

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT WAGNER COLLEGE

A private, co-educational, liberal arts institution, Wagner College is committed to academic excellence through experiential, cultural and global awareness provided by a highly qualified and caring faculty, administration, staff, and Board of Trustees. Wagner is an institution with substantial residential facilities and a diverse student body. Much has happened at Wagner since the last Evaluation Team site visit nearly 10 years ago. The Wagner Plan, introduced 12 years ago, has been successfully implemented, transforming the undergraduate curriculum at the institution. The College's finances, which were a concern at that time, have been stabilized. In 2001 the College's endowment was approximately \$3 million and its debt was approximately \$45 million. Since then, the endowment has risen to \$64 million and, with the recent refinancing to build Foundation Hall, the College's debt sits at \$65 million. In addition, Wagner surpassed the goal of \$50 million in its first comprehensive campaign in its history, Putting Wagner First: The Campaign for Wagner College. The campaign will now be extended by another \$25 million, which will permit the College to construct its first new academic building in more than 40 years. In each of the last nine years the College has run a significant operating surplus. Wagner instituted a thorough strategic planning program in 2005, successfully completing it in 2010. The new plan is in gestation this academic year, dovetailing with this self-study process.

With this newly gained financial stability, the College continues to make major investments in students, through increased scholarships and tuition assistance; in faculty, through the establishment of distinguished endowed chairs and funding for research, scholarship, and

professional development; and in the college itself, through upgrades to facilities and campus infrastructure.

Wagner College has made civic engagement a cornerstone of the “Wagner Plan,” our innovative curriculum which combines deep learning and practical application. The College has been awarded the Community Engagement Classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the first college in New York City to receive this designation. The Corporation for National and Community Service, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact and the American Council on Education, has named the College to the U.S. President’s Higher Education Distinguished Community Service Honor Roll for four consecutive years. This selection is the highest federal recognition that an institution of higher education can receive for its commitment to service learning and civic engagement, and Wagner has earned this distinction every year since the Honor Roll was created in 2006.

The College also received a significant federal grant of \$500,000, “Civic Innovations,” where academic departments partner with local not-for-profit organizations, creating experiential learning opportunities within the organizations for our students while building the capacity of the local organizations. This program has been continued and expanded by the College. In particular, following this unique model, the College’s Civic Innovations: Port Richmond Partnership, is an effort to concentrate resources in and around one of Staten Island’s most impoverished neighborhoods. It was recently cited at President Bill Clinton’s Global Initiative University. According to Clinton, the Port Richmond Partnership builds upon "Wagner's extensive expertise and leadership in education and citizenship." Clinton added that the partnership will help provide services to a community that is bearing the brunt of today's economic crisis.

At the undergraduate level, the College offers 30 academic programs leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Bachelor of Science (B.S.). Five-year Bachelor's/Master's (B.S./M.S.) degrees are available in the Accounting, Microbiology and Physician Assistant programs. Our newest undergraduate program is a B.A. in Art History that was approved by the New York State Education Department in May, 2008 and introduced at the beginning of the fall 2008 semester. There are seven other disciplines where minors are available. The College offers pre-professional programs in law, engineering, the ministry and in the health sciences.

The College's Division of Graduate Studies offers 20 programs leading to the degrees of Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.), Master of Science (M.S.), Master of Science in Education (M.S.ED) and Post Master's Certificate. These programs are in the fields of Accounting, Business, Education, Microbiology, Nursing and Advanced Physician Assistant Studies.

Wagner has produced a cadre of distinguished alumni. Among them are CEOs in finance and business, including chairmen emeriti of GE Asset Management, Dupont Europe, and the Oppenheimer Management Company. Wagner alumni are found in the performing arts, education, and medicine and many hold leadership roles in public service, government, and the not-for-profit sectors. The chief of staff of the Clinton Foundation, the campaign manager of Walter Mondale's 1984 presidential campaign, and two current members of the New York State Assembly are Wagner alumni, as is a former minority leader of that body. Among our many distinguished theatre alumni is a Tony Award Winner (Best Featured Actress in a Musical), an Emmy and Academy Award nominee; a former television network executive who is now an independent producer, and a number of actors who have graced the off-Broadway and Broadway stages, our television sets, and our movie screens. Among our athletes have been two American League Rookies of the Year, a former

NFL head coach and player, and a number of major college coaches. The 1972 Pulitzer Prize for Drama was awarded to a chemistry major.

THE PRESENT CHALLENGE

Like most of society, Wagner has been profoundly affected by the worldwide economic crisis that began in the fall of 2008. Our undergraduate enrollment (head count) was 1,924 in fall, 2008; one year later, it was 1,870. This fall, it was 1,829. This economic downturn is likely to have a lasting impact on American higher education. Small residential institutions, such as Wagner, face the challenge of remaining viable academic and business enterprises in the face of changing perceptions about the “value” of what we offer. Public four-year institutions (which face their own problems of growing enrollments and shrinking state support), community colleges, the for-profit sector, as well as larger private institutions are alternatives that many parents and prospective students are examining with more interest than they might have in the past. At Wagner, prudent decisions were made, even before the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy, that have permitted the institution to move forward without any erosion of our students’ experience.

MAJOR THEMES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE SELF-STUDY

Four overarching themes are at the heart of this decennial self examination.

WAGNER 2.0. The original Wagner Plan has been in place for a decade. What has been its impact on the institution thus far, and how can the plan be moved forward during the next decade? While the Wagner Plan’s impact on the College can be discerned throughout the document, it will be specifically addressed in the final chapter: **Special Emphasis: the Wagner Plan After a Decade.**

THE AGE OF LIMITS. The nation’s economic crisis has had a profound impact on all institutions, including Wagner. It is clear that Americans are changing their consumer habits. It is not yet clear how the crisis will affect decisions such as college choice and philanthropy. In the

near-term, we must assume that we are operating within certain financial constraints that did not exist in the past. Therefore, how can Wagner make more efficient use of its present resources and what can be done to identify and access new resources so that the College can further its mission and realize its goals? These questions will be addressed in the Chapter addressing Standards 2 and 3.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT/GLOBALIZATION. The College has developed a number of important civic engagement initiatives over the past decade, including (1) Civic Innovations, and (2) Civic Innovations: Port Richmond. The College has also expanded its commitment to global education and awareness. While such initiatives are consistent and important to both our mission and the Wagner Plan, the challenge is to further integrate these initiatives into the life of the College. What progress have we made in these areas and what opportunities lie ahead of us? These questions are discussed in Chapters 5 (Enrollment, Admissions and Published Materials and Institutional Assessment), 8 (Curricular Core and Majors), 9 (Learning Outcomes and Assessment), 10 (Student Affairs, Athletics and Co-Curricular) and 11 (The Wagner Plan After a Decade).

ASSESSMENT. Continuous improvement, in all areas, is essential for Wagner College to move forward. Institutional assessment, as well as assessment of learning outcomes is important. To what extent has a culture of continuous improvement developed at Wagner, and how can we continue to cultivate this culture over the next decade?

For every aspect of the College:, how does “success” look and how can we measure progress? This theme is discussed in Chapters 5 (Enrollment, Admissions and Published Materials and Institutional Assessment), 8 (Curricular Core and Majors), and 9 (Learning Outcomes and Assessment).

The organization of this self-study mirrors the approach of the Wagner Plan. Rather than presenting 14 discrete standards and chapters, the chapters and standards are blended where appropriate, so that the presentation is more reflective of how we perceive the standards within the context of the Wagner Plan. Standards 1 (Mission) and 6 (Integrity) are addressed in Chapter 1; Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance) and 5 (Administration) are discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. Standard 8 (Enrollment, Admissions and Published Materials) is examined in Chapter 4) Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment) in Chapter 5. Standards 2 (Finances) and 3 (Planning) are covered in Chapter 6. Standard 10 (The Faculty) is reviewed in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 evaluates both our Curricular Core and Majors (Standards 11 and 12), while Chapter 9 presents our findings on Learning Outcomes and Assessment (Standard 14). Chapter 10 analyzes learning outside the classroom: Student Affairs, Athletics and Co-Curricular (Standards 9 and 13). Our final chapter, our special emphasis, sums up our experience of the Wagner Plan after a Decade: Where we' have been; who we are, and where we must go.

The College's self-study is the outcome of more than two years of intensive college-wide review and discussion. The process is outlined in a self-study timeline (Appendix A). Information from the major resources that support the report's findings appear in Appendices 1-11.

CHAPTER 1-MISSION AND INTEGRITY (STANDARDS 1 AND 6)

I. *Charge to the Sub-Committee*

Standard 1: Mission and Goals - The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness. The institution's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates who the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission.

Standard 6 - Integrity - In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

II. *Sources of Evidence*

- *Wagner College Mission Statement*
- *Departmental Mission Statements*
- *Common Data Sets*
- *College's Submission to America's Best College's Survey, 2003, 2004*
- *Departmental Annual Reports*
- *Academic Honesty Committee data*
- *Wagner College Faculty Handbook*
(<http://www.wagner.edu/pbc/sites/wagner.edu.pbc/files/download/Faculty%20Handbook%2017th%20ed%20PDF.pdf>)
- *Wagner College Employee Handbook*
(http://www.wagner.edu/human_resources/hr_handbook)

III. *Executive Summary*

A. *Strengths*

- *The Wagner Plan facilitates the integration of student learning on campus and in the community.*
- *The College's location attracts students interested in the many opportunities to actively participate in off-campus experience in the fast paced and competitive environment of New York City and the surrounding region.*

- *The College has been able to attract more students with stronger academic backgrounds due to the interest generated by the Wagner Plan.*
- *Students in Civic Innovations courses report a greater grasp of the integration of on-campus and off-campus learning and commitment to civic engagement and social responsibility*
- *The College promotes a climate of intellectual and academic freedom.*
- *The College has developed an Academic Honesty Policy that is well publicized and is administered in an efficient and transparent fashion.*

B. Challenges

- *The nation's difficult economic times and the struggles that many families are facing in financing a college education are making it more difficult for some students to attend or remain at Wagner.*
- *The ability of community-based agencies in the Civic Innovations program to effectively deploy our students has been uneven.*
- *There is a greater need to research the relationship between forms of experiential learning, student retention and learning outcomes.*
- *The use of the College's mission and general education and institutional learning goals to develop and assess student learning outcomes in the academic departments should be more consistent.*
- *While the College promotes its ethical standards in its publications, website, and other in-house communications, there is a need to ensure that statements that appear in publications and websites are consistent and that there be greater consistency in some of the policies outlined in the Faculty and Employee Handbooks*
- *While the College's institutional goals have presence across all majors, there is a need for a greater consistency in the degree of integration of these goals in our major programs*
- *There should be greater consistency of expectations of course syllabi and these should be articulated in the faculty handbook.*

C. Recommendations

- *The College needs to develop additional sources of financial aid so it can remain financially accessible to academically-qualified students.*
- *The College should develop strategies for recruiting a student body with a better gender balance*
- *Additional faculty and academic departments should participate in Civic Innovations to further deepen the Wagner Plan*
- *The College should review and assess the relationship between models of experiential learning, student learning outcomes, and student retention.*

- *The academic departments should make more use of the College's mission, general education and institutional learning goals in their assessment activities.*
- *There should be more consistency in the integration of our institutional goals in all of the College's major programs*
- *The faculty should develop a description of what is expected in a course syllabus that can be included in the Faculty Handbook.*

WAGNER COLLEGE'S MISSION

Wagner College has a mission statement that, clearly and directly, sets out its mission as an institution of higher learning and defines the College's academic purposes and goals, as well as its role in the larger community. The product of wide deliberation involving all stakeholders, the mission is true to its underlying principles but at the same time able to respond to experience and adapt to changing demands.

WAGNER COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Approved by the Trustees and the Faculty, May 2003

Wagner College prepares students for life, as well as for careers, by emphasizing scholarship, achievement, leadership, and citizenship. Wagner offers a comprehensive educational program that is anchored in the liberal arts, experiential and co-curricular learning, inter-culturalism, interdisciplinary studies, and service to society and that is cultivated by a faculty dedicated to promoting individual expression, reflective practice, and integrative learning.

Wagner College achieves this mission through the implementation and enhancement of The Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts. The Plan is predicated on a method of integrated learning. Specifically, the plan relies on the integration of liberal arts and professional education with experiential learning. The liberal arts provide a wider and more cosmopolitan understanding of diversity of cultures, historical epochs, differing values and systems of human organization as

well as ethical and moral dilemmas. Professional education emphasizes applied learning in business, education, and nursing which emphasizes conceptualization design, field practice, assessment evaluation and revision. The integration of these two powerful learning paradigms best prepares students for positions of effective and responsible leadership in their chosen professions and to the various publics served by them.

Preparing students for leadership requires a coherent, efficient and effective educational program and a focused faculty and administration, supported by an equally committed Board of Trustees.

The mission statement is posted on the Wagner College website and it appears in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletins 2008-2010*, the *Parent Handbook*, and the *Wagner College Student Planner and Handbook*.

A. The Wagner Plan

One of the ways that Wagner College strives to meet its mission is through the well-developed undergraduate educational program. The Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts (introduced in 1998) is predicated on a model of integrating liberal arts and professional education, complemented by experiential learning. The experiential learning component of the Wagner Plan is threaded throughout the academic and co-curricular programs. “The freshman experience may take any of an array of possible forms: civic engagement, service learning, participatory learning/mentorships, independent study, field trips, and community research. All experiences are integrated as much as possible into the coursework of the reflective tutorial. In the senior learning community, all students participate in a practicum directly related to their major as a capstone experience prior to graduation. This provides a smoother transition from the academic world to the world of work and graduate and professional studies (Student Handbook, 2008).

B. Civic Innovations

In 2006, Wagner College implemented a newly created experiential model to complement the Wagner Plan: Civic Innovations. Six academic departments, self-identified as a Community-Connected Department (CCD), committed to threading focused civic engagement activities developmentally throughout their departmental curricula. Through Civic Innovations, each CCD collaborates with a single community-based organization. Professors of the courses within the CCDs work closely with the community organization to collaboratively construct syllabi to meet the needs of both the community-based organization and the student learning outcomes expected for the course. This allows one department to focus on one community agency and vice versa. Ongoing engagement with one agency engenders in students a deeper commitment to civic engagement and develops a sense of personal and social responsibility. Some of the participating academic departments and agencies include the Education Department and the New York City Public Schools; the Business Department and the YMCA; the Evelyn L. Spiro School of Nursing and United Activities Unlimited; Sociology/Anthropology Department and RSVP (an organization serving older adults); the Government and Politics Department and Project Hospitality (an organization serving the homeless and disenfranchised), and the History Department and the Park Hill neighborhood on Staten Island.

Each of the Civic Innovations' CCDs identified four courses per year (totaling 24 per year, by the third year of the grant), and implemented a sophisticated assessment process that measures impact on students, community partners and their constituents. By spring 2009, the assessment tool included additional specific questions that measured students' perceptions of their commitment to personal and social responsibility in relation to their participation in Civic Innovations. The following data highlight the response to statements that align with civic engagement commitment

and student learning: 69.5% of the students responding agreed or strongly agreed “that the community participation aspect of this course helped me to see how the subject matter I learned can be used in everyday life;” 69.5% agreed or strongly agreed that “The idea of combining work in the community with college work should be practiced in more classes at this college;” 69.5%.; 75.4% agreed or strongly agreed that “I was able to work directly with a community partner through this course;” and 67.8% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “I felt a personal responsibility to meet the needs of the community partner of this course.” When asked their response to the following statement: “I probably will not volunteer or participate in community work after this course,” 67% disagreed or strongly disagreed (A summary of the response to all the questions is found in Appendix 1-1).

Six trends emerged from the data that further the understanding of Wagner students’ commitment to civic engagement, personal and social responsibility, and connections to learning:

1. Students perceived an increase in areas of personal growth as pertaining to responsibility and citizenship.
2. Students perceived increased comfort with racial and economic class differences.
3. Students felt a responsibility to meet the needs of the community partners.
4. Students felt more aware of different approaches to, and solutions for problems.
5. Students believed that combining work in the community with college work should be embedded throughout the curriculum.
6. Students believed that work in the community aided them in further awareness of their personal strengths and weaknesses.

Students who participated in the Civic Innovations courses were more likely to comprehend the goals of the course when strong faculty-community partner interactions occurred. The Civic Innovations model provides opportunities for consistency and continuity in campus-community civic engagement activities.

One challenge in the Civic Innovations Program has been the difficulty that some community-based agencies have had developing meaningful learning opportunities for advanced students. While all agencies have made effective use of first-year students, often deploying those in

direct service activities which assist the agencies in fulfilling their mission and provide students with important insights about the community around them, not all agencies have been as successful in utilizing Wagner students in more sophisticated roles. The academic departments have offered assistance to the agencies in developing opportunities for the intermediate and senior-level students, but at least one agency has struggled with the task. More interaction with the agencies needs to occur for them to more thoroughly integrate Wagner students into meaningful experiences with the agency and its constituents. Additionally, more Wagner faculty members need to deeply participate in the semester-long academic department/agency collaboration so that it is mutually beneficial to the agency and the student.

C. Civic Engagement Certificate

The Civic Engagement Certificate Program immerses students in civic engagement in the Staten Island community through strategic curricular and community service components. Community partners include Project Hospitality, the African Refuge Center, and Community Health Action. Students in the program are given the opportunity to experience what it means to be deeply engaged in the community and gain knowledge of the dynamics of citizenship in society.

The program provides students with an opportunity to experience leadership and civic accomplishment, think critically, seek knowledge, and become change agents, relates service and professional ethics to civic engagement, and taps into student idealism. It fosters interest and investment in civic matters, helps students develop a deeper understanding of the issues faced by the Staten Island community, and relates them to a larger global context. It recognizes student involvement and achievement, and promotes the importance of civic engagement and community-based learning in creating a well-rounded, informed and empathetic body of student citizens.

Students in the program complete a total of 230 hours of experiential learning over four

years. Each student creates a personal action plan to serve a local agency for 50 hours each semester. Individualized action plans align a student's scholastic and career pursuits with the goals of our community partners. Past work agreements have included acting as a site leader by supervising, motivating, and working alongside other Wagner student volunteers in service learning courses, creating and implementing new programming at an after-school program, serving as a community advocate by engaging in grassroots level activism, and facilitating a series of needs assessment focus groups for a publication.

To prepare students for community-building and encourage a critical understanding of the issues impacting Staten Island, a two-semester course sequence introduces participants to leadership training, concepts of citizenship, and grassroots activism. Students in the program complete two courses: Civic Engagement Leadership (fall) and Community Organizing (spring).

CIVIC INNOVATIONS: PORT RICHMOND PARTNERSHIP

The Civic Innovations: Port Richmond Partnership is an extension of our Civic Innovations initiative. In March 2008, a cross-section of leaders from the Port Richmond community of Staten Island, NY, convened to propose an expanded partnership based on the model of Wagner College's Civic Innovations Program. The committee sought to build significant, sustainable partnerships between Wagner College and North Shore community groups, faith communities, businesses and schools. Members of the Civic Innovations-Port Richmond Partnership (CI-PRP) steering committee identified three objectives that anticipated the greatest community impact: meeting educational needs; meeting health care needs; meeting economic needs.

Port Richmond is located on Staten Island's North Shore. This area includes dry dock and shipyard facilities and places of historic interest including the Dutch Reformed Church (founded

1714). Port Richmond's population grew by 22% in the 1990s. Hispanics and Latinos make up 25.7% of the the neighborhood's population, and 17.8% of the population is foreign-born, a greater share than in most Staten Island neighborhoods. Most of these residents have recently entered the country: almost 54% entered after 1990. Of these new immigrants, more came from Mexico than from any other country. Port Richmond is an economically distressed community, with the borough's second-lowest median household income (\$29,971), the second-highest poverty rate (17.5%), and the highest concentration of older housing in the borough (nearly 60% of the units were built before 1950). Source: <http://www.city-data.com/neighborhood/Port-Richmond-Staten-Island-NY.html>

This project is an outgrowth of the Civic Innovations grant (2006-2009) from Learn & Serve America. It is also a natural extension and deepening of the Wagner Plan for the Liberal Arts. The five-year program involves the College and seven community groups and focuses Wagner's volunteer activities on a single community. The College's goals for this initiative are to: (1) assist with economic development; (2) address environmental issues; (3) address educational issues; and (4) assist with improved health care.

WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?

During the fall 2010 semester, Wagner College enrolled 1,839 undergraduate and 432 graduate students. Consistent with the College's residential character, 95% of the undergraduates were full-time students. Women constituted 64% of the undergraduate student body. On the graduate level, 53% of the students were full-time (defined as nine credits or more per semester) and 47% attend part-time. Women accounted for 65% of the graduate student body and men, 35%. (Appendix 1-1 presents institutional enrollment data for fall, 2010). The Wagner Plan provides the

undergraduate learning, the reflective practice, and the experiential learning component in the New York City area. Proximity to New York City provides students with many opportunities for off-campus experiences.

In fall 2010, African-American students made up 5.8% of the Wagner College undergraduate student body (6.0% of the first year class); Hispanics, 7.4% (9.9% of the first year class), Asian/Pacific Islanders constituted 2.2% of the student body (1.7% of the first year class), and Other under-represented groups constituted 0.1% of the undergraduate student body (Appendix 1-2).

Since 2002, the proportion of African-American (from 5.4% to 5.8% of the undergraduate student body) and Hispanic students has increased (5.1% to 6%). White, non-Hispanic students constitute the overwhelming majority of the undergraduate student body, with the percentage ranging from 75% (fall 2010) to 82.6% (2008-09). The data for 2002-2010 are presented as Appendix 1-3. It is apparent that the College needs to investigate more successful strategies to recruit a more diverse student body.

A. Freshman Profile: SAT Scores

Since the last Middle States self-study, the SAT scores of first-time, first year students have risen. In 2002-03, 31% of the first-year students had SAT Verbal (as they were known then) and Mathematics scores of 600 or above. In 2009-10, 47% of the College's first year students had SAT Critical Reading scores of 600 or above and 50% of the first year students had SAT Mathematics scores of 600 or above.

Beginning in 2010-2011, the College will no longer require the SAT or the ACT score for admission. This will allow the College to focus more on students who bring other skill sets and ambitions to Wagner.

B. Freshman Profile: Class Rank

Class rank is another metric that reflects the academic preparation of the students attending Wagner. While the College's freshman class has typically been made up of students who were in the top half of their high school class, the most significant development has been the increased proportion of students who were in the top quarter of their high school class. In 2009, 70% of the entering class was made up of students who were in the top quarter of their class; in 2002, 53% of the freshman class was composed of students in the top quarter. This is another reflection of Wagner's commitment to attracting better performing students.

C. Scholarships and Grants

During 2009-2010, the College awarded more than \$12 million in need based scholarships and grants and more than \$7 million in non-need-based scholarships and grants. The nation's difficult economic times and the struggles that many families face in financing a college education are reflected in the increased number of students seeking aid.

For 2009-2010, 1,290 (71.7%) of the College's 1,799 full-time undergraduates (71.7%) applied for need-based financial aid. Of these, 1,057 (58.75%) received some sort of financial aid; 281 students (15.6%) had their needs fully met. The average financial aid package awarded was \$20,457, and the average percentage of need met was 72.7% (Appendix 1-4).

In 2008-2009, 1,271 (68.1%) of the 1,866 full-time undergraduates applied for need-based financial aid; 55.9% received some sort of assistance. While a slightly higher percentage (15.9%) had all of their needs met, the average financial aid package was \$18,894 and the average

percentage of need met was 72% (Appendix 1-5). The College is committed to making a liberal arts education financially accessible to all students who qualify. Reductions in federal and state financial aid (and the increasing demand for these programs) are a challenge which may be complicated by further changes in federally-funded student loan programs scheduled to take effect in the 2010-2011 academic year. The debt burden that many Wagner students face upon graduation is also cause for concern. During 2008-2009, 61% of the graduating students had obtained either a Federal Perkins, Federal Stafford subsidized, or an unsubsidized private loan during their undergraduate careers. The average principal borrowed was \$36,988.

D. Athletic Scholarships

Wagner College maintains an NCAA Division I program, one of the smallest institutions in the country to do so. Nearly 23% of Wagner's full-time undergraduates are student-athletes. In 2009-2010, the College awarded \$1.9 million in need-based and \$312,635 in non-need-based aid to student-athletes. Not all student-athletes receive scholarships, and only some members of the men's and women's basketball teams receive full scholarships. A number of student-athletes receive partial scholarships, and are eligible for other forms of financial aid as well.

E. Academic Majors

A number of undergraduate majors are enrolling increased numbers of students, especially in biology, biopsychology, economics, French, mathematics, microbiology, nursing, and philosophy. Majors that have remained static are business administration, chemistry and sociology. Undergraduate programs experiencing a significant decline in the number of majors include Computer Science, English, Government and Politics, History, Music, and Public Policy and Administration. The five largest majors in 2009-10 were Business Administration, Nursing, Theatre and Speech, Physician Assistant Studies and Psychology. Business Administration, Nursing and

Theatre and Speech have been among the five largest programs over the last six academic years (Appendix 1-6).

F. Graduate Programs

Graduate enrollment has increased by 19% since 2004. Accounting and Nursing, and Physician Assistant Studies have experienced significant growth during this period, while the programs in Business Administration, Education and Microbiology have seen their enrollment decline slightly or remain stable (Appendix 1-6).

DEPARTMENTS, PROGRAMS, AND THE MISSION

TABLE 1- Academic Departments/Programs and Their Fulfillment of Mission, General Education, and Student Learning Goals.

KEY: Columns

- (1) Knowledge & Modes of Inquiry
- (2) Critical thinking & Reflective Practice
- (3) Communication
- (4) Cultural diversity & Importance of values
- (5) Creativity
- (6) Leadership
- (7) Citizenship

KEY: Cells

Empty Cell - Not known/Not Fulfilling; * - Fulfilling; ** - Strongly Fulfilling

	DEPARTMENTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Humanities							
1	English							
	English	**	**	**		**		
	Film (minor)	**	**	**	**	**		
	Journalism (minor)	**	**	**		**		
2	Modern Languages							
	French	**	**	**	**			
	German (minor)	**	**	**	**			
	Italian Studies (minor)	**	**	**	**			
	Spanish	**	**	**	**			
3	Philosophy & Religion							
	Philosophy	**	**	*	**			*

	Religious Studies (minor)	**	**	*	**			*
4	History							
	City Studies (minor)	**	*	**	**	*		**
	Gender Studies (minor)	**	**		**	*		**
	History	**	*	**	**	*		**
	Performing and Visual Arts							
5	Art							
	Art	**	*	*		*		
	Art History	**	*	*		*		
6	Theater	**	**	**			*	*
	Arts Administration	**	**	**			*	*
	Dance (Minor)	**	**	**			*	*
	Theatre	**	**	**			*	*
7	Music	**	**	*	**	**		
	Professional Programs							
8	Business Administration							
	Accounting	**	**	**	*		**	*
	Business Administration	**	**	**	*		**	*
9	Education	**	**	**	**	*	*	*
10	Nursing	**	**	*	**		*	**
	Science							
11	Biological Sciences							
	Biology	**	**	*	*			*
	Environmental Sciences (minor)	**	**	*	*			*
	Microbiology	**	**	*	*			*
12	Physical Sciences	**	**	*				
	Chemistry	**	**	*				
	Physician Assistant Studies	**	**		*			
	Physics	**	**					
13	Mathematics & Computer Science							
	Computer Science	*	*			*		
	Information Systems (minor)	*	**	*				
	Mathematics	**	**	*				
	Social Sciences							
14	Economics	*	*		*			
	Biopsychology	**	**	*	*			*
15	Government and Politics							
	Government and Politics	**	**		*		*	**
	International Affairs	**	**	**	*		**	*
	Public Policy and	*	*	*	*		**	**

	Administration							
16	Psychology	**	**	*				
17	Sociology and Anthropology	**	**	*	**			*
	Anthropology	**	**	*	**			*
	Sociology	**	**	*	**			*

Source of Data: Departmental Mission Statements (Appendix 1-2)

*The Biopsychology major is administered jointly by the Departments of Psychology and Biological Sciences

TABLE 2 - Non-Degree Academic Programs and Their Fulfillment of The Mission, General Education, and Institutional Goals.

KEY: Columns

- (1) Knowledge & Modes of Inquiry
- (2) Critical thinking & Reflective Practice
- (3) Communication
- (4) Cultural diversity & Importance of values
- (5) Creativity
- (6) Leadership
- (7) Citizenship

KEY: Cells

Empty Cell - Not known/Not Fulfilling; * - Fulfilling; ** - Strongly Fulfilling

	Non-degree academic programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	First year program	**	**	**	**	*	*	**
2	Intermediate learning community	**	**	**	**	*	*	*
3	Senior learning community	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
4	Honors program	**	**	**				
5	Internationalization	*	**	**	**		*	*
6	Pre-health program	*	*		*			
7	Pre-law program	*	*	*			*	*
8	Pre-PA program	**	*		*			
9	Urban programs	*	*	*	**		*	*
10	Academic & Cultural Enrichment	**		**		**		

11	Co-curricular Programs	**	*	**	**	**	**	*
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A. Overview

While all programs seek to further “knowledge and modes of inquiry,” some of the general education and institutional goals are more limited in terms of the extent of their penetration throughout the institution. The Education Department reports that it furthers all seven goals. Three key components of the Wagner Plan—the three required learning communities (First Year, Intermediate and Senior)--also report advancing all seven goals. The goals of creativity and leadership are not as prevalent in their presence in the programs of the College and should be addressed further through assessment. It is clear that the institutional goals are embedded across the majors. However, the degree of integration is not consistent.

B. Division of Graduate Studies Mission Statement

The Division of Graduate Studies [DGS] supports the mission and goals of Wagner College through graduate education. Committed to the “learning by doing” philosophy embodied in the Wagner Plan, the DGS offers select, yet comprehensive graduate programs. These programs foster core competencies, the use of cutting-edge technologies, and critical thinking. Committed faculty prepare individuals for life and work in an increasingly complex, diverse and global society. Students in the DGS receive personal attention as they work closely with faculty in small classes. Graduate programs at Wagner College remain responsive to the needs of the external community.

The College’s graduate programs are designed largely to meet professional requirements and New York State requirements. However, programs strive to integrate the components of the Wagner Plan to the greatest extent possible. The microbiology graduate program emphasizes experiential learning and critical thinking through direct exposure to scientific method, experimental design and analysis, as well as written and oral communication skills through required

papers, theses (thesis track), and class discussions of scientific papers. The thesis and non-thesis tracks prepare microbiology students for service to society by preparing them for careers as microbiologists, molecular biologists, immunologists, virologists, mycologists, parasitologists, and epidemiologists in clinical, industrial, and governmental research laboratories. The nursing graduate program emphasizes experiential learning in primary care and/or population-based settings in the community. Cultural competency is emphasized in the graduate courses, and the graduate program clearly emphasizes service to society. The business administration graduate programs provide multiple opportunities for experiential learning through internships, as well as opportunities for interculturalism and interdisciplinary studies through overseas intercultural engagements. The programs are discussed in Chapter 7-Curricular Core and Majors (Standards 11 and 12).

C. Goals and Assessments

The use of the College's mission and institutional goals to develop and assess student learning in the academic departments and in Academic Support and Co-Curricular Activities could be more consistent. One of the areas where progress can be made is to encourage all academic departments and academic support units to more effectively apply the College's mission, general education and learning goals to assessment activities within their disciplines. In other words, general education and institutional goals outcomes should be assessed through the learning communities and the disciplines as well.

While every major program has been through at least one cycle of assessment, the academic departments and Academic Support and Co-Curricular Activities have been less diligent in their assessment of how their activities further the College's mission and general education and institutional learning outcomes. Such assessment is needed if the various components of the institution are to be more effective in furthering the College's mission.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

The College promotes its ethical standards in its publications, website, and other in-house communications. In the *2010-2012 Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, statements supporting ethical treatment of students by the College and by fellow students are addressed in the Academic Policies section and the non-discrimination statement.

A. Academic and Intellectual Freedom

The 17th edition of the *Wagner College Faculty Handbook* endorses standards of academic freedom, as established by the 1940 Statement of the American Association of University Professors [AAUP] for faculty (pg. 21). In addition, the *Handbook* sets forth a policy that provides protection from discrimination.

At Wagner, faculty members have considerable latitude in terms of their course syllabi and content. There is no description of what is expected to be in a course syllabus in the *Faculty Handbook*. At the beginning of each academic year, a mailing from the provost's office includes a statement on "faculty routines and schedules" which states:

Syllabi: A written syllabus is to be handed out to each class. In addition to course description, expected student learning outcomes, and calendar and course content, the syllabus needs to include the following:

Student attendance, grading and "make-up" policies (Federal student aid funding regulations require that we keep accurate attendance records)

Description of class participation, examinations, tests, quizzes, papers, or other course requirements

Office hours and contact information

Of the 16 departments that replied to the syllabus survey, 11 do not have departmental guidelines for syllabi in place, while five do. Two departments have a standard syllabus for use for courses in their department and five have a required text for one or more courses offered in the

department. One department reported syllabi requirements imposed by a professional accreditation body. The comments in response to an open-ended question regarding Wagner's syllabi policy indicated a sense that the latitude that faculty members enjoy in this area is highly valued.

Notwithstanding the latitude that faculty members have, some department heads note that there have been several requests made by the administration via Department Chairs Council [DCC] and Learning Community [LC] Council meetings that certain information be added to syllabi. For example, the provost's office has stated that objectives regarding learning outcomes (i.e., writing, critical thinking, etc.) need to be clearly stated in the syllabus. There are reports that faculty have been asked to include learning goals and mission statement information in their syllabi. Comments in response to the syllabi survey are found in Appendix 1-7.

Student academic freedom is strongly supported. Students are reminded about their proprietary rights regarding their own work by the library and other offices via Moodle. Also, the Student Government Association enacted a Student Bill of Rights in 2005. This statement is printed in the *Student Handbook* and is available online (http://www.wagner.edu/campus_life/bill_of_rights).

B. Academic Honesty

Since the establishment of an Academic Honesty Committee (AHC) in 1998, the College's academic honesty policies have been revised several times. The efforts of the last 10 years have generated a system that is well publicized to students, faculty and staff, and that functions with efficiency and transparency.

There have been two important changes since 1998: 1) The AHC now suspends students after the second offense; 2) Student representatives now sit on the committee as full voting members.

The AHC has two central goals. The first is to educate students so that they understand and comply with the essential elements of academic honesty. The second is to maintain academic integrity at the college by sanctioning individuals who violate the academic policy.

The College's academic honesty policies are well documented in the *2010 Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. Further, the Academic Honesty Committee maintains a web page (www.wagner.edu/provost/ahc) with links to the following documents/topics: the procedure for reporting a case; *Student Academic Honesty and Integrity Handbook*; Student Honor Code and the Honesty Statement for Work submitted.

In addition, there is now a well-developed program to educate students directly as to how to avoid academic dishonesty. The elements of the program are the following:

- A presentation by the chair of the AHC to members of the first year class about academic honesty during orientation
- Members of the AHC visit First Year Program (FYP) Reflective Tutorial (RFT) classes and discuss Wagner's academic honesty policy, including possible penalties for violations. At this time freshmen receive a copy of the "*Student Academic Honesty and Integrity Handbook*" and sign and acknowledgement that they have read and understood the content
- Tutorials about plagiarism are offered twice each semester and are open to every student

There are two policies in effect to promote academic integrity: 1) Cases of academic dishonesty can be handled by the individual course instructors; 2) Faculty, students and staff can report suspected violations to AHC. Penalties in either case depend on the severity of the violations and whether a student repeatedly violates the academic honesty policies of the College. In all instances, penalized students have to complete a tutorial about plagiarism or time management within one semester.

C. Research Involving Human Subjects

In research utilizing human subjects, Wagner has supported and promoted ethical practices

with the creation (in 2002) of the Human Experimentation Review Board [HERB], an institutional review board [IRB] established pursuant to Title 45 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 46.

This board, housed in the Department of Psychology, is available to all members of the Wagner College community. The board adheres to all guidelines put forth by the Belmont Report of 1979 and is registered with the Federal Office of Human Research Protections (Wagner College IRB #1 - HERB). Federal regulations require that the board strive for balance in terms of gender, expert/non-expert members, and the inclusion of community and student voting members. The committee reviews approximately 20-40 proposals each semester, the majority of which are submitted by undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff (from psychology, education, physician assistant, biology, chemistry, among others). Information about HERB is available online at www.wagner.edu/departments/psychology/herb. All students engaged in research are educated about the purpose of HERB and how to submit research proposals.

DUE PROCESS

Wagner College has developed procedures to insure fair and consistent implementation of its policies for all of the institution's stakeholders.

A. General

Discrimination. Wagner College is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or disability.

The College is also committed to maintaining a workplace free of harassment and intimidation and expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability or status in any group protected by federal, state or local law. To educate the college community on the

issue of sexual harassment, New Media Learning has been contracted to provide an on-line sexual harassment training program that must be completed by all employees.

College policy mandates that alleged violations be reported to the director of human resources, who is to make every effort to ensure that complaints of harassment or violation of the College's discrimination policy be investigated and resolved promptly, effectively, and in a manner that respects confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Appropriate disciplinary action is taken against employees who violate this policy, up to and including dismissal.

Sexual Harassment. Sexual harassment in any form, which interferes with another person's performance or which creates any intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for any member of the Wagner community, is strictly prohibited.

Students may direct complaints to the office of the Dean of Campus Life; employees may direct complaints to the director of human resources. No student or employee is to suffer any adverse action as a result of a good faith report of harassment or for assisting in the investigation of such a report: any one responsible for an act of retaliation against said student or employee is subject to disciplinary action.

B. Faculty

Personnel Issues. The Faculty Hearings and Appeals Committee (FHAC), comprising five tenured full-time faculty members elected by the Committee of the Whole, hear and make recommendations on faculty appeals concerning significant personnel issues, when a substantive procedural violation is alleged. Appeals regarding appointment and tenure may concern only substantive procedural irregularities or application of improper criteria. Substantive violations are defined as those serious enough to result in a different outcome in the reappointment process.

The chair of the FHAC notifies the faculty member within one month of receipt of the appeal, whether or not the committee will hear the case. If the committee decides to hear the case, it may require further information from concerned parties and, consequently, may wish to call the faculty member as well as others involved for a hearing. The findings of the committee shall be conveyed to the President, the faculty member and all other involved parties in the form of a written judgment about the merits of the appeal, together with any recommendations for action that the committee deems warranted. Final disposition rests with the President.

Faculty Discipline. *The Wagner College Faculty Handbook, 17th edition*, states that any faculty member may be discharged, as distinguished from not reappointed, or suspended only for serious and/or repeated misconduct, professional incompetence or the long-term inability to perform academic duties. The disciplinary process empowers the Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC) to conduct an informal inquiry into a matter brought to its attention by the President. The committee shall inform the President of its recommendation as to whether formal proceedings should be instituted. If, after receipt of the recommendation of the FPC, the President decides to initiate formal proceedings against the faculty member, the President shall send the faculty member a statement of the charges against him/her and a statement of the discipline sought. The faculty member may request a hearing before the FHAC. The FHAC, following a hearing, shall make its recommendation to the President. The President's decision shall be final.

C. Students

Academic Grievances. Students wishing to lodge a complaint regarding academic policy, procedure, or decision, as it relates to any alleged action prohibited by anti-discrimination acts, should first discuss the matter on an informal basis with the appropriate academic department

chairperson within five business days. The department chairperson will give the matter prompt attention and respond to the complainant. If the grievance is not resolved at this level, it is then presented in writing, within five business days to the Office of the Provost. The document should include, but is not limited to, the following: statement of the grievance and the facts upon which it is based; date of the occurrence; prior attempts made to resolve the grievance; the student's signature and date.

The Provost will attempt, on an informal basis, to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. In the event an acceptable resolution is not achieved, the faculty member or student may request that the grievance be brought before the Equal Opportunity Grievance Committee, which will review all facts and make its recommendation to the President of the College. The decision of the President is final.

Appeal of Grades. If a student believes that there has been an error in matters of grading and attendance, after first speaking to the professor involved and trying to solve the matter there, the student may appeal to the chair of the department offering the course, or to the appropriate Graduate Program Director.

If there continues to be a disagreement, the Registrar will review the appeal and make a determination. If there is compelling evidence of unfairness, the student may appeal to the Provost or designee. The Provost or designee's decision is final, and is not subject to further appeal.

An appeal must be submitted, in writing, to the appropriate office as outlined in the previous paragraph no later than the close of business on the last business day of the third full week of classes of the semester (fall or spring) following the term in which the grade was given.

Academic Honesty Committee (AHC). The AHC's decisions may be appealed to the Provost (or his/her/a designee). Appeals shall be based upon the availability of new evidence and/or procedural

error by the committee. The faculty are given an annual report describing the status of all cases the AHC has reviewed.

Student conduct. Matters involving violations of the College's community standards may be adjudicated by either the Community Standards Review Board (CSRB) or through an administrative hearing. The CSRB consists of students who participate on a rotating basis to adjudicate violations of campus policies. They are trained to review incident reports and listen to witness accounts to determine responsibility and formulate recommendations for appropriate sanctions. Student behavior guidelines are printed in the *Student Handbook*.

In some serious cases, or upon the request of the parties or on the determination of the Dean of Campus Life, cases may be heard at an administrative hearing, where the matter is heard by a panel of Wagner College administrators, who participate on a rotating basis. Students may appeal decisions to the Dean of Campus Life or a designee.

D. Non-Exempt, Non-Union Staff

Employee Grievances. A grievance is defined in the *Wagner College Employee Handbook* (http://www.wagner.edu/human_resources/gp) as a complaint by an employee regarding the interpretation or application of College rules and regulations, working conditions, or alleged improper treatment. The *Employee Handbook* sets forth two types of grievance procedures: informal and formal.

If the informal process does not lead to a resolution satisfactory to the employee, a formal grievance may be initiated through a written statement to his/her immediate supervisor (Step 1) in which the employee details the complaint and describes the desired resolution. The written grievance must be submitted to the immediate supervisor within 10 working days of the last informal meeting to resolve the grievance. There are additional steps in the appeals process whereby

the employee may appeal further to his/her immediate supervisor's supervisor (Step 2), the Director of Human Resources (Step 3) and the appropriate Vice President (Step 4), whose decision is final unless the President exercises the right to review the decision and modify or reverse it.

E. Unionized Staff

Grievance and disciplinary procedures affecting unionized staff are established through collective bargaining agreements between the College and the staff members' collective bargaining unit. The unions representing Wagner's unionized employees are the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3; International Union of Operating Engineers Local 30; the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, and the Security Officers Union Local 2.

CHAPTER 2-LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE (STANDARD 4)

I. *Charges to the Subcommittee*

Standard 4- The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

II. *Sources of Evidence*

- *Wagner College Charter*
- *Wagner College Constitution and Bylaws*
- *Wagner College Faculty Handbook, 17/e*
- *Faculty Governance Survey*
- *Survey for Board of Trustees*
- *Survey of Academic Department Chairs*
- *Student Survey*

III. *Executive Summary*

A. *Strengths*

- *The College seeks to establish an inclusive campus climate through welcoming diverse perspectives and opinions within the governance system.*
- *Those faculty members, staff, administrators and students with disparate perspectives have a number of opportunities within the College's system of shared governance to express their opinions.*
- *The Board of Trustees has developed a system of self-assessment.*
- *The Board takes its responsibilities seriously, seeks input from various stakeholders, but does not "micro-manage" the day-to-day activities of the College.*

B. *Challenges*

- *There is not an effective inclusion of students in the institution's system of governance.*
- *Survey results show that nearly 60 percent of faculty who responded to the Faculty Governance Survey, believe that the governance structure requires at least moderate improvement.*
- *There is a need to increase attendance and broaden participation at faculty Committee of the Whole meetings.*
- *The present composition of the Faculty Personnel Committee creates situations where, given conflicts of interest, recommendations may be made by 4 members of the Committee.*

- *The present array of faculty handbook mandated standing committees, ad hoc committees and other college bodies is cumbersome*

C. Recommendations

- *To deepen the role of students in college governance, the Academic Policy Committee should add a non-voting student member as discussed in the Faculty Handbook.*
- *As stipulated in the Faculty Handbook, all academic departments should invite a non-voting student representative to their department meetings.*
- *The College should continue to seek voice from the faculty regarding any concerns with the structure of shared governance.*
- *The Committee of the Whole meeting format should be reviewed to make such meetings more engaging.*
- *The composition of the Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC) should be increased from 5 to 7 members to create more than 4 voting members, given conflicts of interest, and to create a greater faculty voice in tenure and promotion decisions.*
- *All committees should be carefully assessed for effectiveness and purpose.*
- *The Graduate Student Association should be re-activated.*
- *The Board of Trustees should continue to broaden and deepen the current self-assessment process.*

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

A. Formal Administrative Structure

All educational institutions in New York State are members of the University of the State of New York, and are governed by the New York State Board of Regents. The Regents are responsible for the general supervision of all educational activities within the state, presiding over The University and the New York State Education Department. The Board consists of 17 members elected by the state legislature for 5-year terms: 1 from each of the state's 13 judicial districts and 4 members who serve at large. Regents are unsalaried and are reimbursed only for travel and related expenses in connection with their official duties.

Wagner College is authorized to offer bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as post-master's certificates, for a variety of disciplines including a small number of professional programs. The College also participates in the Association of Colleges of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The New York State Education Law, Regents Rules and Commissioner's

Regulations Concerning Postsecondary Education and Program Registration provide the framework within which Wagner College operates.

The policy documents that guide the operation of the College include the *Wagner College Charter* and the *Wagner College Constitution and Bylaws*, and the minutes of the Board of Trustees of Wagner College. Overall authority is vested in the Board of Trustees of Wagner College, which shall not exceed 35 in number. There are a number of Trustees' committees, which include the Executive Committee; the Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee; the Audit Committee; the Business and Finance Committee; the Investment Committee, and the Institutional Advancement Committee. Sub-committees of the Board include: Athletics, Buildings and Grounds, Bylaws, Enrollment and Strategic Planning, and Trustee Affairs.

The governance structure of the College can be found in the Wagner College Constitution and By-laws and the *Wagner College Faculty Handbook*, 17th edition.

The Wagner College Board of Trustees is the ultimate authority for personnel decisions related to the President (the President is the ultimate authority for all other personnel actions); the Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) are the final authority for curricula and degree-granting initiatives brought forward by the College.

The College strives to educate all members of the college community about governance matters. *The Faculty Handbook* is provided to all new full-time faculty members.

There are a number of governance bodies on campus:

- The Committee of the Whole, which comprises all full-time faculty members, the President, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (the presiding officer), exercises the legislative powers of the faculty. These include making recommendations in the areas of admissions requirements for students, the curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, and those aspects of student life that relate to the academic process. The faculty establish the requirements for degrees offered, determine when the requirements have been met, and recommend to the President and the Board of Trustees that degrees be

awarded. The College's Board of Trustees retains final authority over the aforementioned areas and may, at its discretion, overrule the Faculty and/or the Administration.

- The collective faculty has the authority, pursuant to the *Faculty Handbook*, to establish standing committees to which it may delegate its legislative powers. These elected standing committees report to the Committee of the Whole, which retains the authority to review and approve their actions. These committees include the Academic Policy Committee (APC); Academic Honesty Committee (AHC); Committee for Learning Assessment (CLA); Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC); Faculty Hearings and Appeals Committee (FHAC); Priorities and Budget Committee (PBC); Department Chairs Council (DCC), and Academic Review Committee (ARC). These committees make recommendations to the full body which, in turn, makes recommendations to the Provost.
- The *Faculty Handbook* also provides for a Periodic Governance Evaluation Committee (PGE). The primary task of the committee is to assess the faculty governance structure in light of the goals and objectives of the College.
- The Student Government Association (SGA) is the constituent body, which represents student concerns to the larger Wagner community. The SGA is the governance structure that oversees all student organizations on campus, including academic clubs, specialized groups, honor societies, student publications, and all fraternities and sororities. The SGA Constitution is the framework within which the Student Government Association operates. The major organs of the SGA are:
 - The SGA Executive Board, is comprised of a President, Vice President, Vice President for Finance, Vice President for Communications, Vice President for Community Service, and Vice President for Campus Events.
 - The legislative powers of the SGA are vested in the SGA General Assembly, a tripartite body that comprises the Student Senate, a 20-member-body whose members are elected by the student body or appointed by the members of the Senate; the Clubs Congress, comprising one representative from each of the chartered campus organizations, and the Commons House, for those attending an SGA meeting who are not members of the first two bodies.
- The Graduate Student Association (GSA) represents the interests of graduate students to the larger Wagner community. However, as of this writing, the GSA is inactive.

B. Changes in Governance Since the Last Self-Study

Changes in the governance structure since the 2001 self-study include an increase in the number of faculty standing committees, from six to nine as the Academic Honesty Committee, the Committee for Learning Assessment, and the Priorities and Budget Committee were established. The number of academic departments increased from 14 to 17 as two departments were re-organized into five separate departments. In 2004, the Department of Languages and Literature was separated into two separate departments: English and Modern Languages. In 2006, the combined

Department of History, Political Science and Economics became three separate departments: Economics, Government and Politics, and History.

The 17th edition of the *Faculty Handbook* reflects the discontinuation of Faculties, except as a basis for representative distribution on faculty standing committees. As a consequence, the five faculty chairs (Humanities, Performing and Visual Arts, Professional Programs, Sciences, and Social Sciences) have been eliminated and the department heads have been upgraded to the status of department chairs, combining the duties of the faculty chairs with those of the department heads. This change addressed a concern raised in the 2001 self-study that there was confusion about the roles and duties of faculty chairs and department heads under the previous academic structure. This change also eliminated a layer of organization: the departments, which had been grouped under a faculty whose chair reported to the chief academic officer, are now led by department chairs who report directly to the chief academic officer. Another consequence of this change was that the Department Chairs Council (DCC) immediately expanded from five members to 14, and subsequently to its present size of 18. In addition to the department chairs, the Director of the Physician Assistant Program sits on the DCC. In 2009, the Committee of the Whole (COW) voted to shift History from the Social Sciences to the Humanities for the purpose of representation on standing committees. Town meetings (non-voting discussions) have also been added to the slate of meetings (there are at least three COW meetings and one town hall meeting per semester. Town meetings, facilitated by the PBC, provide a venue for faculty members to voice concerns and discuss important issues that may eventually lead to changes and improvements in the College.

Each semester, the President offers a “State of the College” presentation, to which all stakeholders are invited. At these meetings, the President offers a campus-wide update on College

finances and other important institutional developments. These presentations are followed by a “question and answer” session.

C. Faculty Committees Within the System of Shared Governance

Since the last self-study, developments have occurred that impact committees within the system of shared governance. Some of these changes have taken place due to changes in the *Faculty Handbook* or through actions by the Committee of the Whole (COW), while others have come about through practice.

The Priorities and Budget Committee (PBC), established under the 17th edition of the *Faculty Handbook*, is responsible for the following: reviewing the annual operating budget of the College; designing, reviewing, and revising the priorities statement for academic and educational programs with the Provost; reviewing and making recommendations on the Strategic Plan for Academic and Educational Programs; making recommendations to the President and the Provost on resource allocation affecting all educational programs, including departmental budgets, library and information technology, Academic and Cultural Enrichment (ACE), financial aid, student life and fundraising; reviewing all recommendations regarding faculty position requests from APC based on budget and priority concerns; annually nominating a slate of faculty members for election to standing committees and a faculty representative to the Board of Trustees; periodically reviewing and revising the *Faculty Handbook* and forwarding recommendations to the COW; formulating, in collaboration with appropriate administrative officers, a recommended faculty compensation plan and reporting to the COW; monitoring student recruitment, retention, attrition, and other related issues; receiving reports from the Provost regarding workloads and visiting positions, and calling special meetings to discuss important issues when necessary.

There have also been recent changes (in practice) to the Academic Policy Committee (APC). The *Faculty Handbook* establishes the composition of the committees as five voting members (one from each of the faculties) and the Provost and Associate Provost. The meetings are now also regularly attended by the Registrar (who has been attending meetings as a “resource” for the committee since 2001), the Dean of Academic and Career Development, the Assistant Dean of Learning Communities, and the Assistant Dean of Academic Advisement, none of whom has a vote.

There are also non-elected committees whose work may lead to recommendations to elected committees, to the COW, or who may directly advise the President or Provost. Some committees meet regularly and some infrequently. The following are committees not mandated in the *Faculty Handbook* (those in *italics* have been created since the last self-study): *Pre-Health Committee*; *Academic and Cultural Enrichment (ACE) Committee*; *Teacher Education Policy Unit (TEPU)*; *Wagner College Forum for Research Editorial Board*; *The First Year Program Council*; *Intermediate Learning Community Council*; *Senior Learning Communities Council*; *Athletic Advisory Committee*; *Early Childhood Advisory Committee*; *Faculty Library Committee*; *First Year Program Review Committee*; *Faculty Compensation Task Force (ad hoc)*; *Graduate Council*; *Human Experimentation Review Board*; *Pre-Law Committee*; *Expanding Your Horizons Committee*; *Sustainability Committee*; *Diversity Action Council*, and the *Internationalization Action Council*. All of these committees are non-elected and faculty volunteer to participate.

Periodic review and assessment of charges to committees is advisable to insure their usefulness and/or effectiveness.

D. Student Role in Shared Governance

The question from the *Self-Study Design*, “does the College governance system effectively insure that diverse perspectives are given a forum for expression”? presupposes that there exists

policies or practices for including students in institutional governance, and it asks specifically how effective they are. Therefore, an answer to the question should first establish what those policies or practices are, and then evaluate them.

The *Constitution and Bylaws* and employee handbooks, including the *Faculty Handbook*, provide some direction regarding the participation of students in formal decision-making bodies. The bylaws permit the inclusion of students in subcommittees and special committees of the Board of Trustees. The *Faculty Handbook* allows one student to serve as a non-voting member on the Academic Policy Committee, and “When appropriate, two student representatives will be elected/appointed by Student Government” to the Periodic Governance Evaluation Committee. The *Faculty Handbook* also permits participation by non-voting student representatives at departmental meetings. The representatives are to be selected at annual meetings of departmental majors convened by the department chair.

In May 2008, the COW voted to include voting student members on the Academic Honesty Committee.

The *College Constitution and Bylaws* (Art. IV, Sec. 6) state that “The standing committees of the Board may from time to time have such subcommittees as may be authorized by the Board,” and that “Subcommittees may be composed of committee members, Trustees, including Honorary Lifetime Trustees,” College administrators, faculty, staff and/or students. Currently, there are six functioning subcommittees of the Board (Trustee Affairs, Athletics, Strategic Planning, By-Laws, Academic and Student Affairs and Buildings and Grounds). There are presently no student members on any board subcommittee. Several student representatives are present (by invitation) at every meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, though they do not have representation at the full Board of Trustees.

A number of other campus bodies include student members. Two graduate students and two undergraduate students are members of the Diversity Action Council (DAC) and the Internationalization Action Council (IAC). In addition, the *Wagner College Student Handbook*, posted online by the Dean of Campus Life, (www.wagner.edu/campus_life/dean_of_campus_life), describes student participation on boards and councils governing various aspects of student life. These include the National Panhellenic Council, Community Standards Review Board, and the Wagner Campus Activities Board (known as WagCAB). The Community Standards Review Board comprises students who make recommendations to the Dean's Office concerning College Standards of Community Conduct. Other committees on which students serve include the Sustainability Committee and the Parking Appeals Board. Pursuant to the bylaws of the National Alumni Association (NAA), the SGA President is a sitting member of the NAA Board. At the graduate level, the Graduate Student Association is currently inactive.

Two student town hall meetings are held annually, at least one each semester. The meetings, organized by the SGA and attended by the College President and other senior members of the administration, are opportunities for students to bring any issue to the administration's attention. Some of the changes made as a result of these meetings have been the implementation of 24 hour service in the College library (Sunday through Thursday), the introduction of a vegetarian section in the cafeteria, and modification of the shuttle ferry schedule. The SGA President also meets regularly with the College President and Provost. Students observe and occasionally are invited to speak at selected meetings of the faculty, including the COW. At least three departments include students in department meetings (Nursing, Theatre and History). Department chairs often consult informally with students about matters of mutual concern and interest.

E. Does Wagner's Governance Structure Encourage a "Marketplace of Ideas?"

The question asks whether differing points of view are expressed or heard within the institution's governance system. An answer to this question should first establish what forums exist within the governance system in which different points of view might be expressed, then evaluate how effectively the system guarantees that those points of view are indeed expressed.

The College bylaws state that Wagner College “does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, age, handicap, sexual orientation, marital status, or national and ethnic origin in admission, employment, participation in, or administration of any educational program or activity of the College.” The College has expressed a general concern for creating the most inclusive environment possible through the establishment of the Diversity Action Council (DAC), the Internationalization Action Council (IAC), the Center for Intercultural Advancement and sponsorship of campus activities intended to encourage cultural diversity and foster the creation of an inclusive campus climate. Town Meetings are examples of forums for encouraging diversity and varying opinions and voices, as is a campus climate survey that was implemented.

The proceedings of the COW are conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*, with the oversight of an elected parliamentarian. Minutes are taken at each meeting and approved by vote at the following one, and where individual faculty members have moved for correction or supplementation of statements or actions attributed to themselves, the body approves, as appropriate, such amendments to the minutes.

However, the percentage of faculty members attending COW meetings and actively participating in debate appears to be declining. Many faculty members privately complain about the effectiveness and representation of COW discussion. There is a need to reinvigorate the COW as a viable forum for discussion of important College issues and there is a need to review how the COW functions to make it once again an effective venue for such discussion.

A survey of academic department chairs revealed no departmental policies or practices intended specifically to discourage the expression of diverse points of view in departmental governance.

F. The Board of Trustees and Shared Governance

The *Constitution and Bylaws* specifically describe and defines the role and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees. The Constitution states, “Wagner College shall be under the management, direction, dominion and control of a Board of Trustees.” The Board establishes ethical standards and formulates a conflict-of-interest policy. The organizational structure of the Board of Trustees is delineated in the Bylaws, including the executive officers, the standing committees, and the authority to hire the college president. The Board provides oversight and guidance to the senior administration of the College, but does not involve itself in the day-to-day management of the College. The Board takes a leadership role the strategic planning for the College and provides clear and concise direction for the future. The Board, or its Executive Committee, meets almost monthly (10 times per year); an annual retreat is held during the winter Board Meeting.

The Board receives periodic reports from the senior administration and asks questions and provides direction. The Board is fully engaged in the strategic plans for the College. In 2004, the Board approved a strategic plan based on a “SWOT” analysis it had conducted. The Board is presently drafting the College’s new strategic plan. The Board’s committees meet at least four times each year (most meet more frequently). The college administrator assigned to each committee assists in providing information to the committee and in answering questions. The Executive Committee approves all senior administrative appointments.

Over the last three years, the Board has implemented assessment tools to evaluate the performance of the Executive Committee, individual trustees, and the Board as a whole. These

assessment tools were developed by the Trustee Affairs Subcommittee (with assistance from the College administration). The results of the assessments are tabulated by the Secretary to the Board, and the Board uses the information to make changes.

This process appears to be effective. Based upon survey results, new procedures have been developed for selecting committee chairs and the vice chairs. Individual trustees have been approached by the Trustee Affairs Subcommittee about further service on the Board based on the results of the individual surveys and assessments. The Trustee Affairs Subcommittee has created a nominating committee that interviews every trustee to identify interested members for the Executive Committee.

A written assessment tool is used to evaluate the Board's performance, as well as each individual trustee. This tool was created by the Trustee Affairs Subcommittee, based on models used at other institutions. They have been in existence for three years and are conducted annually. The Trustee Affairs Subcommittee, through the Secretary to the Board of Trustees, keeps track of individual attendance records, participation at other campus events, and financial support of the College. Individual committees begin preparation of written goals for the academic year. These goals are then provided to the Executive Committee and the full Board. The committees evaluate their performance as a group and determine whether or not they've been successful in accomplishing these goals for the year.

The trustees are individually evaluated through a two-tiered process. The first process is a self-evaluation. This evaluation is prepared by the trustees and it is designed to highlight strengths and identify areas for improvement. The evaluations are reviewed by the Trustee Affairs Subcommittee and kept by the Secretary of the Board. The Trustee Affairs Subcommittee is charged with reaching out to every Trustee at the end of the academic term to discuss individual

performance and continued service on the Board. The Trustee Affairs Subcommittee makes a recommendation to the Executive Committee as to the future service of a trustee.

There are many open lines of communication between the Board and the college stakeholders. First, the Chair of the Board has a weekly telephone conference with the College President to discuss matters of importance. Second, every member of the executive committee chairs one of the standing committees of the Board and a Vice President is assigned to assist. These individuals have regular conversations and constantly update one another on campus initiatives and committee goals. Third, each Vice President prepares a written report prior to the meetings of the full Board and these reports discuss current activities and highlight key issues. Fourth, the Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees attends meetings of the full Board and of the Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee, where they often provide the faculty perspective on issues facing the College. Fifth, there are instances where various stakeholders, including trustees, come together to consider College policies. A notable example is the Faculty Compensation Task Force, established in 2009, which includes trustees, members of the administration and the faculty. Sixth, many of the trustees are on campus to attend student events, theatre performances, lectures or sports competitions. During these visits they will informally engage faculty, students, parents, alumni and administrators and current information will be shared during these informal gatherings. In addition, many of the trustees will call or “drop by” and visit one of the senior administrators to ask questions or discuss an important issue. All of these formal and informal lines of communication keep the trustees involved and informed.

New trustees are invited to attend trustee orientation, which is held every year before the first Board meeting. There they receive the *Wagner College Trustee Handbook*, which contains information about the college and the importance of being a trustee. Included in this booklet is

information about the college's mission, organization chart, strategic plan, academic calendar, academic programs, a list of current trustees and senior administrators and the history of the College. At orientation, the new board members meet with the senior administrative staff and are briefed on all areas of the college administration. Discussion topics include: the Wagner Plan, academic majors, co-curricular activities, support services, facilities, and the budget. New trustees are given a tour of the campus and an introduction to the strategic plan. Then they meet with fellow trustees to discuss attendance policies, financial contributions, the endowment and conflict of interest policies.

The College president is the chief executive officer of Wagner College and is responsible for all executive, administrative and academic duties in connection with the College. The president is elected by the Board of Trustees and is empowered to lead the College to fulfill its mission, in accordance with the laws of New York State. The Board of Trustees Executive Committee reviews the President's goals and performance determines compensation for the president and senior staff based on College and University Professionals Association for Human Resources (CUPA) data for a group of benchmark institutions.

The President has the authority, with Board approval, to hire senior staff, whom assist him with the management of the College. The senior staff meets on a weekly basis and the president meets with each senior staff member on a weekly, if not daily, basis. During senior staff meetings, the senior administrators discuss issues, resources and other management matters. Decisions that are made during these meetings are either announced directly to the campus community or sent to the Board of Trustees for approval.

CHAPTER 3-ADMINISTRATION (STANDARD 5)

I. Charge to the Subcommittee

Standard 5 - The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research /scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance.

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Organization Chart*
- *Wagner College Constitution and By-Laws*
- *2009-2010 Academic Affairs Goals*
- *Descriptions of Academic and Student Affairs Offices*
- *Provost Council Agendas*

III. Executive Summary

A. Strengths:

- *The ongoing and open communication among the senior staff, the President, the Board of Trustees and the Provost's Council*
- *The annual review, evaluation, and assessment of the President, the senior staff and the Provost's Council*
- *The campus wide inclusivity of constituent voice of the Provost's Council annual goals, the alignment with the institutional mission, and the quarterly updates*
- *The College's commitment to financial support for faculty professional development, scholarly activities and research*
- *Reduction of the faculty teaching load to six courses annually (from eight) to allow for greater attention to non-teaching, college related activities and professional development*
- *The creation of offices and staff to support the innovative activities and initiatives that have enhanced the Wagner Plan*

B. Challenges:

- *The need for greater diversity on the Board of Trustees*
- *Ongoing, sustainable organizational support for teaching, learning and research*
- *The multiple initiatives that have served to enhance the Wagner Plan may seem complex to faculty*

C. Recommendations:

- *Increase diversity among the members of the Board of Trustees*
- *Identify strategies to ensure ongoing financial and human resource commitment to faculty professional development, scholarly activities and research*
- *Include short term and long term goals in the Provost's Council annual goals*

- *Communicate to faculty and students the various initiatives that enhance the Wagner Plan, how they complement one another, and how they are aligned with the Wagner College mission*

HOW DOES THE INSTITUTION'S ADMINISTRATIVE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE SUPPORT THE INSTITUTIONAL MISSION?

The College administration's organizational structure supports the mission of the College, as the organizational design has been developed strategically to support the infrastructure needs, the Wagner Plan, campus life, liberal arts and professional programs.

A. Administration

The composition and leadership of the administration has changed at every level. In 2002, Dr. Richard Guarasci, who had been the College Provost since 1997, was selected by the Board of Trustees to be the 18th President of Wagner College. Over the next several years, key positions were filled: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Business and Administration, and Vice President for Institutional Advancement. Additionally, two new senior level positions were created: Vice President for Enrollment and Strategic Planning and Vice President for Communications. Following the recent death of the Vice President for Business and Administration, a reorganization took place, with the positions of Vice President for Finance (for which there is a national search) and Vice President for Administration (the Chief of Staff assumed this role) being established and the responsibilities of the Chief of Staff being assumed by the Vice President for Communications. These six positions, along with the president, comprise the senior staff. They manage the college on a day-to-day basis while working collaboratively on long term-college strategic planning.

The trustees have implemented a number of policies and procedures that have enhanced their ability to govern. These changes (please see Chapter 2) include: new committees, a new

committee structure, a new orientation program, a board member evaluation process, a systematic revision of the *Wagner College Constitution and Bylaws*, and a commitment to diversifying the Board (the Board recently elected its first female chair).

B. College Organizational Structure

Ultimately, the senior governing body of Wagner College is the Board of Trustees. The Board hires the President and oversees his performance. The President is the chief executive officer of the college and is responsible for the management of the college. The President meets with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees six times per year, as required in the College Bylaws (see Appendix 3-1). The President has weekly telephone and email contact with the Board chair and interacts with members of the Executive Committee throughout the year.

Senior Staff. The President is assisted in the day-to-day governance of the College by the six members of the senior staff: All administrative and faculty offices report to the President or one of the six senior staff officers. The administration is organized according to the Wagner College organizational chart (Appendix 3-2), which lists the reportages and organizational structure among the administrative offices across the campus community and the relationship of the academic departments with the provost.

The senior staff gathers for a two-hour formal policy meeting on a weekly basis. Additional meetings are held as needed. A formal agenda is proposed by the Chief of Staff and minutes of the meetings are prepared and distributed to senior staff. Each week, business items are reviewed from previous meetings to ensure tracking and completion. The vice presidents discuss important issues and activities within their reportages. Day-to-day policy decisions of the college are made during these meetings. (Appendix 3-3 provides a typical agenda and minutes). The president also has individual meetings with every member of the senior staff on a regular, almost daily, basis.

Senior Staff Development. President Guarasci implemented the annual senior staff retreat in June 2004. This two-day, off-campus, strategy session has since expanded to include two additional half-day mini-retreats annually, each designed to address one specific administrative matter per session (see copy of Senior Staff Retreat Agenda – Appendix 3-4).

Other Administrators. The administrative offices of the college are supervised by directors or deans. The title of “director” is for the purely administrative offices of the college, while the title of “dean” is reserved for those who oversee academic or co-curricular functions of the college. Regardless of title, all of the directors and deans report to a member of the senior staff.

C. Participation

Administrators and members of the campus community have the opportunity to participate in the management and decision-making of the college in a variety of avenues.

Campus Wide “State of the College” Meetings. The President holds a campus-wide “State of the College” meeting in the spring and fall semesters to discuss the performance of the college, introduce new campus initiatives and discuss the strategic plan. A question and answer period is always the last part of these meetings. He usually facilitates one faculty “non-business meeting” per semester to address issues of importance to the entire faculty. These usually include concerns around enrollment, tuition, endowment, and compensation

Administrative Department Head Meetings. There are three meetings per semester and one during the summer. These are meetings that are called by the President and every director and dean is expected to attend. An agenda is established and various topics are discussed and debated (A sample agenda is attached as Appendix 3-5).

Provost’s Council. The Provost’s Council includes the Provost’s direct reportages (Appendix 3-6). These reportages include the Senior Associate Provost/Dean of Graduate Programs, Dean of the

Library, Dean of Learning Communities, Director for the Center for Leadership and Service, Dean of Campus Life and Internationalization, Associate Provost for Information Technology, Associate Provost for Assessment and Dean of Academic and Career Development and the Faculty Scholar for Teaching and Learning. The Council also includes three individuals who report to other Vice Presidents: Director for External Programs, Dean of Admissions and Enrollment, and the Associate Director for Athletics (Appendix 3-7, with short descriptions of these offices, articulates how they contribute to the academic excellence of the college). These individuals are included in the Provost's Council because a majority of their responsibilities are directly related to the academic and/or co-curricular programs at the College. The council members meet monthly. Additionally, each council member meets at least bi-weekly with the provost to address relevant, on-going issues. Together, the Council members create a document that outlines annual goals in relation to the mission of the institution. This document is then vetted by the academic department chairs, the faculty, and the Board of Trustees. It is placed on the institutional website and updated four times throughout the academic year. The council members are evaluated by the progress and completion of their stated goals.

Faculty Meetings. The full faculty, in accordance with the *Faculty Handbook*, hold monthly Committee of the Whole (COW) meetings chaired by the Provost as the President's designee. These are considered business meetings. Each meeting includes a Provost's report, reports standing committees, new business, old business and announcements. Proceedings of each meeting are recorded and voted on by the full faculty. (See Appendix 3-8 for a representative agenda and minutes). Faculty have the option of organizing one non-business meeting per semester (attendance is not mandatory). The faculty, through their representatives on the Priorities and Budget Committee (PBC), choose an issue they to discuss in depth. This meeting is organized and

facilitated by the PBC.

Strategic Planning Sessions. The Vice President for Enrollment and Strategic Planning holds regular meetings with members of the campus community, seeking input for the strategic planning process. These meetings are either open to every member of the campus, or are specifically designated for a particular campus constituency (i.e. students or staff).

D. Evaluations

The President's performance is evaluated by the Board on an annual basis. It receives a copy of his goals at the beginning of every academic year and assesses both his qualitative and quantitative outcomes. The President evaluates the senior staff members on an annual basis. They submit their annual goals to the president and receive an assessment of the previous year's performance. The President shares his assessment of his senior staff with the Executive Committee and they discuss compensation for the senior staff. Compensation standards are based on the national data from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources [CUPA]

All other directors and academic deans are evaluated on an annual schedule that is managed by the Director of Human Resources (A copy of the evaluation and assessment form is presented as Appendix 3-9).

HOW DOES THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE SUPPORT CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT FOR FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP, RESEARCH, AND TEACHING?

Wagner College's mission is to "prepare students for life, as well as for careers, by emphasizing scholarship, achievement, leadership, and citizenship. Wagner offers a comprehensive educational program that is anchored in the liberal arts, experiential and co-curricular learning, interculturalism, interdisciplinary studies, and service to society, which is cultivated by a faculty dedicated to promoting individual expression, reflective practice, and integrative learning." (http://www.wagner.edu/strategic_planning/mission_vision).

A. Support of Research and Scholarship:

The administration supports faculty research and scholarship in a number of ways. Direct support includes:

Reduction of Teaching Load: Between 2002 and 2008 the standard teaching load was reduced from eight courses per year to six with the intent of allowing more time for advising, service to the College, scholarship and research.

Sabbaticals: After six years of service, faculty may apply for sabbatical leave, which provides a full semester at full pay or a year at half pay, with the intent of allowing semester-long periods of time for scholarship and research pursuits.

Faculty Aid: Research funds are available to promote completion of terminal degrees, conference presentations, attending short courses, and related pursuits.

Funds for Faculty Research: Funds for faculty research include support for conferences, professional travel and manuscript preparation. During the past three years, the amount of funds available for research support was increased from \$33,000 to \$220,000.

Professional Development Semester (PDS): Any tenure-track faculty member who has participated in the First Year Program for three consecutive years is eligible, with approval from his/her department chair, for a Professional Development Semester. This semester does not supplant a sabbatical, and was created to provide an opportunity for faculty to re-energize and devote uninterrupted time to professional and scholarly development. Because junior faculty are encouraged to participate in the First Year Program, it is a welcomed opportunity to pursue their scholarly agenda, pre-promotion and tenure, when they are not yet eligible for a sabbatical.

In addition to direct support of scholarship and research, the administration provides these supports to faculty:

Faculty Grants Coordinator: A position created in 2007, the faculty grants coordinator is a tenured faculty member whose time is partially dedicated to assisting faculty members with all facets of federally funded grants; conducting grant writing workshops and grant circles (See Appendix 3-10 for chart identifying granting agencies, activities, and amount funded).

Associate Dean of the Faculty. A position created in the fall of 2003, the associate dean of the faculty is a tenure-track faculty member whose time is partially dedicated to overseeing programs that support and sustain faculty scholarship and faculty development: These programs include:

- Scholarship Circles (cross-disciplinary research groups). These year-long faculty learning communities provide faculty members assistance with individual scholarship endeavors.
- NYU Faculty Resource Network, which gives Wagner faculty members access to NYU's libraries, the opportunity to audit courses and attend faculty seminars offered by NYU professors).
- Faculty Forums, at which individual faculty present their research.
- Programs recognizing faculty scholarship (receptions honoring faculty who have published books and the display of faculty publications at an annual Faculty Awards Dinner.

In addition, the Associate Dean coordinates activities that build faculty "community" and enhance faculty quality of life, which indirectly support scholarship and teaching at the college:

These include;

- New faculty orientation.
- A mentoring program that matches incoming full-time faculty with mentors outside their departments to help them succeed at the college.
- Support of adjunct faculty to integrate them into the life of the college by improving communication and providing them with teaching and learning support.

Scholarship (whether traditional or publically engaged) is important not only for the advancement of knowledge but also for the advancement of teaching. Wagner has several entities and positions that support teaching and learning:

The Dean and Associate Dean for Learning Communities, established in 2003. These positions have the responsibility and authority to oversee the three major learning communities (First Year Program, Intermediate Learning Communities, Senior Learning Communities), serving as the

liaisons between the faculty, the students, and the community agencies that provide the required experiential learning placements for the Freshman (FLC) and Senior Learning Communities (SLC) components of the Wagner Plan (http://www.wagner.edu/experiential_learning/). As these programs have grown and developed, reorganization has been necessary to provide the better support for experiential learning, resulting in the establishment of The Center for Leadership and Service. Experiential learning that involves civic engagement is supported by this newly created unit.

The Center for Teaching, Learning and Research, established in the spring of 2009, houses resources for all full-time and part-time faculty members to assist them with teaching, learning and research. This center has a dedicated space in the lower level of the library.

Faculty Scholar for Teaching and Learning, a position created in the fall of 2009, is held by a tenure-track faculty member whose time is partially dedicated to assisting faculty members with teaching, learning and related scholarship. This includes mid-semester diagnostics in the classroom, one-on-one meetings to discuss teaching issues and concerns and share best teaching practices with faculty, organizing faculty learning communities on teaching and learning (where faculty members meet once a month to develop their own research on a topic related to their teaching and student learning and provide feedback on each other's teaching projects), and moderating "Teaching Matters" luncheon sessions. One area where the faculty scholar could play a larger role is in working with faculty to conduct assessment of student learning. This should be done in conjunction with the learning communities and the individual academic departments.

HOW ARE THE OFFICES OF THE PROVOST'S COUNCIL SUPPORTIVE OF THE MISSION AND THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE INSTITUTION?

In 2004, the Board of Trustees approved the Wagner College Strategic Plan, which focused on four major areas, with specific goals within each area: (1) Academic Excellence, (2) Facilities Improvement, (3) Improving Institutional Reputation, and (4) Financial Stability. Of these,

“Academic Excellence” falls within the purview of the Provost’s office, and therefore the responsibility of the Provost’s Council. The Strategic Plan specifies the following goals of academic excellence: (1) Deepen the Wagner Plan, (2) Support Faculty Development, (3) Increase Diversity, (4) Expand Educational Technology, (5) Internationalize Programs, (6) Increase Civic Commitment, (7) Expand and Improve Graduate Programs, and (8) Adjust Compensation to Meet National Benchmarks (http://www.wagner.edu/strategic_planning/).

The Associate Provost for Assessment and Dean of Academic and Career Development, the Associate Dean for Learning Communities, and the Director for the Center for Leadership and Service together address goals 1 and 6, the Associate Dean of the Faculty and the Faculty Scholar for Teaching and Learning both address goal 2, the Associate Provost for Information Technology addresses goal 4, and the Dean of Campus Life and Internationalization addresses goals 3 and 5. The Associate Provost for Academic Affairs addresses goal 7 as the Chair of the Graduate Council and facilitator of the Graduate Programs Strategic and Marketing Plans. The Provost addresses goal 8 as the Chairs of the Faculty Compensation Task Force, comprising three faculty members, two members of the Board of Trustees, and two additional members of the administration.

The Provost’s Council is mission driven, non-competitive, collegial, and oriented toward problem-solving (See Appendix 3-11 for examples of the monthly agenda). The Provost’s Council identifies tactical objectives and ensures that all areas of academic excellence specified in the strategic plan are addressed. The process employed by the Provost’s Council, in designing an annual tactical objectives document is intentional, systematic, and transparent (www.wagner.edu/provost/goals_2009-2010).

The ongoing assessment of this document provides the following: transparency in process, accountability for each member and department of the Provost’s Council, continued focus on the

College's mission and strategic plan and, a common document from which to discuss activities and objectives.

Developed first for the academic year 2004-2005, the annual tactical objectives document continues to serve a strategic function. All documents are available on the Wagner website, allowing viewers to compare the progress of annual goals for the previous years. The goals are designed to be as measurable as possible, facilitating further clarity and accountability. The annual goals of the Office of Academic Affairs for the Academic Years 2006-07 through 2010-2011 constitute Appendix 3-12 of this Self-Study.

HOW DOES THE COLLEGE'S ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE SUPPORT THE GOALS, ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES OF THE WAGNER PLAN?

The three primary components of the Wagner Plan are the freshman, intermediate, and senior learning communities.

A. Freshman Learning Community (FLC):

Participation in a freshman learning community [FLC] is required for all entering freshmen. The FLC introduces the students to the academic program and acclimates them to the College. The administration provides significant support to faculty teaching in FLCs through the following programs and services:

The First Year Program [FYP] Retreat- An annual two-day, off-campus retreat offering workshops on topics such as writing, syllabus-creation, and intercultural awareness.

FYP Orientation- The First Year Program faculty hold a 90-minute organizational meeting immediately prior to freshman orientation. They also hold a first meeting with the students in their Reflective Tutorial (RFT).

FYP Meetings- The FYP faculty meet monthly to discuss issues specific to the FLCs. Additionally, the First Year Program Review Committee (FYPRC) meets regularly to make policy

recommendations to the larger FYP body and to the full faculty body.

FYP Writing Workshops- The Director of the Writing and Peer Tutoring Center facilitates workshops for faculty entering the program for the first time and assists them with writing assessment, peer writing exercises, grading and other issues.

Writing-Intensive Tutors (WITs)- Each FLC is supported by a Writing-Intensive WIT, who is available to come to the classroom to assist with matters such as peer editing and documentation style.

Writing and Peer Tutoring Center - Faculty members encourage students to utilize the writing center, where they can work with WITs.

The Library-Library personnel are available to assist students with basic research techniques and introduce them to databases. Students can use the services of RITs (Research Intensive Tutors) to help with research or documentation questions.

Academic and Cultural Enrichment (ACE)-ACE, which is discussed in Chapter 10, often brings speakers and programs that match themes of FLCs. When such events take place, the students enrolled in the relevant FLCs attend and the event is often discussed at subsequent class meetings.

B. Intermediate Learning Community (ILC):

Faculty teaching in the intermediate learning community [ILC] are supported by an ILC Faculty Committee that convenes twice each semester. Each department is represented by a liaison to the ILC Faculty. The ILC Coordinator, who is elected from among the faculty, works closely with the Dean and Associate Dean of Learning Communities to establish the goals for the year. S/he also facilitates meetings and coordinates an ILC executive committee (known as the ILC Review Committee), which assists with policy-making and makes recommendations to the larger ILC body and the full faculty body.

The Associate Dean of Learning Communities and the ILC Coordinator help connect faculty

who wish to team teach or co-teach in the ILCs (a maximum of three team-taught ILCs per year is permitted). They also ensure that an adequate number of ILCs are offered each term; scheduled in appropriate time periods of the day/week.

C. Senior Learning Community (SLC):

The Senior Learning Community (SLC) Council includes the Dean/Associate Dean of Learning Communities, a faculty member from each academic department, and an elected Coordinator from among the faculty. As with the FYP and the ILC, the SLC Coordinator serves a 3-year term and presides over all meetings, in coordination with the Dean and Associate Dean of Learning Communities. The SLC Council meets three times a semester to discuss issues specific to SLC faculty and students.

The Center for Academic and Career Development (CACD) helps place seniors in internships to fulfill their 100-hour experiential learning requirement. It also provides services such as mock interviews, résumé and cover letter support, and career advice to help seniors with their transition to a professional career or to graduate school.

At the close of each academic year, senior students present projects or theses at public campus events. The WITS and library staff are available to provide support for thesis writing.

D. General Support for Teaching:

Wagner College provides administrative support to improve teaching pedagogy for all full- and part-time faculty:

Monthly “Teaching Matters” lunches, facilitated by the faculty scholar for teaching and learning, focusing on such topics as the use of course management programs for teaching, critical literacy, and addressing bias in the college classroom.

Focus on Faculty, an annual event held the week before the fall semester, challenging faculty to

reflect on their roles as teachers and emphasizing useful pedagogical strategies, with attention to themes such as internationalization, student retention, and the renewal of meaning in faculty work.

All-Campus Symposium. A day and a half event designed to improve communication between different campus constituencies and devoted to explaining the Wagner Plan's focus on integrative and applied learning.

Civic Innovations, a program originally funded by the Corporation for National Service and by Learn and Serve America and overseen on campus by the Center for Leadership and Service (<http://www.learnandserve.gov>), providing ongoing support for faculty who teach in designated Civic Innovations courses.

Campus Compact, an organization with which the College is affiliated, providing support for individualized course design directed toward community-based learning.

Project Pericles Consortium, an organization with which the College is affiliated. Wagner College's association with Project Pericles has served to position Wagner within the national dialogue on education for social responsibility and participatory citizenship as an essential part of education in the classroom, on the campus, and in the community; allowing the College to enhance curricular and co-curricular engagement with outcomes and activities that serve to further Wagner students' dedication to civic commitment and the creation of a more democratic society.

In sum, the Wagner administration actively supports the pedagogical goals of the Wagner Plan. It has made the following organizational changes over the last five years to improve the coordination of the plan:

- The formation of the First Year Program Review Committee to assess the performance of the FYP.
- The addition of the Center for Leadership and Service, with a Director of Leadership and Service.
- The creation of the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research and a faculty scholar for teaching and learning.
- The appointment of an associate provost for assessment.

- The integration of the previously separate advising group and the career development group into the Center for Academic and Career Development.
- The provision of an administrative budget for faculty and student work associated with the Wagner Plan.
- The introduction of an innovative co-curricular program to support the Wagner Plan.

Though the College has been thoughtful and strategic in creating and supporting initiatives that enhance the Wagner Plan, the challenge is to communicate clearly and consistently how the initiatives complement one another, align with the mission of the institution, and benefit the institution at large.

HOW DOES THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE SUPPORT THE INSTITUTION'S GOVERNANCE?

Within the past seven years, Wagner College has experienced a renewed commitment to shared governance. Overall, management style has shifted from a traditional centralized, top down, system to one that is broad-based and encourages members from the entire campus community to have a voice in strategic planning. In concert with this shift is the full engagement of the Board of Trustees. The current Board has played a more pivotal role in sculpting the vision of the College and articulating strategic priorities than it has in the past.

A. The Board of Trustees

Board Responsibilities. All power and authority of the Wagner College Board of Trustees is granted through the College's *Constitution and Bylaws* (Appendix 3-1). The Board of Trustees exercises overall management of the fiscal, fiduciary and educational integrity of the institution. The Board reviews policies, as well as appoints the president of the college, approving all appointments for senior staff, such as all vice presidents and chief executive appointments. The board approves the annual budget (as submitted by the president), monitors revenues and expenditures monthly, and compares the current year's operating budget with the current year's "actuals;" it is apprised of any significant personnel additions and departures. The board

oversees the investment of endowment funds, reviews and approves all academic and other curricular changes, approves all building projects, approves the master plan, and establishes the educational philosophy and objectives of the strategic plan. The Board also approves granting of tenure and promotion of faculty.

Organization of the Board. The *Wagner College Constitution and Bylaws* mandates 34 members on the Board of Trustees. Currently, there are 27 voting members; an additional 10 members are non-voting lifetime trustees. A non-voting representative of the faculty is invited to attend a portion of the meeting of the Board and provides input from the faculty perspective. The Board consists of the following officers: a Chair, a Vice-Chair; a Treasurer; and a Secretary. Elected members may serve four consecutive three-year terms.

Board Management. The full Board meets at least four times per year. The meeting agendas are set by the College President with the Chair of the Board and are a combination of business meetings and strategy sessions. Information packets are distributed in advance, including minutes of past meetings. All Board committees are provided updated reports by the appropriate Vice Presidents; the President reports on recent campus activities, and both new and old business are addressed. The Executive Committee meets an additional six times per year and is charged with acting in place of the full Board. The Executive Committee includes the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, chairs of the standing board committees, two at-large members and the College President.

The Board, in February 2009, implemented an annual full board retreat to review issues, discuss strategic planning and develop a closer working relationship with one another. This off-campus meeting has been an important next step in the Board's development as an effective governing body and was a result of the assessment of the Board's efficiency and effectiveness.

Board Diversity. The Board has broadened its gender diversity since the last Middle States Review. Currently the Board consists of 18 males and eight females. Last year, the first female chair was elected. Still, the need for greater demographic diversity remains a central goal for the upcoming year. The Board has charged the Trustee Affairs Subcommittee with identifying potential new Board candidates from underrepresented demographic groups.

Board Orientation. The Board implemented an extensive orientation program approximately six years ago. The new Board members attend an orientation program that include: conversations with every vice president; a review of the College's financial statements; and a brief history of the College. The new Trustees also receive instruction on academic programs, student life, and College resources and finances. New members are mentored by experienced Board members and are counseled on the expectations of all Board members.

At the first full Board meeting of the year, all Trustees receive the *Trustee Handbook* (Appendix 3-13), which provides the Trustees with information about the College, committee assignments, and upcoming events. The College also publishes the *Trustee Directory*, which is an internal document that outlines the biography of each Trustee.

Trustee Nominations. It is the responsibility of every Trustee to seek out individuals who may qualify to serve on the Board. Anyone who has identified a potential candidate submits the person's name to the Trustee Affairs Subcommittee. In conjunction with the college president, the Trustee Affairs Committee interviews the candidate and considers his/her candidacy. All nominations are reviewed in light of the particular qualifications of nominees and the specific needs of the College. The Trustee Affairs Subcommittee brings candidate names to the Executive Committee and then the full Board for approval.

Trustee Committees. In addition to the Executive Committee, the standing committees of the

Board are the: Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee; Audit Committee, Business and Finance Committee, Investment Committee; and Institutional Advancement Committee. The Board also has subcommittees that report through the standing committees. These subcommittees cover: Athletics; Bylaws; Enrollment & Strategic Planning, and Trustee Affairs (Executive Committee), and Buildings & Grounds (Business & Finance). All of these committees and subcommittees provide a communication link between the Trustees and the various parts of the campus community. The committees and subcommittees are authorized by the bylaws to have non-trustees as members of the committees. This could include faculty, alumni, students, and parents, friends of the college and lifetime trustees. From time to time, the board appoints a special committee or an ad hoc committee to deal with a specific issue or dilemma. The Special Committee on Technology, the Faculty Compensation Task Force, and the Nominating Committee are recent examples. A non-voting faculty member, elected by his/her peers, attends the Academic Affairs and Student Life subcommittee. This faculty member also provides faculty feedback at each full Board meeting.

Performance Assessment. The Board has made great strides to improve its internal procedures and assess its own effectiveness over the last several years. Examples of improvements are:

- The orientation program has become more formalized.
- The *Trustee Handbook* and directory have been created and published.
- There is a Trustee page on the Wagner website.
- The Trustees have implemented a formal assessment process to measure both individual and Board performance. (See Appendix 3-14 for this form.)

The assessment tools were modeled after examples from other colleges and universities, but tailored for the Wagner College Board. The assessment results were tabulated by the Secretary to the Board of Trustees. The Trustee Affairs Subcommittee was charged with examining the results and recommending changes to the full Board. While the assessment analysis confirmed the Trustees' commitment and dedication to the College, there were areas cited for improvement.

Recommended steps have been taken to improve policies and procedures. These include revision of the election process for committee chairs, the creation of a nominating committee to identify candidates for the Executive Committee, and interviews of non-participating Trustees to determine their interest in continued participation on the Board.

New Initiatives. Trustee *esprit de corps* is very high and the Board continues to attract enthusiastic new members. The Board of Trustees continues to demonstrate its strong commitment to the College through its financial contributions, as well as ideas for the betterment of the institution. The Trustees are participating in the revision of the strategic plan, the rewriting of the campus master plan, and they have embarked on an aggressive campaign to consider alternative funding sources for the annual budget.

CHAPTER 4-ENROLLMENT, ADMISSIONS, PUBLISHED MATERIALS (STANDARD 8)

I. Charge to the Subcommittee

Standard 8 - The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of student's educational goals.

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Admissions, Registrar and Academic Advisement files*
- *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reports*
- *Common Data Sets information*
- *NSSE Data*
- *FSSE Data*

III. Executive Summary

A. Strengths

- *Wagner continues to significantly increase the geographic diversity of its student body, increasingly drawing students from states outside the Northeast as well as outside the United States.*
- *Wagner continues to increase the racial diversity of its student body by attracting students from underrepresented populations and retaining these students at the same rate as Caucasian students.*
- *There has been a steady and significant increase in the average high school G.P.A. of students who choose to come to Wagner.*
- *Wagner has garnered increased recognition and reputation growth in admissions markets and beyond*
- *Wagner has continued to recruit quality students while maintaining a tuition discount rate in the mid 30% range*
- *Graduate student enrollment has grown steadily over the past five years.*

B. Challenges

- *We need to improve our retention rate for all students.*
- *We must develop strategies to better retain students who are characterized by a B-average or lower high school and college G.P.A.*
- *Anecdotal evidence suggests that as Wagner seeks to recruit an increasingly diverse student body it must recognize the role of need-based grant aid in retention of those students initially recruited.*
- *Data on Student Success Seminars, the early alert system, transfer request interviews, and retention focus groups must be consolidated, analyzed and generally disseminated to ensure that the best long term retention policies are implemented.*
- *It has been challenging to maintain consistency and currency of information across the College website.*
- *The Center for Academic and Career Development does not have broad awareness and is not used deeply throughout the Wagner community*
- *There is no consistency in Wagner communications effort or product*

- *Our current database makes gathering and analyzing these data difficult*

C. Recommendations

- *To effectively address challenges in admission and retention, the College must better understand patterns and trends in student demographic and performance data, as well as why students choose to come to Wagner and why those who leave do so. Such analysis requires a single database in which all information pertaining to students is recorded. Currently, much of this information is unavailable, available only in paper form or available as aggregate digital data, in non-comparable formats. As many of these data are sensitive, each office (Financial Aid, Admissions, Academic Advisement, and Registrar) should access a single database with internally consistent coding. The anticipated installation of the JICS network system in 2011 is intended to provide the support necessary to commence this process.*
- *It is recommended that research and further analysis of the characteristics of the highlighted “at risk” students are needed to determine potential patterns of why they are leaving and to develop a recruitment and retention plan to address each “at risk” group. This includes using the National Student Clearinghouse or in-house records of final transcript mailings to track the institutions to which students transfer.*
- *The College needs to establish a formal line of communication between advisors conducting student transcript requests interviews in the Center for Academic and Career Development and the Financial Aid Office/Appeals Committee to proactively assist students with demonstrated financial need by securing additional funding when available.*
- *The College needs to move toward an online version of the Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin that can be updated and revised on a more frequent basis. This would allow for faster error correction, and would provide greater accessibility to both current and prospective students. A point person should be identified for each department or office, to be responsible for updating online information.*
- *The College needs to identify a way to maintain consistent and current information throughout the College website and across documents representing the College*

ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION

A. Admissions

In accordance with our mission, the College seeks to attract and retain students with an aptitude for scholarship and achievement, and a commitment to leadership and citizenship. This means, among other things, attracting a geographically and demographically diverse student body with a high grade point average (G.P.A.).

To attract students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with the vision of the College, particularly as expressed in our use of learning communities and experiential learning, the

College purchases the names of high school juniors who mention interests in areas such as service learning, internships, and global education in their self-profiles. Students with appropriate academic and interest criteria, such as small residential college in or near a large city, are also identified as likely candidates for admission.

The Office of Admissions works closely with the Athletics Department in the recruitment of student-athletes. Consistent with the mission of the College, the Admissions Office and the Athletics Department are committed to recruiting students from underrepresented groups. The student-athletes comprise approximately 23% of the overall student population, one of the highest percentages in Division I sports. During the academic year, the Dean of Admissions meets at least once a week with the Associate Athletic Director to discuss the applications of student-athletes, and all student-athletes must meet the academic requirements set by the college. The Admissions Office, in conjunction with the Athletics Department, has made a conscious effort to increase racial, ethnic and geographic diversity among the student-athlete population. Over the past 10 years, the Admissions Office has targeted key territories in the Northeast for recruiting underrepresented students. Additionally, the Athletics Department has recruited international student-athletes (South Africa, Benin Republic, Canada, Brazil, the Bahamas, Australia and Great Britain).

College publications, in particular the *Viewbook*, emphasize the Wagner Plan. In addition, the College encourages admissions counselors to emphasize the Wagner Plan when they are recruiting and interviewing potential students.

B. Retention

To understand patterns in the College's enrollment and retention, and thus identify areas in which we are meeting our goals and areas in which we are not, data were collected and analyzed for three first-year classes: 2001, 2004, and 2007. These data were drawn from a variety of records

maintained by the Admissions, Registrar and Academic Advisement offices. Aggregate data from 2004-2008 were abstracted from the Common Data Set, available on Wagner's website (http://www.wagner.edu/institutional_research/). Finally, data from an online, student-designed opinion survey were included in this analysis. Summary statistics and univariate analysis identified a number of important variables of interest across these diverse data sources. These patterns were further explored through logistic regression analysis of the 2001, 2004, and 2007 class database.

THE STUDENT BODY

The number of enrolled first-year students (those who registered for at least one semester), has varied in the past 10 years from a low of 483 in 2010 to a high of 519 (2001, 2009). Wagner has continued to increase the diversity of its student body. The fall, 2001 freshman class, included students from 24 states, the District of Columbia, Russia, and Germany. In fall, 2004, our first-year students were drawn from 28 states, Canada, Germany, Japan, and Korea. In 2007, there were students from 26 states, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Britain and Pakistan in the first-year class. Not only has the range of places from which Wagner attracts students broadened, but the number of students from outside New York and the Northeast has significantly increased (Table 1, $\chi^2 p = .000$).

Table 1: Enrolled Students by State or Region of Residence (Percentage of Total Enrollment)

	2000*	2001	2004	2007
New York	54.0	48.4	44.6	45.3
New Jersey	17.0	21.9	21.5	22.3
Middle Atlantic+	7.0	8.1	6.5	1.2
New England#	16.0	14.3	17.2	16.9
Other States	6.0	6.9	9.4	13.1
International	0	0.4	0.8	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*From Wagner College Middle States Self-Study, 2001

+Middle Atlantic states defined as Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

#New England states are Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Unfortunately, students from outside the Northeast are significantly more likely to withdraw from Wagner than are students from within the region ($\chi^2 p=.000$). It is unclear why students from outside the region are less likely to remain at Wagner, a phenomenon the College should examine as part of its retention efforts.

The increased diversity of Wagner’s student body can also be seen by the number of students from underrepresented groups who enroll. The increase of first-year students between 2001 and 2009 has been significant ($\chi^2 p=.000$). (Table 2).

Table 2: Racial Self-Identification of Enrolled First-Year Students

	2001		2004		2007		2009	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Non-white	51	9.8	74	15.1	69	13.9	82	15.8
White	425	81.9	367	75.1	363	72.9	356	69.6
Unknown	43	8.3	48	9.8	66	13.3	81	15.6
Total	519	100.0	489	100.0	498	100.0	519	100.0

The significant increase in the percentage of non-white students can be attributed to efforts by the Admissions staff to recruit qualified students from underrepresented racial groups, which is consistent with the College’s commitment to diversity. It should be noted that, at almost 16 percent, the proportion of entering diverse students is higher than at many of our peer institutions, which average 11-12 percent of their first-year students.

Finally, the proportion of student-athletes the College enrolls has remained consistent across the four benchmark years noted in Table 2 (26%, 25%, 26%, and 24%). We are significantly more likely to retain students who are athletes, and significantly less likely to retain non-athletes

($x^2p=.031$). However, data from the student survey (described below) indicate that athletes are, on average, less satisfied with their Wagner College experience than their non-athlete counterparts.

A. Student Preparedness

The average high school G.P.A. of incoming students has steadily and significantly increased from 2001 to 2007 (TABLE 3 and Figure 1: ANOVA $p=.000$, Sheffe test shows all means to be significantly different at 0.05). This may reflect an increase in preparedness, or may reflect a nationwide trend in grade inflation.

TABLE 3: Mean and Median High School Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) of First-year Enrolled Students

	2001	2004	2007
N	519	489	498
Mean	86.04	86.95	87.77
Median	86.00	87.10	88.00
Std. Deviation	5.01	4.80	5.26
Minimum	71.60	67.90	73.10
Maximum	99.30	98.80	100.00

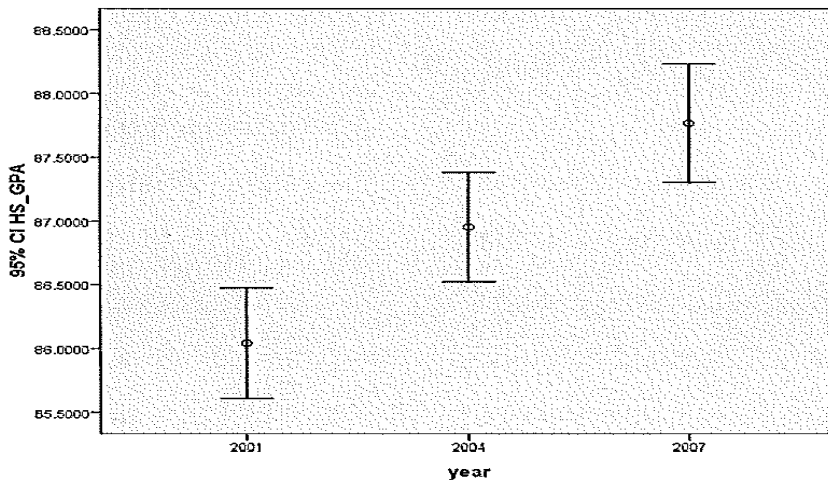


Figure 1: 95% confidence intervals for mean high school GPA by year

Students grouped by their Wagner outcome are characterized by statistically significant differences in average high school G.P.A.s (Table 4: ANOVA $p=.000$, Sheffe test shows all means to be significantly different at 0.05). Students who enrolled in 2007 and were retained (as of fall 2008), and so were expected to graduate (condition 4), had the highest high school G.P.A. Students who enrolled in 2001 and 2004 and graduated (condition 1) have the second highest high school G.P.A. average. This difference is likely a result of the overall increase in average high school G.P.A. discussed above. Students who withdrew from Wagner (condition 2) are characterized by a significantly lower high school grade point average than students who were retained (conditions 1 and 4). Students who withdrew with prejudice (condition 3 - students who were expelled or were suspended for academic or disciplinary reasons and did not return.) had the lowest average high school G.P.A.

Table 4: Enrolled Student Mean and Median High School Grade Point Average

	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3*	Condition 4
Students with GPA	644	462	55	331
Students with no GPA	5	7	0	0
Mean	87.25	86.21	81.04	88.25
Median	87.40	86.00	81.60	88.10
Std. Deviation	4.69	5.16	3.59	5.05
Minimum	71.60	67.90	73.00	74.50
Maximum	99.30	98.30	89.80	103.00

*condition 3 includes students who were expelled, or were suspended for academic or disciplinary reasons and did not return.

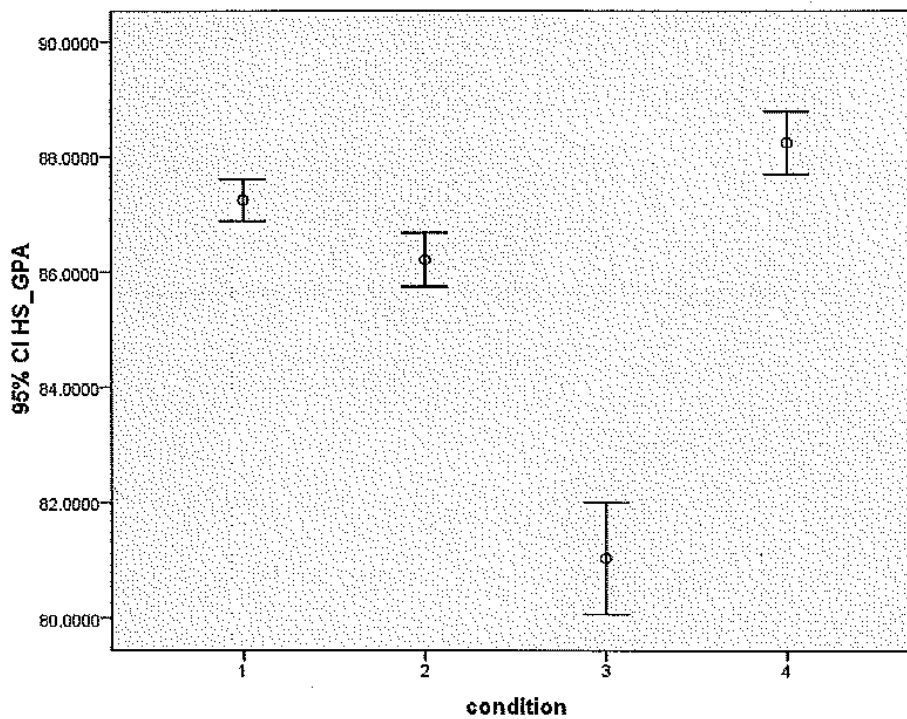


Figure 2: 95% confidence intervals for mean high school GPA

This pattern suggests that high school G.P.A. is a strong predictor of college graduation. This assertion is further supported by analysis of current or graduating Wagner G.P.A. and Wagner graduation outcome. Students who enrolled in 2001 and 2004 and graduated (condition 1), and

students who enrolled in 2007 and were retained (condition 4) are characterized by nearly identical average Wagner G.P.A.s (Table 5; ANOVA $p=.000$. The Sheffe test shows all means except condition 1 and 4 to be significantly different at 0.05). Students who withdrew from Wagner (condition 2) exhibit significantly lower average G.P.A.. Students who withdrew with prejudice (condition 3) had the lowest average G.P.A..

Table 5: Enrolled Student Average Graduating or Current Wagner Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)

	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4
Students with GPA	649	469	55	331
Mean	3.29	2.73	1.56	3.29
Median	3.35	3.00	1.63	3.35
Std. Deviation	.43	1.02	.68	.46
Minimum	2.02	0.00	0.00	1.67
Maximum	4.00	4.00	3.08	4.00

It appears that the majority of students who withdraw from Wagner had a B or lower average G.P.A. in both high school and Wagner. While these students do have lower G.P.A.s, most of these students are academically prepared and succeeding at Wagner before they withdraw. The loss of these students is a challenge for the College. It is important to determine why these students choose to leave, so that the problem can be addressed. Toward this end, during the summer of 2008, the Center for Academic and Career Advisement (CACD) instituted a new protocol for students who request transcripts. Student must participate in a “transcript request interview” before their transcripts are released. This helps the students express their thinking about leaving the school and helps the College identify patterns. In addition, student interviews are being conducted with students who remain enrolled to more fully understand how to keep students connected to the College.

B. Logistic Regression

To better understand the patterns of student retention, a preliminary logistic regression analysis was performed with 2001, 2004, and 2007 count data, modeling the probability of student withdrawal from Wagner. Analysis indicates (Appendix 4-1) that the general results from the univariate analysis hold up under the modeling procedure: state of origin and academic achievement (in high school and at Wagner) are the most significant factors associated with withdrawal “without prejudice” (students who most likely transfer to other institutions, as opposed to those who are expelled or who do not return after suspension). Ethnicity (split as white/non-white), gender, and athletic participation do not appear to be significantly associated with retention in these models, and as the parameter estimates for these variables are characterized by low standard errors, the assumption is that they are stable—in other words, having relatively fewer non-white students is not causing the model to over- or underestimate the effect of ethnicity.

The major finding of the modeling procedure is that the most significant variables associated with withdrawal may have a modifying effect on one another. For example, “B” students from New Jersey, “C” students from New England, and “C” students from other regions may be particularly vulnerable to attrition. While these results should be considered preliminary, they help illuminate the types of characteristics of vulnerable students that need to be the focus of more significant data collection and analysis, both qualitative and quantitative.

C. Financial Aid and Scholarships

Detailed tables describing student applications for and awards of financial aid are available in Appendix 4-2, where key points of interest from the aggregate data are summarized. The amount of aid given as percentage of defined need increased marginally between 2004 and 2008 (71 to 74%). The size of the average financial aid package (including self-help such as subsidized loans, work study, etc., but excluding unsubsidized loans and private loans) given during the same period has

increased overall (\$14,931 to \$19,767 – an increase of 32%) as tuition increased (\$25,350 to \$30,900 – an increase of 22%). Grant-based aid, however, has remained flat (\$11,941 to \$11,797), which represents a substantial rise in the students' responsibility for increased tuition and other expenses.

Additionally, the number of students receiving non-need based financial awards increased between 2004 and 2008 (128 to 158 – an increase of 23%), and the average size of these grants increased (though not in a linear manner—see appendices) from \$17,496 to \$20,117 (an increase of 15%). As Wagner re-evaluates its overall strategy for retaining students it should take these trends into account, although as stated earlier there is not enough individual-level statistical data to conclude what overall impact these financial aid patterns have on the retention of students. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, as Wagner seeks to recruit an increasingly diverse student body, it must recognize the role of need-based grant and/or scholarship aid in retention of those students initially recruited.

As part of the recommendation for a single database to track all individual student information from application to graduation withdrawal, the database should include detailed, individual-level financial aid award data, if the College wishes to analyze the effectiveness of financial aid funding in retaining students. There may surely be other reasons for withdrawal other than financial need.

D. Transfer Students

Transfer student data were analyzed for the same benchmark years as incoming student data (2001, 2004, and 2007, Appendix 4-3). The number of transfer students varied greatly: 40, 105, and 42, respectively. As with incoming first-year students, there was a temporal increase in the proportion of female transfer students (47.5%, 63.8% and 64.3%, respectively). However, this increase is not statistically significant ($\chi^2 p=.169$), nor is the sex ratio of transfer students significantly different than the sex ratio of incoming first year students ($\chi^2 p=.973$).

Transfer students are drawn from a variety of geographic areas (Appendix 4-4). Given the small number of transfer students from abroad, the Middle Atlantic, and New England, these groups were combined for statistical analysis. Across the three years there is no significant difference in the regions from which the transfer students were drawn when compared with incoming first-year students. However, it appears that transfer students as a group are significantly more likely to be from New York than are incoming first year students.

There are no significant differences across the three years in the number of students from underrepresented groups who transfer to Wagner when compared with incoming first-year students (Appendix 4-5). Interestingly, transfer students as a group, are significantly more likely to be non-white than are incoming first year students.

Examination of retention patterns reveals no significant differences between transfer and incoming first-year students. As previously found, transfer students who have graduated (condition 1) and those who have been retained and are expected to graduate (condition 4) are characterized by similar Wagner G.P.A.s. Transfer students who later withdrew from Wagner (condition 2) are characterized by significantly lower average Wagner G.P.A. (ANOVA $p=.000$, Sheffe test shows all means except condition 1 and 4 to be significantly different at 0.05). Finally, transfer status is not a significant predictor of retention, as these students do not differ significantly from incoming first year students ($\chi^2 p=.614$).

E. Retention of Academically Underperforming Students

At the end of each semester the Academic Review Committee (ARC) meets to examine the transcripts of undergraduate and graduate students achieving below the level of good standing (below 2.0 for undergraduates, below 3.0 for graduates). Undergraduate students are placed on academic probation, suspended, or expelled; graduate students are given either a warning, suspended, or

expelled. Table ARC (Appendix 4-5) provides a summary of the actions taken over the past seven years, and shows a consistent pattern of student performance. Overall, the vast majority of students at Wagner College are in good academic standing, and the proportion of students who are not in good standing has been declining.

Students who are placed on academic probation are given a set of activities to carry out during their time on probation, and the ultimate measure of success is whether they achieve good academic standing after their probationary semester is complete. Students who are making progress toward good standing but have not reached it in one semester usually continue on academic probation, and are given another set of activities to accomplish. These activities include meeting with an advisor in the Center for Academic and Career Development (either the Dean, Associate Dean, or Assistant Dean), following up with a faculty advisor, seeking peer tutoring for content-specific subject matter and/or working with the Writing Intensive Tutors (WITs), repeating a course or courses where necessary, and attending a number of Student Success Seminars (students on probation for the first time are required to attend five seminar workshops during a semester; students who continue on probation must attend eight seminars (workshops). The seminars cover such topics as goal setting, time management, study skills, healthy lifestyles, money management, resume writing, and job search etiquette. In addition to these topics, students may choose to participate in mock-interviews, student-alumni networking events, an academic major exploration fair, or other campus lectures or events. When the need is indicated, students are referred to Counseling Services.

Beginning in the fall of 2006, the Office of Academic Advisement initiated Student Success Seminars, targeting students deemed to be academically “at risk.” The grades of students on probation and the number of units attempted and earned are tracked and students’ attendance at the Student Success Seminars is monitored. Although students are required to attend either five or eight

workshops, not all of them comply fully. Preliminary data comparing students who attend all, some, or none of the seminars suggest that participation has a positive effect on both grade point average and the number of academic units successfully completed. However, more information is needed to track the long-term success of the seminars. We recommend continuing the seminars, as well as tracking the success of individual students in the existing categories, specific numbers of seminars attended, and whether the seminars differed from one another in content.

Students who fail their freshman year first semester RFT (Reflective Tutorial, the writing intensive course in the first-year learning community) are required to take English 101 in order to meet the first of two writing course requirements, and students who pass the RFT with very low grades are also advised to take the course. Students in EN101 devote most of their time to writing drafts of papers, and other forms of writing (sometimes poetry or other creative writing). The data collected about class outcomes, principally the proportion of students earning As and Bs, suggest that the program is effective in helping underprepared students master the fundamentals of college writing. This program should be continued, and it is recommended that the College consider dedicating more resources to ensuring that designated incoming freshmen are able to enroll in the pre-semester summer version of the course. At present, students are invited to attend, but it is difficult logistically for many due to travel and other scheduling conflicts.

F. Student Survey Data Summary and Analysis

The student members of this self-study subcommittee (with faculty input) designed and administered a survey of the student body. The survey was responded to by 223 students, 77% women and 23% men (the gender distribution of undergraduates at the College during the spring, 2010 semester was approximately 65% female and 35% male). Respondents were completing majors in each of the academic areas of the College, including the humanities (14%), the natural and physical

sciences (19%), the arts (21%), professional programs (22%), and the social sciences (24%). Distribution among ethnicities was consistent with the College’s demographic profile, and there was substantial representation across the four years (freshmen-senior) with freshmen responding in somewhat higher numbers (the freshman class is typically the largest, as well as the one most vulnerable to attrition). This was a reasonable sample from which to draw information for further investigation. Some suggestive points about student satisfaction (and thus, presumably, retention) are summarized below in Tables 6 and 7.

TABLE 6: Student Satisfaction with Wagner College

Question	M	SD	%Agreement
Wagner College presents itself accurately in promotional materials and on its website.	3.50	0.96	62%
The campus visit day influenced my decision to study at Wagner College.	3.71	1.01	60%
My current impression of Wagner College is similar to the one I developed based on campus visits and interactions with admissions counselors before enrolling	2.96	1.19	41%
I am happy with the student body at Wagner College.	3.33	1.11	56%
I am happy with the faculty at Wagner College.	3.82	0.89	74%
I am happy with the way the administration operates at Wagner College.	2.78	1.18	30%

M indicates mean, the arithmetic average (5=highly satisfied, 1=completely unsatisfied). SD indicates standard deviation, a measure of average spread. Agreement indicates percentage of respondents who reported satisfied or highly satisfied.

Commuter students were more likely to report that Wagner presents itself accurately in promotional materials than were residential students. Residential students were marginally more likely to describe their campus visits as influential. Commuter students were more likely to have a consistent impression of Wagner and to report happiness with the administration. It should be noted that the student understanding of “administration” is not the same as that of faculty. Based on written comments submitted by students, “administration” was often interpreted as meaning non-academic

offices, and these survey results are consistent with administrative office surveys discussed in the section of this report examining institutional assessment.

Students who identified themselves as active on campus were significantly more satisfied with the availability of the faculty, with the sensitivity to different perspectives, and with social programming (e.g., movie nights at the coffeehouse, trips to Broadway shows).

Students who self-identified as persons of underrepresented ethnic groups were less satisfied than students who identified themselves as caucasian in response to the following prompts: social interactions with peers who share similar background, social interactions with peers with distinct experiences before college, and availability of Residence Education staff. Students of color were marginally less satisfied with sensitivity to different perspectives during classroom discussions.

TABLE 7: Student Satisfaction with Campus Life

Question	M	SD	%Agreement
Social interactions with peers who share a similar background.	3.76	1.06	72%
Social interactions with peers whose experiences before college were quite distinct from my own.	3.65	0.95	63%
Availability of faculty.	3.95	0.84	81%
Availability of college administrators.	3.34	1.06	50%
Availability of Residence Education staff.	3.58	0.97	55%
Sensitivity to different perspectives during classroom discussions.	3.72	0.98	69%
Social programming on campus.	3.33	1.09	52%

M indicates mean, the arithmetic average (5=highly satisfied, 1=completely unsatisfied). SD indicates standard deviation, a measure of average spread. Agreement indicates percentage of respondents who reported satisfied or highly satisfied.

When commuter students were compared to residential students, commuter students were marginally more satisfied with their interactions with peers who had different experiences than their own before college. Additionally, commuter students were significantly more satisfied with the availability of the faculty and of administrators and were marginally more satisfied with social programming available at the College.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Ten years ago, the self-study recommended the creation of a communications office at Wagner College to facilitate the dissemination of important information to the institution's various publics, including current and prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, and local and regional communities. Such an office was established at Wagner, and was reconfigured in 2006-2007 to better meet the needs of the College. At present, the office is directed by a vice president who oversees the work of the department, and who also serves as the Chief of Staff and as a member of the President's senior staff. He is charged with providing communications and public relations counsel and strategic assistance to the chief executive and other senior staff members. In addition, there is a college editor who has responsibility for managing various publications, including the Wagner alumni magazine, the President's annual report, and who provides assistance with major admissions publications, including the *Viewbook*. A publications designer is now on staff, which allows the college to reduce expenses and insure graphical identity and consistency much more effectively than relying on freelance designers. A media relations professional has provided consistency by initiating and maintaining contacts with area press, re-vamping the school's hometown news system (an important, but often overlooked, promotional vehicle), and serving as a writer for various publications and the website's news pages. An office manager serves as a printer liaison and production manager to shepherd projects through various stages from concept to print. While this configuration provides a solid foundation for the College's immediate needs, there is a need to further address the support of the website and move into social media outlets and other emerging technologies. Though there has been much more coordination of communications and publications, there is need for greater connection and outreach to the entire community regarding publication process and product.

A. Publications

Wagner College publishes a variety of books, brochures and pamphlets to ensure that prospective and current students have accurate and comprehensive information. These publications assist the institution as it seeks to enroll students whose interests, goals and abilities are consistent with the College mission.

Undergraduate & Graduate Bulletin. The College publishes the *Wagner College Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, also known as the College catalog, on a bi-annual basis. Until 2008, the College published separate undergraduate and graduate bulletins. In 2008, a combined bulletin was published, covering the period 2008-2010. This combined catalog provides Wagner's undergraduate and graduate students with a compendium of information needed to make informed decisions about their studies at the College. The catalog that is current during a student's initial enrollment year also serves as a formal agreement between the institution and the student. The catalog contains information on various programs, majors and minors, off-campus learning experiences, academic resources and services, academic awards, the campus community, costs, financial aid, academic policies and procedures, academic evaluations, academic distinction, probation and suspension, preparation for graduation, and student rights and responsibilities, among other topics. It also comprises a current listing of courses and degree requirements by department. Thus, the *Wagner College Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* contains the information (appropriate to a college bulletin) necessary for students to make informed decisions about their education.

The content of the catalog is governed, ultimately, by the Provost, who serves as Wagner's chief academic officer. Policies are also formulated by the faculty (as approved and recommended by the faculty Academic Policy Committee and the faculty Committee of the Whole), the Associate Provost, as well as the Registrar's Office. The various contributors to the publication receive appropriate sections for review prior to printing. The Office of Communications and Marketing,

which has production responsibilities for many of the College publications, reviews appropriate sections for graphic consistency, as it does for all major external relations publications.

While a copy of the bulletin is made available on the website, it is in PDF format. It is recommended that Wagner consider moving toward an online, interactive version of the catalog that can be updated and revised on a more frequent basis, allowing for much faster error correction, and increasing accessibility to both current and prospective students.

The Viewbook. Considered the frontline publication for admissions recruiting, the *Viewbook* provides prospective students with an overview of Wagner College, its academic programs and campus life options, as well as information on the cultural resources of New York City. The *Viewbook* also includes complete information and deadlines for the application process and provides instructions for arranging a visit to campus.

New Student Guide. This publication was created to provide students with a reference handbook for life at Wagner College. It explains, in detail, the First Year Program, campus life, student clubs and organizations, living at Wagner, health and safety concerns, and logistical considerations. It provides important contact information and a checklist of tasks to be completed before enrollment.

To supplement the above-mentioned materials, the Office of Communications and Marketing, in conjunction with the Center for Academic and Career Development (CACD) and the Civic Innovations Program, created four new brochures in the past year to help students better understand and take full advantage of the opportunities and resources that the College offers:

Student Athlete Handbook. This publication provides student-athletes with information about the athletic program, athletic department procedures and their rights and responsibilities as student-athletes.

What's Your Wagner Plan? A new brochure, "*What's Your Wagner Plan?*" helps guide students through the College curriculum. It outlines a step-by-step process to help students consider questions about what classes to take and what majors to explore. It provides insight on how today's classes will be applicable to their lives beyond graduation, and prompts students to begin the process of considering a career.

Internships. Wagner College places a high priority on ensuring that all students have an opportunity to apply the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom in real world settings. Therefore, the CACD created the new brochure, *Internships*. This publication outlines the benefits of internships as an important part of a student's Wagner experience and offers tips on seeking and securing the right internship. It also offers examples of internships completed by senior students, as a further incentive.

Civic Innovations. Community service is an important part of the Wagner Plan, and we have created, in the past year, a new brochure outlining the College's Civic Innovations program, which is a strategic collaboration between the College and agencies serving youth on Staten Island. The brochure informs current students how to participate in this program.

A. Website

Wagner's website, which was re-designed in late 2009, provides students with a wealth of detailed information that supplements printed publications, to help students make informed decisions about their academic and career options. In the re-design of 2005, the site also incorporated, for the first time, the use of a Content Management System (CMS). This made an immediate difference in the ability of campus web page managers to update content on these critical information avenues. Wagner uses Drupal-- an open source CMS adapted to meet the College's needs. Since its implementation, IT staff members have made several upgrades to the software, each one improving the flexibility and usability of the product for content managers across the campus. Additional

flexibility will be incorporated as new updates are available, particularly those facilitating the use of audio and video files.

Responses to the improvements made to the website have been measurable and sustained. Length of visit and total numbers of unique visits have increased, while the bounce rate has dropped significantly, all of which are positive indicators that visitors to Wagner's website are finding the information that is needed and are able to access it in an efficient manner.

CHAPTER 5-ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (STANDARD 7)

I. Charge to the Subcommittee

Standard 7 - The institution has developed and instituted an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Annual Residential Education Surveys*
- *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Reports*
- *Athletics Assessments for NCAA*
- *Library Services Assessments*
- *2009 Campus Symposium Assessment Data*
- *Common Data Sets Information*
- *Student-conducted student opinion survey*
- *NSSE Data*
- *FSSE Data*
- *2008 and 2009 Administrative Office Survey (results, reports and student comments)*
- *Residential Education Housing Assessment Surveys*
- *Evaluations of Resident Assistants*

III. Executive Summary

A. Strengths

- *Several non-academic offices have effectively used assessment to evaluate their effectiveness, and to make changes based upon these evaluations.*
- *Annual unqualified audits allow for good assessment in this key area.*
- *Senior administrative staff have set up annual goal setting and review for all areas.*
- *Engaged Board of Trustees provide regular assessment and feedback on budget and goal setting*
- *A strong strategic planning and goal setting culture has developed in recent years*
- *The current strategic planning process includes a strong commitment to implementing campus wide administrative assessment*
- *Learning outcomes assessment is present across academic departments, reflecting the strategic plan and the mission of the institution.*

B. Challenges

- *Non-academic offices must become more aware of the need for the use of assessment and be trained to assess properly to determine how well they are supporting the mission of the college.*
- *There is a need to engage the entire campus in the ongoing strategic planning process leading to increased institutional effectiveness.*
- *There is a need to develop a formal program for trustee assessment and effectiveness*
- *There is a need for academic departments to integrate institutional learning goals and disciplinary learning goals*

C. Recommendations

- *Within each non-academic office, a person should be designated as an assessment liaison to help ensure that assessment takes place within each office, and/that relevant data are conveyed to the Office of Institutional Research and the relevant vice president.*
- *Senior staff should be charged with analyzing data for the purpose of overall assessment.*
- *Senior staff should annually review assessment data from all administrative offices and academic programs*
- *The College needs to enhance the Office of Institutional Research and be able to effectively lead institutional evaluation and analyze data*
- *The College should further emphasize and target institutional effectiveness and assessment within the 2011 Strategic Plan.*

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

While assessment of the learning outcomes of students has become increasingly institutionalized, the assessment of how well the non-academic offices are performing and how the offices are achieving their goals and supporting the mission of the College is less systematic. However, there are specific examples of pockets of excellence within some offices on the campus, and the past three years have witnessed a great deal of improvement in institutional assessment.

A. Assessment Procedures

Currently, Wagner College has a variety of assessment procedures in place. Some of the results that are personnel-related are retained in the Human Resource Office, and are used to help determine if staff members are meeting their responsibilities as determined by supervisors.

In the fall of 2007, the Provost's Council reviewed the results of the 2007 NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement), and discovered that students were less satisfied with the "quality of relationships with administrative personnel and offices" in comparison to our peer institutions. Due to the vagueness of this question, an in-house instrument was created that specifically asked the entire student body to rate their satisfaction with 23 different offices on campus. This assessment instrument, the Administrative Offices Survey, was distributed in the spring of 2008, and repeated in the spring of 2009, this time focusing on the seven offices that were the lowest performing offices in

the opinion of the student body. The surveys, results of these surveys, and executive summaries are included in Appendix 5-1.

B. Institutional Assessment Efforts

The library is one of the offices on campus most diligent in performing assessment (done via surveys). In 2001, a library use survey was administered; 2002 saw a survey on library hours; 2003 a graduate program survey; 2005 a library and information technology survey, and in 2009 a library renovation survey. Outcomes from these assessment instruments are detailed in Appendix 5-2. Clearly the library is one of the pockets of excellence when it comes to creating an organized and sustained assessment process.

The Office of Campus Life (encompassing Residential Education, Health Services and Co-curricular Programs), which has had an assessment program in place since 2007. Assessment has included a housing satisfaction survey (given to all residential students), a resident evaluation of RAs (given to all residential students), and a first-year residential experience pre-test survey (given to all first year students at the end of spring semester). The first two surveys have been performed each year since 2007–08, and the final survey was given at the end of the academic year 2008-09. Other surveys conducted by Campus Life include an alcohol and drug use survey and an orientation survey. Additionally, within the Office of Campus Life, an assessment committee was created in 2008 to develop goals for the office, assess outcomes for the office, and to foster a culture of continual improvement.

The Athletics Department also conducts extensive and regular assessments. Per the NCAA, a comprehensive self-study and evaluation must be completed every 10 years. This self-study examines issues such as governance and compliance, academic integrity, student-athlete welfare, and gender and diversity. Additionally, the compliance requirements of the NCAA are externally audited every

four years (the last external audit was completed in October, 2008). Finally, at the conclusion of each academic year, all student-athletes are provided with end-of-year surveys to assess the athletics program. Graduating seniors are given a more extensive questionnaire to complete, which includes the opportunity for an exit interview with the Director of Athletics (or a designee).

The Office of Institutional Advancement has developed a number of assessment tools. These include post-event surveys; post-event post-mortems; analysis of fund-raising effectiveness; and surveys of alumni regarding their interest in the office's travel programs and services.

Other offices on campus have not yet developed assessment methods as detailed or integrated into their operations, and this is a major challenge for the College as we move forward with our institutional assessment efforts.

C. Assessment Outcomes

Based on institutional assessment that has been conducted, there are distinct changes that have been made in the offices most directly involved with the assessment efforts. From the Administrative Offices Survey of 2008, it was clear that three offices had deficiencies that needed to be addressed: the Registrar's Office, the Bursar's Office, and the Office of Financial Aid. In light of these results, action was taken including staff training and reorganization. In the student survey performed the following year (2009), there was improvement in the perceived performance of the Bursar's Office, but less so for the other two offices. The surveys reported that the primary student concerns were with the hours of operation of these offices and their ability to resolve student problems on the first attempt. The 2009 survey revealed a general campus-wide failure to deal effectively with student concerns: offices often shifted problems to other offices.

Departments have made adjustments based on assessment. The library has extended its hours of operation at key times, revised the floor plan for the proposed learning commons area, emphasized

the use of citation software (and avoidance of plagiarism) during student instruction, and redesigned the library's website.

Based upon assessment data collected by the Office of Campus Life, changes were made to a variety of operations. Residential Assistant (RA) training has been modified, common room facilities have been improved, a feedback system for RA performance has been implemented, and a new process for re-appointing RAs.

D. Awareness of the Wagner Plan

In the fall of 2009, a campus-wide symposium was conducted over two days to increase the awareness of academic initiatives and programs currently in place. Based on assessment data collected after this event, over 75% of those responding reported that they had a clearer understanding of campus initiatives. Additionally, a campus-wide poster campaign was initiated in the fall of 2009, articulating the key goals of the Wagner Plan. The high visibility of these posters has served to heighten awareness of what the expected learning outcomes and goals of the Wagner Plan are.

E. Assessment Challenges

However, there are some deficiencies in how institutional assessment is performed. Assessment has increased dramatically since 2006, with several offices adding strong, sustainable assessment procedures to ensure continual improvement. In order to address consistency across all offices, there has to be a strong commitment to a culture of continual improvement using assessment in non-academic offices. A structure similar to that for academic assessment would also be useful for institutional assessment to ensure that assessment is appropriate, comprehensive, and the results efficiently communicated to those with decision-making responsibilities within the College.

Currently the Office of Institutional Research focuses on data collection and reporting, less so to institutional assessment and effectiveness. Ideally, it should coordinate with each administrative office on campus to create goals consistent with the mission of the College, assist each office in the

creation of appropriate assessment instruments to determine how well these goals are being achieved, and collect and analyze all the assessment data and relay it to appropriate parties. Additionally, this office should coordinate with other academic assessment structures on campus, to ensure that administrative offices are aware of programs and initiatives on campus through appropriate dissemination procedures. Within each administrative office, one staff member should be designated as the office assessment coordinator, responsible for collaborating with the Office of Institutional Research, to insure that each department is in compliance with the assessment goals of the College. This office should also assist academic departments with student learning outcomes assessment.

There is still work to be done to develop mechanisms to facilitate the gathering and analysis of data, and a systematic method for the implementation of change, based on assessment.

CHAPTER 6-FINANCE, RESOURCES AND FACILITIES (STANDARDS 2 AND 3)

I. Charge to the Subcommittee

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal. An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and maintain institutional quality.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources. The human, financial, technical, physical facilities and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Endowment*
- *Long-term debt*
- *Net unrestricted assets*
- *Debt- to-endowment ratio*
- *Monthly budget reports*
- *Operating budgets*
- *Revenues from External Programs*
- *Revenues from Summer School*
- *Income statement*
- *Financial statement audits*
- *A-133 Agreed Upon Procedures Audit*
- *NCAA-Intercollegiate Athletics Agreed Upon Procedures Audit*
- *Enrollment 2001-2009*
- *Enrollment projections 2010-2015*
- *Alumni participation and giving*
- *Construction projects \$25,000.00 and over, 2000-2010*
- *Average salary of full-time instructional faculty by rank*
- *Average percent change in salary for continuing faculty*
- *Facilities Master Plan*
- *Strategic Plan*
- *Campaign Phase I Final Report*

III. Executive Summary

A. Strengths

- *Wagner's overall financial condition is strong and viable as evidenced by unqualified opinions of auditors*
- *The College's investment portfolio is professionally managed and the investments are diversified*

- *Wagner's debt structure is well balanced and professionally managed, assuring sufficient liquidity*
- *Budget and resource allocation decisions are achieved collaboratively to assure that all mission-critical operations are funded fairly. All stakeholders participate in the budget and resource allocation decision process*
- *The Audit and Finance Committees of the Board of Trustees actively engage in periodic review of various financial reports*
- *The Finance Department has been restructured and functional responsibilities have been updated to assure a high level of professional competencies in all areas of financial services to the College.*
- *The College infrastructure is continually evaluated*
- *Wagner's endowment and investments have surpassed the \$60 million mark for the first time in its history.*
- *The College exceeded the initial goal of \$50 million in its first-ever comprehensive campaign called Putting Wagner First: The Campaign for Wagner College. This unprecedented success has led the Trustees to approve a \$25 million extension to the Campaign, specifically to build the College's first new academic building in more than 40 years.*
- *A new residence hall – the first in nearly 40 years – opened to upperclassmen in January 2010*
- *The College has maintained a moderate “discount rate,” resulting in higher net revenues per student*

B. Challenges

- *There is significant reliance on student tuition revenue*
- *There is a declining student retention rate that affects overall revenue*
- *Enhanced information technology infrastructure that helps communicate data across offices is needed to support College departments throughout the campus. Many offices depend on up to date, accurate, “live” data, and are less efficient without.*
- *Both the College's financial difficulties during the 1970s and 1980s and the current state of the national economy creates a difficult environment for alumni and friends to make significant financial commitments to Wagner*
- *Main Hall (including the theatre) is in need of renovation and updating*
- *A new (integrated learning) building (Center for Global Learning) is necessary to maintain and grow current professional programs and related liberal arts programs, and to further deepen and enhance the Wagner Plan. Also, this will open up Campus Hall to expand building space for other programs*
- *Despite the College's commitment of additional resources, deferred maintenance remains a serious problem.*
- *While progress has been made, there is still more to be done to improve access to facilities by the physically challenged*
- *Limitations in both physical and virtual space occasionally hamper efficient library research. There is student dissatisfaction generally related to inadequate lighting,*

excessive noise, cleanliness and a shortage of computers when classes are held in the Smart Lab

C. *Recommendations:*

- *The College must reduce its significant dependence on tuition by increasing major fund raising leading to significant endowment growth, annual giving, pursuit of grants from government and foundations, and identifying additional revenue sources*
- *The College must develop and implement effective strategies to increase the student retention rate*
- *The College should enhance IT infrastructure, with capabilities for departments to more effectively access and share live data. Additionally, IT should: expand web presence, provide more system integration of communications, provide 100% wireless coverage, implement an audio system for the hearing impaired where appropriate, migrate to Windows 7, and make the College's servers compatible with appropriate archiving software*
- *Institutional Advancement should assess why alumni from the 1970s and 1980s are less engaged than other decades and work to improve relations with those alumni*
- *Institutional Advancement should continue to cultivate alumni and friends and move them toward investment*
- *The College should make additional improvements to provide access to the physically challenged*
- *The College should continue to raise funds and plan for major capital investments, including exterior and interior renovation of Main Hall (including the theatre) and construction of a new academic building on the site previously occupied by the former Augustinian Academy*
- *The College should add a learning commons section to the main floor of the library to enhance student satisfaction with current physical library facilities*
- *The College should institute a "student-alumni" program to bring a greater awareness of philanthropy and loyalty to future alumni*

FINANCES

The *2001 Middle States Self-Study* report identified Wagner College's greatest financial challenges as: high level of debt, small endowment, and too much dependence on tuition revenues. The *2006 Periodic Review Report* indicated that these challenges were being addressed and notable progress was made in each area. Specifically, it cited increases in the operating budget, modest decreases in the debt, and a significant upturn in the endowment fund. As Appendix 6-1 illustrates, the endowment has increased from approximately \$3 million in 2001 to (as of this writing) more than \$60 million. The College has just completed the first phase of its first comprehensive

campaign, raising more than \$50 million, an achievement which was celebrated by the President ringing the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on March 23, 2010. Because of this success, the Board of Trustees voted in May, 2010 to conduct a feasibility study to extend the campaign and increase the overall goal to \$75 million, specifically to raise funds for a much needed new academic building. As of December 31, 2010, we have already raised nearly \$13 million toward that effort.

The leveling out of the growth curve for giving over the past two years is largely the result of the 2008-2009 economic recession and global financial instability, which depressed the stock market and kept potential donors on the sideline. As the nation continues on the road to economic recovery, the previous upward trend is projected to return in the coming years.

The College's debt (Appendix 6-2) had steadily decreased from 2001 thru 2008, but increased in 2009 with the construction of a new campus-based residence hall. The cost of this facility was \$31 million, of which \$5 million is being funded by the Richmond County Savings Foundation as a charitable gift. The remaining \$26 million has been funded by borrowing through bonds. This necessary expense had been carefully planned and designed to relieve overcrowding in the three existing residence halls, enhancing the residential learning experience of our primarily residential student population.

Over the past 10 years, due to increased recognition, the College has witnessed an upsurge in interest by potential students. Through aggressive, but conservative, budgeting and planning, its net unrestricted assets have moved from the negative into the positive range (Appendix 6-3). The endowment-to-debt ratio improved dramatically from 1:10 a decade ago to 1.2:1 in FY07. Although it has risen recently due to the addition of the new residence hall, it is still only 1:1.3, and the College's goal is to reach and surpass 1:1 (Appendix 6-4).

A. Revenue and Expenses

Wagner College's primary source of revenue remains tuition (Appendix 6-5). Enrollment and retention rates grew appreciably from 2001 through 2005, but in the past four years the retention rate has declined slightly (Appendix 6-6). One possible way to increase enrollment would be to decrease selectivity and increase financial aid. However, this approach would probably have an ultimately negative impact on retention and would not necessarily result in increased revenues, as the cost of additional "discounting" coupled with the costs of serving a larger student body, would more than offset any increased revenue. Further, this approach would be a short-term solution contrary to the College's mission and goals and hence detrimental in the long run. The College is strategically committed to maintaining its selectivity and its comparatively low "discount" rate. Wagner's policy is to maintain the quality of admitted students, which will help safeguard the academic reputation of the institution. Wagner has increased its discount rate from 33% to 36%, yet is still able to maintain the academic quality of the freshman cohorts during this difficult economic period.

Recent declines in the retention rate should be addressed by identifying patterns in attrition and developing strategies to deal with each. Examples of identification and strategies to address retention are:

- Faculty members submit "early alert" notices to the advising office
- All students requesting transcripts must have a "transcript request" interview to discuss why they are thinking about leaving the College
- The Center for Teaching, Learning and Research develops ways to address pedagogy and create an enhanced student learning environment
- The College has created more programs that help connect students to faculty, staff, and campus: international opportunities; pre-health and pre-law programs, civic engagement certificate program, enhanced honors program; and additional campus life programs (these are discussed in Chapter 10)
- The Office of Enrollment is undertaking a financial aid and retention audit to assess how best to leverage current institutional aid to better package "at risk" students

Some of the decrease in projected and actual revenues has been offset by increased efficiencies. Additional funding sources are being identified and explored. The most successful of these are associated with the Office of External and Summer Programs (Appendices 6-7 and 6-8), which has seen its revenues increase over the past five years, reaching \$1.4 million in FY '09. Projections for the near future continue to be positive. Given the recent increase in the number of adults receiving government aid for training, additional demand for the certificate courses offered through this office is anticipated. For 2011, an increase in summer conferences aimed at high school students, and taking advantage of our new residence hall, our location and key programs of excellence, such as theatre, are expected to further increase revenue in this area. In addition, summer semester courses (Appendix 6-9) net approximately \$2 million dollars annually.

The administration believes there is significant revenue potential in graduate programs. Feasibility studies are underway for additional graduate programs, namely the Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP), as are studies of new Master's degrees programs in Sports Management, Arts Administration, and Fine and Performing Arts. The College has received approval from the New York State Education Department for a new five-year BS/MS in Microbiology and an Accelerated Master's in Business Administration. Both of these programs are now being implemented. Other positive developments include recent growth in auxiliary revenues in vending and soft drink contracts, and ongoing efforts to identify efficiency/cost reduction areas in Business Office operations.

The Office of Institutional Advancement has expanded and professionalized, creating major gifts, advancement services, leadership annual giving, and donor relations units, while enhancing the annual fund and alumni offices. This staffing growth has allowed Advancement to increase its outreach to alumni locally and across the country through personal contact, print communications,

and social media. Notable successes achieved during the Putting Wagner First campaign include securing 20 new commitments of \$1 million or more, acquiring more than 75 major gifts (\$25,000 or more) and securing 7,000 new donors. The College has also broadened membership in its National Alumni Association Board of Directors to include a more geographically and chronologically diverse group, and to achieve gender balance. These, and other efforts, foster increased participation in alumni activities including Reunion, Homecoming and regional events.

Although tremendous strides have been made in fundraising, challenges remain. The current state of the national economy continues to create a difficult environment for alumni and friends to make significant financial commitments to Wagner, although strong early giving in FY11 may be a sign that donors are rebounding. Throughout the economic crisis, Institutional Advancement has continued to cultivate and steward alumni and friends and is now strategically positioned to close significant numbers of major and planned gifts from donors who have been sitting on the sidelines waiting for the economy to recover. While overall giving has increased 43% since the last Middle States report, participation percentage in giving, however, continues to be a challenge, not unlike most colleges and universities nationwide, as evidenced in the Center for Aid to Education's (CAE) report on Voluntary Support for Education, 2010 edition. Wagner's alumni giving participation in the annual fund peaked in 2006-2007 (Appendix 6-10) at 15% while annual giving has declined slightly from more than \$2.2 million in FY07 to \$1.6 million FY10. This decline may be attributed to the national economic crisis.

Additionally, the technology issues faced by all campus units affect Institutional Advancement significantly. Addressing this issue in FY11 as currently planned will resolve a major impediment to Institutional Advancement efforts. A more user-friendly database will enhance Institutional Advancement's ability to pull simple reports as well as to analyze and mine data,

making it possible for Advancement to assess performance and to allocate resources strategically, and to more effectively track and engage lost and disaffected alumni, particularly those of the 1970s and 1980s. While there are a number of key alumni from those decades who have reconnected, the College's financial difficulties of that period influenced alumni perceptions and have resulted in tenuous connections between those alumni and the institution. A major effort to understand the issues and to reconnect with those individuals is underway.

B. Facilities

The Wagner College campus consists of 18 principal structures located on 105 acres. The campus, nestled within one of the five boroughs of New York City, was selected as the "Most Beautiful Campus" in 2004 by the *Princeton Review*. Investment in facilities, including renovation, repair, and new construction, has restored luster and beauty to the campus. However, there remain many issues of deferred maintenance.

Seven campus buildings house a variety of administrative and academic functions, including traditional classrooms, smart classrooms, laboratories, specialty learning areas, dance and recital halls, lecture halls, office space and a planetarium. Four buildings comprise the residence halls that have a combination of meeting rooms, lounge areas, gathering spaces, living quarters and a food/convenience store. Five other buildings house the admissions office, external and summer programs, the maintenance shop, the chapel, human resources and public safety. The library is a multipurpose space where students can study, conduct research, write term papers, use a computer, and prepare group presentations. The remaining buildings are athletic facilities and fields, which are home to the Division I NCAA athletic program, intramurals and recreation.

The oldest structure on campus (1852) is Cunard Hall, which houses a number of administrative offices and the Physician Assistant Program. The newest structure is Foundation Hall, a 198 bed, four-story, residence hall that opened in January 2010.

The College has made many strides in deferred maintenance, campus beautification and safety. A list of these upgrades and repairs are listed in Appendix 6-11). Continual facilities enhancements are prioritized in the following order of need: health and safety, general repairs and aesthetics.

Health and Safety. The most significant health and safety renovation since the last self-study has been the installation of sprinklers and new fire alarms in the residence halls. This project conducted over a three year period and cost over \$5 million dollars. The college also demolished an aging structure that was on the edge of campus, which was considered to be an “attractive nuisance.” The College installed, in 2004, a series of security cameras across the campus walkways, in the parking lots and other common areas. There are also “blue light” emergency call boxes” strategically located across the campus and these are emergency safety measures for anyone who is in trouble or needs immediate assistance.

General Repairs. There have been many significant improvements and renovations since the last self-study. All of these improvements have a direct impact on the academic programs or the quality of life for the student body. Overall, it is estimated that \$14 million has been spent on deferred maintenance over the last 10 years. Highlighting a few of these changes:

- The College moved and then renovated the spaces for the Information Technology “Help Desk,” to give students better and more frequent access
- Boilers were replaced in Main Hall, the building that houses the majority of the classrooms, to improve the heating system for the winter months
- The science building (Megerle Hall) had all of its windows replaced.
- The roof on the Horrman Library was replaced
- Two chemistry labs and one biology lab have been completely renovated

- An addition was built onto the admissions house to improve the services provided by the admissions staff
- The new Center for Teaching, Learning and Research was constructed in the basement of the library
- The stadium field was refitted with synthetic turf so that it could be used continuously, regardless of the season
- The student convenience store, “The Wag,” was moved to the Guild Residence Hall and enlarged
- The student grill, “The Hawk’s Nest,” was totally refurbished and sports a new menu
- The main student parking lot was completely resurfaced and additional parking spaces were created

Aesthetics. The College has beautified the campus and eliminated dirt paths by installing paving block walk ways. Further, since the last self-study, many improvements have been made in providing access to the physically challenged, although additional progress needs to be made in this area. In an effort to reduce the number of cars on campus, one of the inner parking lots was eliminated and a park was constructed in its place. Founders’ Park has a strolling walkway that leads to a center garden. Surrounding the garden are many benches where students can talk with friends or quietly reflect. The front entrance to the campus was renovated to be more visible and welcoming.

Facilities Challenges/Future Renovations. The College is currently engaged in several renovation projects and there is an extensive list of other necessary deferred maintenance projects. The College is currently renovating the exterior of Main Hall (estimated to cost \$5.7 million). There is a planned renovation of the former chaplain’s house (\$100K), which will be the location of the new campus chapel and spiritual center. There is a plan to completely renovate the bathrooms and common areas in the Harborview Residence Hall (\$3.5million). The theater (including teaching facilities for the program) is in need of a total restoration (\$5million). More of the science laboratories will need to be renovated (each renovation costs approximately \$500K). Further, all of the brick buildings are in need of re-pointing and there are a number of buildings that need to be fitted for more handicap

accessibility. A list of all repairs and renovations that exceed \$100,000, that are planned for the next 10 years is included as Appendix 6-12.

C. Technology

Wagner has made substantial progress in academic computing and information technology since the last self-study. In 2001, only five rooms (Spiro 1, Spiro 3, Main Hall B5, Main Hall B7 and Main Hall B44) were equipped to handle DVDs and VHS tapes. In fact, only three rooms had rear-projection screens (Spiro 2, Spiro 4 and Spiro 5) and required users to provide and hook up their own laptops. Transparency projectors and TV carts supplied by Media Services were the norm. Wireless internet was not available anywhere on campus and servers were bogged down by a stand-alone, in-house email system. Today, as the result of a \$500k expenditure, coupled with a matching donation from the Richmond County Savings Foundation, most instructional spaces are equipped with projectors, laptops and equipment compatible with several different forms of media. Secure, wireless internet access is available over 95% of the campus. Three smart boards (one in the library, one in Spiro Lab A and another in the Education Resource Room) are available and email is hosted by Google, freeing up the College's IT staff and servers while providing better reliability, superior spam filtration and new document sharing capabilities. The number of servers has increased significantly, providing the College with the ability to control/prioritize bandwidth and support a more effective firewall. Group videoconferencing is now available. Individuals use Skype (a software application that allows users to make voice calls over the internet) with Logitech webcams, microphones and headsets. A Polycom VSX 7000e unit coordinates the process and facilitates file transfer.

This technology enabled the formation of a learning community (ILC-11 Cross-Cultural Business Communication) comprising Wagner students and students at the American University in

Athens, Greece. This initiative garnered a national award from the American Council on Education's "Bringing the World into the Classroom."

Software enhancements have substantially increased services for students and faculty. Students now check their grades, financial status and register online using a Wagner web-based academic manager (WWAM). Faculty utilize Moodle, an online course management system, to post course content (e.g. lectures and assignments), conduct out-of-class or "committee discussions," use group e-mail and maintain calendars. "Wagnerpedia" provides a dynamic collaborative resource for the campus community. Faculty requests for specialized software are evaluated on a regular basis. In August 2009, the College web site was completely re-designed, and converted from a table-based layout to one based on CSS (cascading style sheets) to ensure a more uniform presentation across various browsers. A new home page was created with vivid, inviting images of the Wagner campus and its environs and a new section was added, titled "Wagner Is..." which offers visitors a brief introduction to the campus. Continual assessment is used for future ongoing-upgrades and improvements.

The Board of Trustees Technology Sub-committee is assessing current technology, evaluating adequacy and making recommendations on upgrades, all with the intent of making long-term improvements. When students were asked to rate how technologically capable the facilities are, they returned an average value of a "7" on a scale from 1-10 (1=negative; 10 = positive). The results indicate that the College is perceived as adequately equipped, in general. Specific enhancements are recommended including the expansion of the web presence, integration of capabilities to share and report data, more system integration of phones, cell phones, faxes and email, 100% wireless coverage, implementation of an audio system for the hearing impaired in the largest lecture halls (Spiro 2, 4 and 5), and migration to Windows 7.

D. Library

The Horrmann Library is a 35,000 sq. ft. facility, which also houses the Writing Center; Peer Tutoring Office; IT Help Desk; the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research; and Spotlight Gallery. As a consequence of the digital revolution, the meaning of the descriptive phrase “the heart of the campus” has changed. In this new environment, since the last self-study, the Horrmann Library:

- Has aligned its physical space to comport with the needs of students and faculty with more computers and private study areas. A learning commons area is planned for the main floor
- Continually explores the feasibility of digital initiatives and the archiving of books, periodicals and important documents
- Has provided assistance to faculty on how to legally use copyrighted materials
- Has expanded the role of the librarians so that they are more deeply involved in the life of the campus (e.g. The senior reference librarian acts as the library liaison for the Foundation Center initiative and the Dean of the Library participates in faculty Scholarship Circles)
- Has expanded the role of the librarians in The Wagner Plan, including providing library research training for freshmen and implementing the Research Intensive Tutor Program to service freshmen
- Has allocated space dedicated to teaching, learning and research regarding student learning
- Has re-conceptualized the size and scope of the book collection to make it smaller, leaner, and more curriculum-based. E-books and a robust interlibrary loan apparatus, as well as declining circulation statistics, make this a practical option for creating space for other uses
- Has through careful planning and budgeting, obtained access to over 50 subscription databases. However, limitations in both physical and virtual space occasionally hamper efficient research. The latter is especially problematic as there are impediments to digital initiatives (e.g., the College's servers are incompatible with archiving software such as Greenstone or Dspace)

Interviews with students indicate that the library is useful in terms of making digital resources available and maintaining the size of the physical collection. Students also indicate that the staff members are knowledgeable. This information was gathered through a variety of surveys. Dissatisfaction is generally related to inadequate lighting, excessive noise, cleanliness and a shortage of computers when classes are held in the SmartLab. It is believed that a learning commons area on the main floor will mitigate some of these problems.

E. Compensation, Departmental Budgets and Faculty Aid

Adjusting the compensation of faculty and staff to meet national and regional benchmarks for liberal arts and comprehensive institutions was addressed in the *2006 Periodic Review Report* and is currently one of the *2006-2011 Major Institutional Goals* and part of the *Strategic Plan*. The Faculty Priorities and Budget Committee (PBC) investigated this issue. In 2007, lists of comparable institutions were compiled and PBC made recommendations (Appendix 6-13). In response to this report, the President created the Faculty Compensation Task Force (comprising two Board members, three faculty members, and three administrators), with the charge of making recommendations to the President to address the findings. Based on faculty survey data and a review of the literature, this task force developed a compensation philosophy which addresses variable compensation depending on discipline and comparable benchmarks. Their proposal has been presented to the President who presented it to the Board of Trustees at their December, 2010 meeting. The Board is now reviewing the proposal.

Faculty aid for research and development (from the College's operating budget) has increased from \$33,000 annually in 2004 to \$100,000 today. Additionally, faculty research and professional development has increased another \$120,000 per year from private donors, bringing faculty development support to \$220,000 annually. Also, the faculty teaching load was reduced from eight courses per year in 2001, to six courses per year today. This is in addition to a careful examination of curriculum in the effort to reduce teaching load for full time faculty without significantly increasing the number of adjunct courses.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The College periodically undertakes a broad based, overarching strategic planning process. The present plan, adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2004 (http://www.wagner.edu/strategic_planning/main) states that the College is committed to achieving

and then remaining an institution of approximately 2,000 undergraduate students, and continuing to be a residential college with approximately 75% of its students residing on campus. The plan identifies specific priorities: educational excellence, resource enhancement and management, institutional reputation, and facilities improvement. The strategic plan established specific targeted goals. The College is presently in the midst of another strategic planning cycle, anticipating completion in 2011.

ACADEMIC PLANNING

Planning for curriculum and program changes is the province of the academic departments, the faculty Academic Policy Committee (APC) and the provost (see Chapter 8). Given its relationship with finances, resources and facilities, academic planning is included here as well. The faculty elected Priorities and Budget Committee (PBC) has a number of responsibilities, most of which are related to academic planning. Each year the Provost prepares a set of goals for academic and student affairs (see Chapter 3). Each academic department also sets its own academic goals, which subsequently become part of the Provost's goals. Status reports on these goals are presented to the Board of Trustees quarterly for their review. Academic departments also assess their programs and make plans and changes based on those assessments (see Chapter 9)

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

Input for institutional planning comes from the faculty, senior staff, and the Board of Trustees. Six members of the faculty are elected to the Priorities and Budget Committee annually. This committee addresses issues and makes recommendations to the President related to matters of budget and institutional priorities. Each member of the senior staff sets annual goals for his/her areas of responsibility, each aligned with the institutional goals and strategic plan. These goals are updated throughout the academic year and presented at each of the four annual meetings of the

Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees meets four times during the year (separate from the full Board of Trustees meetings) and the Committee addresses overall institutional goals and specific issues that arise during those times. The Executive Committee reports issues and outcomes to the full Board.

One challenge to the College's planning efforts is the need to improve support for institutional research and institutional effectiveness. The College's institutional research office is staffed by one employee, who is often focused on compiling information for the increasing number of reports required from the College by federal and state agencies. Currently, discussions and processes for institutional planning and effectiveness occur at all levels of the College resulting in multiple voices and offices actively and effectively participating in the process. The College must find a way to develop more centralized planning and more consistent, common source of data.

CHAPTER 7-FACULTY (STANDARD 10)

I. Charge to the Subcommittee

Standard 10: Faculty: The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Common Data Set information*
- *Wagner College Faculty Handbook*
- *Minutes of the Academic Policy Committee*
- *Wagner College Faculty Newsletter*
- *Survey conducted by Sub-Committee of Wagner College full-time faculty*
- *Fox Fellows e-book*
- *Annual Faculty Activity Reports*

III. Executive Summary

A. Strengths

- *Annual teaching responsibilities for full-time faculty have, since the last self-study, been reduced from 4-4 to 3-3*
- *Faculty members are engaged in scholarship and research and in continuing efforts to improve their pedagogy and the curriculum*
- *The Provost's Office encourages and supports faculty research through the provision of financial and other campus-based resources and by supporting faculty members in the submission of external funding proposals. Since the last self-study, monies available for faculty aid have increased from \$33,000 to \$220,000*
- *The College has maintained its commitment to support sabbaticals and Professional Development Semesters (PDS)*
- *The number of journal articles, conference presentations, book chapters and books authored by Wagner College faculty has increased since the last self-study*
- *There are clearly stated procedures for the appointment, re-appointment, promotion and tenure of full-time faculty members in the Faculty Handbook*
- *There is a clearly stated policy for the appointment and review of adjunct faculty*

B. Challenges

- *Faculty salaries have historically lagged behind those offered at comparable institutions in the metropolitan area; while there have been efforts to address this over the years, entry salaries are at the 25th percentile of benchmark institutions*
- *Adjunct salaries have remained static for the last seven years at a level that makes it difficult to recruit qualified adjuncts*
- *Adjunct faculty members are not well integrated into the life of the College*
- *The faculty are not as diverse as the various stakeholders in the College would desire*

- *Notwithstanding clearly stated procedures for the appointment, re-appointment, promotion and tenure of Full-Time faculty members in the Faculty Handbook, some faculty members express concerns about the clarity of the process*
- *The peer evaluation of teaching by adjunct faculty is uneven throughout the institution*

C. Recommendations

- *Attention should be made to find ways to reduce our reliance on adjuncts*
- *Continue to encourage pedagogical and scholarly development of full-time faculty; greater effort needed to include adjunct faculty in pedagogical development programs.*
- *Recruitment of people from under-represented groups for faculty positions should be enhanced. Human Resources should be able to track our efforts better in this area*
- *All departments should adhere to College policy on peer observation of adjunct faculty*
- *More effort should be made to educate the faculty on the promotion and tenure process*
- *The College should more fully integrate adjunct faculty members into the College's curricular and extracurricular activities*
- *Faculty concerns regarding the fairness of the tenure and promotion process should be addressed*

A. Faculty Qualifications

The faculty at Wagner College are appropriately prepared and qualified to teach the wide range of curricular content offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels. As of the beginning of the fall, 2010 semester, the College employed 94 full-time faculty members, including visiting professors. Over 92% of our full-time faculty have earned either a doctorate or other terminal degree, while a very small group of faculty members possess advanced master's degrees in the disciplines in which they teach. There are 26 full professors, 41 associate professors, and 27 assistant professors. There is one Distinguished Professor in Residence, who has a joint appointment in the Departments of Education and Government and Politics, reflecting his professional background in education (including service as the President of the New York City Board of Education) and politics (nine years as a member of the New York State Senate). He also heads the Hugh L. Carey Institute for Government Reform. While the number of full-time faculty

has remained stable in recent years, the present complement represents an increase from earlier in the decade. As late as fall, 2004, there were 89 full-time faculty members.

Seven Wagner employees are designated as associated faculty. These are full-time administrators whose responsibilities regularly include teaching. In fall, 2010, the College employed 172 adjunct faculty. These adjuncts are well qualified and many provide practical knowledge of their fields, which is consistent with the College's commitment to the "Practical Liberal Arts," and is beneficial to our students. The number of adjuncts has increased since the last self-study. In 2004, there were 120 adjuncts; in 2005, 130; and in 2006, 133. From 2007 through 2009, the number of adjuncts employed by the College remained steady at 149.

B. Faculty Involvement With the Curriculum

The undergraduate and graduate curricula are maintained and updated by the faculty and staff on a regular basis. New and revised courses and programs are initiated by the academic departments. The Academic Policy Committee (APC) reviews all suggested course and program modifications; major changes are then sent to the Committee of the Whole (COW) for its consideration. New program proposals approved by the APC are then forwarded to the Faculty Committee of the Whole (COW) for its consideration. COW approved academic programs are then forwarded to the College Administration for submission to the New York State Education Department for review and registration (approval). Since the last self-study, the APC has approved the addition of 126 courses, the elimination of 50 courses, and the modification of 153 courses. New undergraduate programs registered for the College by the New York State Education Department since the last self-study include International Affairs, Anthropology, Theatre and Speech Education K-12, Natural Science and Elementary Education, History and Elementary Education, Music and Elementary Education, Philosophy and Art History.

Master's level programs registered since the last self-study include M.S. in Education (Early Childhood-2), M.S. in Education (grades 5-9), M.S. in Education (Literacy, Birth-grade 6), M.S. in Education (grades 1-6), M.S. in Education (Adolescent Education, grades 7-12) and a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) offered in an accelerated format. Five-year programs (B.S./M.S.) programs in Accountancy, Microbiology, and Advanced Physician Assistant Studies have also been approved by APC, the COW, and registered by the State.

The M.B.A. Program in Emergency Management, which was submitted by the College, has not been registered by the New York State Education Department. Efforts to re-evaluate and re-submit this proposal should be made.

C. Institutional Support for the Advancement and Development Of the Faculty

The institution has implemented a number of programs and committed additional resources to insure that full-time faculty members are given appropriate opportunities to conduct scholarly research and present their findings via conferences, publication and other means of dissemination. Further, the faculty workload has been reduced (gradually, from 4-4 to 4-3 at the time the Wagner Plan was introduced; to 3-3 for some faculty in 2005-06, with all full-time faculty at a 3-3 by 2007-08) to give the faculty more time for student advising, campus service, research and to compete for external funding. One outcome of the reduction in the course load for full-time faculty has been the aforementioned increase in the number of adjunct faculty employed by the College.

Since the last self-study, the amount of funding available for full-time faculty development and the number of faculty development opportunities has greatly increased. For example, monies for Faculty Aid have increased from \$33,000 in the early part of the decade to \$220,000 today. This substantial increase in support has allowed faculty to further develop their research agendas, improve their pedagogy and stay connected to national and international higher education initiatives

and conversations. All tenured and probationary faculty members are eligible to apply for faculty aid and research grants during the fall and spring. The Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC) uses an established set of criteria to review the applications and make recommendations to the Provost for the award of said funds. During the 2006-2007 AY, the amount of faculty aid that could be received annually was increased from \$1,500 to \$1,750. The COW also empowered the FPC to give additional consideration to probationary faculty and to all faculty members who had not yet attained the rank of full professor, providing them with additional support in their efforts to further their academic careers.

This increased support came not only from an additional commitment of College resources by the Administration, but also through separate contributions from an anonymous donor fund, the Fox Family Funds, the Litzenberger Funds, the Mollica Family Funds and the Robinson Funds. The Fox and Robinson Funds underwrite named fellowships.

Notwithstanding the national economic crisis, the College has maintained its commitment to supporting sabbaticals and professional development semesters (PDS). The PDS allows faculty who commit the extra time required to teach in the freshman learning communities the opportunity to pursue scholarship and to further develop their pedagogy.

Faculty are encouraged to apply to participate in a grant writing circle, which is designed to help faculty members identify grant opportunities and assist them in the development of grant proposals. The faculty accepted to be part of the circle meet monthly to examine various issues that arise during the grant writing process. There is also a grant writing workshop held each semester, open to all full-time and adjunct faculty interested in pursuing grant support. Among the topics covered during the workshop are where to apply for grant support, how to write a successful

proposal, and how to formulate a budget. The Faculty Grant Coordinator, a tenured member of the faculty, facilitates the grant writing circles and workshops.

Another support activity developed by the Administration is the Scholarship Circle. These circles, led by the Provost or the Associate Dean of the Faculty, provide participating faculty with support and feedback on their research, as well as writing, time management, and assistance in the exploration of appropriate outlets for their research. Significant scholarly activity has resulted from these circles.

During the 2007-2008 AY, the College appointed its first Scholar for Teaching and Learning and established the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research. The Center supports faculty as they refine their teaching, prepare classes, and focus on student learning and research. All faculty members are encouraged to use the Center, its' library, and participate in the offered programs. Programs include bi-monthly Teaching Matters lunch discussions regarding topics of relevance led by Wagner College faculty and administrators. During the fall, 2009 semester, for example, "Teaching Matters" programs included Jeff Gutkin, Director of Academic Computing ("Moodle as a Teaching Tool"); Professor Claire Regan ("Adjunct Teaching on our Campus"); Dr. Erica Johnson ("Critical literacy"); Dr. Anne Love ("Learning from the National Survey on Student Engagement"), and Dr. Miles Groth ("Teaching Men in the College Classroom.").

The Fellowship for Teaching, Learning and Research, under the aegis of the Center, is a faculty learning community within which faculty members develop their own research on a topic related to their teaching and student learning. The Fellowship meets monthly to discuss current research on teaching and learning. In the spring, 2009 semester, 10 Fellows received a stipend in support of their participation. Each fellow brought a course concept or teaching method that they hope to explore and develop through the fellowship.

Other functions of the Center include private and confidential meetings with the Scholar for Teaching and Learning regarding pedagogical issues, mid-semester diagnostics to improve one's classes, and address student concerns, during the semester while the course is still in session, and sponsoring the annual Wagner College Focus on Faculty on topics of interest and immediacy such as the "Focus on Faculty: Community, Meaning and Renewal at Wagner College" held in the fall of 2009. In 2008, the Focus on Faculty addressed "Engaging students."

The opportunities for faculty development have increased dramatically, and there has been an increase in scholarly productivity by faculty. To examine the amount of scholarship performed across years, entries in the *Faculty Scholarship and Professional Development Newsletter*, which summarizes each academic year's achievements were compared. Comparisons were made at five year intervals (1999, 2004, and 2009). This newsletter (Appendix 7-1) is not a perfect source, as not all faculty members submit entries and faculty differ in what they consider to be scholarship worth reporting, but it still provides a basis for comparison. A chart representing our findings is Appendix 7-2 to this Self-Study.

Overall, the number of entries in the newsletter increased from 138 (1999) to 209 (2004) to over 214 (2009). Omitting entries for internal grants, Wagner publications, and presentations by students, the corrected numbers are 123, 178, and 197, respectively. The number of faculty reporting to the newsletter increased from 39 (1999) to 47 (2004) and then decreased to 41 in 2009. Therefore the number of entries per reporting faculty member clearly has increased from 3.2 in 1999, to 3.8 in 2004, and to 4.8 in 2009.

There was a dramatic increase in the number of scholarly presentations and lectures,; from 19 in 1999 to 61 in 2009. Although smaller in number, books also increased from 0 to 5 over the 10-year period and book chapters from 1 to 14. The number of peer-reviewed journal articles

increased at first but may be leveling off: an increase from 15 to 22 from 1999 to 2004, and then 22 again in 2009, although the number of articles per faculty member has increased. External grants follow a similar trend. The one obvious negative trend that is seen is in the arts, as the number of performances and exhibits has decreased from 28 in 1999 to 5 in 2009.

D. Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Standards and Procedures

The *Wagner College Faculty Handbook*, 17th edition, sets forth the procedures for appointment, promotion, tenure, grievance, discipline and dismissal. Policies and procedures for the hiring of new, full-time, tenure-track and visiting faculty, as well as for reappointment, promotion, and tenure of current full-time faculty, are found in the *Faculty Handbook* (pp. 38-67). Appointment policies and procedures for part-time faculty are also found there (pp. 67-69).

The tenure process provides for departmental-level review during the candidate's first, third and fifth years of service. During the second, fourth and sixth years, the process is broadened by the inclusion of faculty members from outside the department into a first-level evaluation by the Peer Evaluation Group (PEG) and the addition of a review by the Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC). The Provost reviews the recommendations of the department (1st, 3rd, and 5th years) and the PEG and FPC (2nd, 4th, and 6th years). In addition, all candidates for promotion in rank are to be reviewed by a PEG, the FPC, the Provost, and the President. In the case of positive tenure and promotion recommendations, the Board of Trustees will have final approval.

In an effort to determine whether the process for faculty re-appointment, promotion and tenure is consistent and transparent across all academic departments, the sub-committee responsible for this Chapter conducted a survey of full-time faculty members. Fifty-two out of 94 full-time faculty members responded (55.3% response rate).

The survey results (Appendix 7-3) indicate that some members of the faculty have

concerns about the current faculty evaluation process at the College. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents thought that the instrument used for student evaluations of faculty was not well-designed. Only 27% of the respondents agreed that the Faculty Personnel Committee was able to evaluate each and every candidate in a fair manner, while 37% disagreed (the rest were undecided). Only 27.5% believed that the tenure and promotion process at Wagner was fair, 37.3% were undecided, and 35.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed that process was fair. There appear to be other questions among the faculty concerning the differences between requirements for tenure and those for promotion to associate professor and about how important service to the larger community outside of Wagner should be to the process. In Spring 2009, the faculty rejected a proposal to link tenure and promotion to associate professor.

These concerns need to be addressed, and more effort is needed to educate the faculty about the process.

E. Diversifying the Faculty

Continuous efforts have been made to hire an increased number of qualified female full-time faculty members to bring about a more gender-balanced faculty. Also, there is a strong commitment by the College to hire members of underrepresented groups to fill open positions. Policies and procedures for the hiring of new, full-time, tenure track and visiting faculty are found in the *Faculty Handbook* (17th Edition, pp.31-58).

In fall, 2010, 47 of the 94 full-time faculty members (50%) and 90 of the 172 part-time faculty members (52.3%) were women. Ten of the full-time (10.6%) and 21 of the part-time (12.2%) faculty were members of underrepresented groups. This compares to 2004-2005, when 38 of the 89 full-time faculty members (42.7%) and 66 of 120 (55%) of the part-time faculty were women. In 2004-2005, 8 (9%) of the full-time faculty and 16 (13.3%) of the part-time faculty were

members of minority groups. At present, there are no tenured African-American faculty members. Currently, one African-American female has probationary faculty status and a second African-American has visiting professor status.

While some progress has been made in hiring a more diverse full-time faculty, the part-time faculty cohort is less diverse than five years ago. It is clear that, despite a longstanding commitment to the recruitment of a more diverse faculty, substantial progress needs to be made.

F. The Role of Adjunct Faculty at Wagner

Adjunct faculty members are an important part of Wagner's instructional staff. Adjunct professors enrich the curriculum by teaching specialized courses in their particular areas of expertise. They are also used when staffing shortfalls result from faculty on leave situations or when unanticipated additional courses or course sections are needed.

Each semester, the College holds, under the direction of the Associate Dean of Faculty, an orientation for adjuncts, where they are apprised of College procedures. In addition, one Teaching Matters session during fall, 2009 was held at 5:00 p.m., so that many adjuncts who teach evening classes could attend.

At the department level, efforts to integrate adjunct faculty are inconsistent. A few departments offered orientations where they cover a plethora of items ranging from basic daily routines through specific goals for classes. Some departments hold none orientation. While some departments invite adjunct faculty members to attend department meetings, others do not. Most departments include adjuncts in celebratory events. While adjuncts are an important part of our faculty, the College recognizes that there is a need to more fully integrate them into the College's curricular and extracurricular activities. The Department Chairs Council has devoted portions of at least two meetings to this issue in the last year. The Department of Business Administration invites

adjuncts to attend all department meetings. These meetings are typically attended by two or three adjuncts, who attend when their schedule permits. The annual faculty awards event now includes an award for “outstanding adjunct professor.”

The review of teaching effectiveness for adjunct faculty is similar to that of full-time faculty. Adjunct faculty members with three years or less of service are observed and evaluated by a member of the full-time faculty on an annual basis. The form used for that purpose is identical to that used for full-time members of the faculty (Appendix E of the *Wagner College Faculty Handbook, 17/e*). Adjuncts are also evaluated by their students in each course they teach (the form this purpose is found as Appendix F of the *Wagner College Faculty Handbook, 17/e*). The results of these student evaluations are forwarded to the department chair, the Provost’s Office, and the adjunct faculty member. While the student evaluations are conducted on a regular basis, the peer observations have not been implemented consistently. While some academic departments have conducted peer observations as specified, not all have done so, even though the form used to re-appoint adjunct faculty includes questions about peer observations and copies of such observations are required to be included with the form. It is clear that formal review of all part-time faculty members is not taking place in a systematic way.

G. Academic Freedom

Wagner College recognizes the American Association of University Professors’ 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure (Section III A of the *Wagner College Faculty Handbook, 17th edition*, page 21). The statement (Appendix A of the *Wagner College Faculty Handbook, 17th edition*, sets forth the principles of academic freedom. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, there was criticism of a faculty member whose personal website was perceived by some as critical of American policy. However, the vast majority of members of the

campus community expressed their support of academic freedom and the right of faculty to express their views in a manner consistent with the 1940 statement. No other incident of violation or concern about academic freedom has arisen.

H. Faculty Compensation

While the issue is addressed in Chapter 6, the question of faculty salaries has long been a matter of concern at the College. Because of financial difficulties during the 1980s, faculty salaries at Wagner began to lag behind those of comparable institutions in the New York metropolitan area. In the early 1990s, the College began to address the issue by significantly increasing salaries for entry-level assistant professors, with more modest increases for senior faculty. Notwithstanding those increases, salaries continued to lag. These concerns have been magnified by the salary freeze that was in place for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 academic years.

In 2007-2008, the Priorities and Budget Committee (PBC) presented a proposal for faculty compensation to the College Administration. Subsequently, the President established the Faculty Compensation Task Force to develop a compensation philosophy and compensation recommendations. The study found that Wagner's faculty salaries ranked in the 25th percentile of pay at comparable benchmark schools, and significantly worse in specific highly-paid disciplines. It has completed its report and delivered it to the President, who presented it to the Board of Trustees at the December, 2010 Board of Trustees meeting. The Board plans to review and hold further discussions about the proposal.

Adjunct compensation has remained at \$2,000 per course for quite some time. In 2007-2008, the Provost's Office surveyed metropolitan area institutions and found that Wagner's adjunct pay rate was among the lowest in region. A number of department chairs have cited the adjunct pay rate

as an impediment to the recruitment of adjuncts. The Compensation Task Force included adjunct compensation in its report to the President and the Board of Trustees.

I. Conclusion

Wagner College full-time faculty members are active and productive in teaching, scholarship and professional development. Faculty play a leading role in the development of new courses and curricula, they have taken advantage of increased resources to initiate and expand research agendas; and they have received assistance from the College in developing their pedagogy, as the College continues its commitment to both teaching and scholarship.

While the *Faculty Handbook* sets forth the procedures for re-appointment, promotion and tenure of full-time faculty, a survey of full-time faculty members indicates there is some concern about the clarity and fairness of the process. These concerns need to be addressed. The greater diversification of the faculty, a longstanding commitment of both the administration and faculty, remains a challenge as the College continues its efforts to recruit a faculty, both full and part-time, that more accurately mirrors our society. Compensation for both full-time and adjunct faculty are ongoing concerns that are part of a broader issue that is addressed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 8-CURRICULAR CORE AND MAJORS (STANDARDS 11 AND 12)

I. Charge to the Subcommittee:

Standard 11: Educational Offerings. The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

Standard 12: General Education. The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

II. Source of Evidence

- *Wagner College Mission Statement*
- *Department Annual Reports and Assessment Plans/Reports*
- *Minutes of the meetings of the Academic Policy Committee*
- *Undergraduate/Graduate Course Bulletins*
- *Survey of departments conducted by Chapter 8 Sub-Committee*

Executive Summary

A. Strengths

- *The Wagner Plan is a strong undergraduate general education program that provides opportunities for all students to meet their general education, disciplinary outcomes and institutional goals*
- *The faculty have a significant voice in the development of new programs and the modification of existing programs*
- *The academic program approval process is well defined*
- *Every academic department is actively engaged in student learning assessment and, to some degree, is utilizing assessment data to improve academic programs*
- *Experiential learning, integral to the Wagner Plan, has been incorporated and is aligned with our institutional mission*
- *Interdisciplinarity encouraged and thriving through the Wagner Plan*

B. Challenges

- *Some academic departments have some difficulty balancing the staffing of the First Year Program and the Intermediate Learning Communities while, at the same time, offering enough courses for majors, especially upper level courses.*
- *There is a need to insure broader and more predictable participation by academic departments in the Honors Program*
- *Particular departments have completed extensive student learning assessment. However, assessment has not been extensive in every department*

- *Some academic departments that have made significant changes as a result of assessment have yet to measure the effects these changes have had on student learning outcomes*
- *Measures for identifying departmental and program success are not clearly articulated*

C. Recommendations

- *A mechanism that would incorporate a strategic institutional view of academic program development should be established*
- *Departments should regularly offer Honors sections to support the Honors Program*
- *The College should develop a more clearly articulated vision for the Honors Program*
- *All academic departments should be using assessment data to make modifications in their academic programs related to disciplinary content and general education goals*
- *In-depth assessment of departmental program changes and their impact on learning outcomes should be streamlined where possible*

EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

Wagner College's educational offerings are designed to provide students with knowledge and skills in their chosen fields through scholarly inquiry built on the fundamentals of the liberal arts tradition combined with curricular goals specific to Wagner. These include: citizenship, experiential learning, interdisciplinary connections, reflection, practice, and writing across the curriculum.

Wagner College assures the mission-related quality of its educational offerings through a rigorous proposal and review process, overseen by the faculty in consultation with the provost. Many changes in existing academic programs have resulted from assessment activities undertaken by the departments (Chapter 9).

A. The Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts

Under *The Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts* (Appendix 8-1), students complete general education requirements and an in-depth major, totaling 36 course units. Each course (with some exceptions) is weighted as one unit. The general education requirements include foundation courses, two intercultural courses, learning communities with experiential learning components,

reflective tutorials (RFTs), and courses fulfilling disciplinary perspectives. The major, selected no later than the end of sophomore year, typically requires between 12–18 units (A description of the Wagner Plan is found in Appendix 8-1).

B. Program Development

Evaluation of New Programs and Their Curricula. The College has a well-defined process for the approval of new degree or certificate programs (and the courses and degree requirements necessary to implement them). The process involves the academic departments, the College administration and the New York State Education Department.

The College’s guidelines for every new program proposal mandate appropriate content, academic rigor and coherence. These standards meet the requirements of the New York State Education Department, where all academic programs must be registered. Supplementary guidelines apply to programs that are accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE), Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), and the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC). Adherence to these guidelines is assured through the shared oversight of the Office of the Provost, the Committee of the Whole, and the Academic Policy Committee (APC); approval by all three is required before any new program proposal is submitted to the New York State Education Department for review and approval.

New programs and other curricular changes are developed by the academic departments. The APC is responsible for reviewing current academic programs, conducting initial reviews and making recommendations for new programs, evaluating all course changes in existing programs, evaluating course changes needed to implement new programs, and reviewing all new course

proposals. The elaboration of program curricula (course titles and descriptions, prerequisites and syllabi) is prescribed by the forms that must be completed by the academic departments before they submit their proposals to the APC (<http://www.wagner.edu/apc/forms>). No new course is sent for approval to the APC unless it meets all requirements established by that body.

New program proposals are required to demonstrate academic quality and conformity with the standards of accrediting agencies (where relevant) and state regulations, and consistency with the College's mission and awareness of regional, state, and national needs. The College must have the resources (including faculty) needed for proper implementation of the program. The programs with accrediting organizations are Business Administration (ACBSP, IACBE), Education (NCATE), Nursing (NLNAC), Physician Assistant Studies (ARC-PA).

Program Oversight. In partnership with the administration, the APC manages the process of program and curriculum development. The Academic Review Committee (ARC) reviews student records. The Registrar's Office reviews every prospective graduate's transcript to ensure that degree requirements are met, and the Registrar serves as a non-voting member of the APC.

Once registered, the quality of programs is monitored through a process that is coordinated by the Office of the Provost. Monitoring takes place through an annual departmental report that includes assessment of student learning goals of programs within the department's purview. Monitoring also involves a multi-year plan that charts future developments at the departmental level. At this point, the annual department report process does not include a review of standing programs that might lead to possible revision or elimination.

Planning future curricula. While the program proposal process is well-established and provides ample opportunity for judgment about content, rigor and coherence of academic programs at the proposal stage, the process is focused at the program and department level and does not provide for

a strategic institutional view of curriculum development. Historically, most curricular changes have been suggested by individual faculty or departmental interests. Other influencing factors have included accreditation demands of external bodies, changes in licensing or certification examinations, and developments in academic disciplines. The process lacks a clearly articulated review policy that focuses attention on programs with low enrollments or other issues that may impact on long-term viability.

GENERAL EDUCATION

Wagner College specifies goals in its mission with regard to preparing students for professional and personal success after graduation. The core undergraduate requirements reflect these goals by requiring mastery of skills, such as critical thinking, public presentation skills and computer fundamentals, as well as exposing students to a breadth of intellectual areas, such as studies in Science, Humanities, Social Sciences and the Arts, that further encourage interdisciplinary connections as well as written reflection. Further, citizenship is built into the general education curriculum through required courses that focus on diversity, inter-culturalism and experiential learning. The components of general education at Wagner are as follows:

A. Learning Communities (LCs).

The Wagner curriculum leans heavily on the learning community concept, particularly within the general education component. LCs are thematically-linked courses, enrolling a common cohort of students. In an LC, students share common courses where linkages of subject matter and student experiences enhance course discussion, critical assessment, problem solving, experiential learning and reflective practice. Students have multiple opportunities in LCs and other courses to have these experiences. Students complete three LCs before graduation, one in the first year (fall term), one during the intermediate years (sophomore/junior), and one in the senior, year in their major. The

first and third LCs must include an experiential learning component and a reflective component (known as a “reflective tutorial” or RFT).

First Year Program (FYP). In the first semester at the College, each student takes an LC comprising three related courses: two disciplinary-based courses and an RFT linked with the outside-the-classroom experiences. The Academic Advisement Center assists entering freshmen in selecting courses related to areas of study in which they are interested. During the summer before they begin their first semester at Wagner, entering freshmen are sent the *First Year Guide* with a list of all the first-year learning communities (a representative list of Learning Communities is found in Appendix 8- 2). They are asked to return their ranked preferences for learning communities to the Academic Advisement Center so that they may be preregistered, for the appropriate learning community, before they arrive for fall orientation.

Intermediate Learning Community (ILC). During the sophomore or junior year, each student takes an intermediate learning community comprising two thematically-linked courses (or a limited number of team-taught, or integrated, ILCs) from different academic disciplines (a representative list of ILCs is found in Appendix 8-3). The ILC facilitates identifying the common threads that link different ways of knowing. The ILC may also be fulfilled by an approved international experience. Students are required to complete a written and oral project that combines the two disciplines represented in the ILC.

Senior Learning Community (SLC). *The Wagner Plan* culminates in the Senior Program and the third required learning community. During the senior year, all students must successfully complete a learning community with a reflective tutorial in their major. The SLC is a summative experience that contains the following elements: a capstone course in the major and a reflective tutorial that includes an experiential component and a final written project. Students are challenged to develop a

more sophisticated understanding of the complexity and depth of at least one discipline through concentrated application, problem solving, reflection, and critique. The SLC is the culmination of *The Wagner Plan* and the transitional learning experience beyond Wagner..

Experiential Learning Component. *The Wagner Plan* links the LCs directly to experiential learning situations based on their themes. In the first-year LC, students are placed in selected community-based situations in small groups with other students from their LC. Students typically spend three hours per week at the designated site. There are several models for experiential learning including: service learning (civic engagement), participatory learning, independent study, field trips, and/or community research. Senior LCs in the major field include an experiential component, called a senior reflective tutorial, to help in the transition from college to the world of employment or graduate studies.

Reflective Tutorial (RFT). The Freshman RFT emphasizes writing and oral communication skills, and students link their outside-the-classroom experiences directly to the readings in the RFT and the LC courses. Because the experiential components are directly linked to academic coursework, students learn how to scrutinize ideas in the light of “real world” experiences and share their findings with their classmates in lively discussions and written commentaries. In the senior LC, an experiential component is again linked to a reflective tutorial and a capstone course in the student’s major.

B. General Education Requirements

Students must satisfy general education requirements, which include **Foundations (3-4 units)**, which include Intensive Writing; Mathematics, Speech and Computer Proficiency; **Intercultural Understanding (2 units)**; **Reflective Tutorials (RFT) (2 units)**; **Learning Communities (3 units)**, and **Disciplinary Perspectives (10 units)** drawn from the **Humanities (3 units)**, including

one unit in history), **Social Sciences-(3 units)**, **Science (2 units)** and **The Art (2 units)**. A more detailed presentation of the General Education requirements is found in Appendix 8-4.

C. Meaning of Undergraduate Unit

The term “unit” signifies the satisfactory completion of work requiring attendance of at least 3.33 hours in lectures or recitations weekly and may include two or three hours weekly of laboratory experience throughout one semester. Normally a unit is a course. Some rare exceptions of fractional or multiple units exist. A semester consists of 13 weeks, exclusive of vacations, plus a required week of class meetings, reserved for class presentations and/or final examinations.

D. Continuous Improvement

Progress of the general education curriculum is monitored by a number of college-wide bodies. The Academic Policy Committee, the Committee for Learning Assessment, and committees of faculty that participate in the First Year Program, Intermediate Learning Community and Senior Learning Community have roles in oversight of various aspects of the general education curriculum. Assessment of student learning outcomes in general education is covered in Chapter 9.

THE UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR

The College’s 30 undergraduate programs of advanced study are located in 18 discipline-based academic departments and three interdisciplinary programs. These “majors” or “concentrations” range from 10 to 21 units (courses) in majors leading to professional credentials. A number of academic departments offer more than one degree program of study. The Provost exercises oversight of all academic programs.

One of the challenges faced by the academic departments has been the effort to staff the First Year Program and the ILCs while simultaneously offering enough courses for majors, especially upper-level courses. Many departments have responded to this challenge by reducing the

course frequency of their upper-level courses and/or staffing these courses with adjuncts. This challenge is compounded in departments that offer graduate programs.

Notwithstanding this challenge, each department reports that it had found ways to promote interdisciplinary connections as articulated in the Wagner Plan, particularly through teaching in the Freshman and the Intermediate Learning Communities, as well as participating in interdisciplinary majors (e.g., Biopsychology).

Another area where some strides have been made since the last self-study is the Honors Program. In addition to challenging course offerings, this co-curricular component has been enhanced with group activities, such as visits to historic sites in Philadelphia and lectures in New York City. However, there is a need for an articulated plan for departmental participation or course offerings in the Honors Program. Academic departments should consider ways to anticipate and regularly offer Honors sections. There is also a need for a more clearly articulated vision for the program.

The College's discussion of its transition to a learner-centered, outcomes assessment approach that has been strategically developed over the last decade is detailed in Chapter 9. However, we highlight the range of progress by offering brief profiles of assessment activities that have been taking place in some academic departments. The profiles are presented in the order of progress towards implementation of assessment from highest to lowest. While not all departments have made substantial process, it is important to note that the process is gaining a strong foothold in the institution and a culture of assessment is being institutionalized across the campus.

The Department of Education. Since 2003, a comprehensive assessment system has been in use for the following undergraduate and graduate programs: Childhood Education: 1-6, Early Childhood B-2, Literacy B-6, and Secondary 7-12.. Assessment measures have effectively and

seamlessly linked evaluation directly to instruction in the College's teacher education programs. Data-driven revisions to course requirements and program specific curricula have been implemented as a result of biannual data analyses and departmental review of data reports at the end of each semester for the past six years. Assessment tools specifically designed to meet the standards of the requisite specialty program associations are consistently utilized to collect data across all five teacher education programs. For instance, all eight assessment tools administered in both the undergraduate and graduate Childhood Education 1-6 programs were approved by The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), the specialty program association required by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), as meeting all 19 ACEI standards for high quality programs of teacher education.

The Department of Psychology. The department has made a number of curricular changes in response to strategic assessment activities. For example, the department added a laboratory component to its PS 116-Statistics and Methodology course, and the amount of time spent on different elements of the laboratory was also changed in response to assessment. Assessment also resulted in the department introducing more evening classes, expanding their experimental psychology offerings, and planning to offer an Advanced Clinical course in the near future. The department also changed experimental subject management software following assessment. Assessment is being conducted to ascertain learning improvement as a result of these changes.

Psychology's assessment process has two levels, one formal and one informal. In the formal process, the department maps out which of their classes cover each of the goals stated in the mission statements of both the college and department, having established objective measures of success for each goal. The informal process involves holding discussions with senior psychology majors concerning their perceptions of the department's successes, failures, and what can be done to

improve the major. This is followed by discussions among departmental faculty about the student comments together with their own observations concerning which problems need to be solved and how the major can be improved.

Department of Modern Languages. In its first assessment cycle, Modern Languages assessed its advanced classes. Faculty designed rubrics to evaluate the oral and written work of all students in these classes and made three significant changes to the curriculum after examining the results. These changes include requiring students to take two introductory level language courses before taking the intermediate course; requiring students in intermediate level courses to read a number of literary texts and essays, and giving a thematic base to the conversation and composition courses. The department is now assessing the elementary language classes and will be discussing the results and potential curriculum changes during the 2010-11 academic year.

Department of Art. The department's assessment caused it to conclude that studio art majors required more training in drawing. In response, the department established a non-credit drawing lab that meets three hours a week; that all majors must attend for a minimum of one semester for a pass/fail grade. The department also changed its capstone course from an experiential-based studio course called Artist and Identity to an Art History capstone course. This was in direct response to the department's assessment that many of its seniors retained an insufficient knowledge of art history.

Department of Chemistry and Physics. Assessment efforts have resulted in a more effective focus on computational chemistry/physics, use of journal articles in upper-level courses. With growth in the number of majors, the department has redefined how upper-level lab courses are being taught.

Department of Business Administration. The department completed a major revision of the undergraduate curriculum during the 2009-2010 academic year. Based on assessment data, the

faculty concluded that the majors in its five concentrations (Accounting, Finance, International Business, Management and Marketing) required additional fundamental knowledge in their areas. As a result, the number of required courses in the concentration was increased from three to four (while the number of electives permitted was reduced from three to two). This change took effect in the fall, 2010 semester.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT WAGNER COLLEGE

A. Experiential Learning Within the Departments

The departments report definitive and successful ways in which they utilize experiential learning, including student participation at research, community partnerships, gallery and museum visits and internships and practica. The “practical” side of liberal education is best defined through our curriculum because of the specific linkages created by our learning communities, reflective tutorials and the commitment faculty make to connecting students with the world outside the classroom.

B. Semester-Long, Off-Campus Internships.

Since 1988 the College has participated in a number of programs where students spend an entire semester participating in off-campus internship programs. A number of students have interned in Washington through our affiliation with the *Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars* (www.twc.edu). Other Wagner students have interned in Albany through the *New York State Assembly Internship Program* (<http://assembly.state.ny.us/internship/>) and the *New York State Senate Undergraduate Session Assistant Program* (<http://www.nysenate.gov/department/student-programs/undergraduate-program>).

Students report that these have been valuable experiences that have helped them in the post-Wagner careers.

THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Wagner College's Graduate Division offers 18 programs leading to a master of science (5 programs), a master of science in education (6 programs), Master of Business Administration (7 programs), a joint B.S.-M.S. in accounting, a joint B.S. M.S. in microbiology, and two post-master's certificate programs in education leadership and family nurse practitioner. In addition to Middle States accreditation, several individual programs are accredited as noted earlier in this Self-Study.

Between 2002-03 and 2009-10, the College awarded 1,216 graduate degrees, distributed as follows: Master of Business Administration, 489; Master of Science in Education, 391; Master of Science (Accounting), 78; Master of Science (Microbiology), 49; Master of Science (Nursing), 124, and Master of Science (Physician Assistant), 82.

Wagner College provides graduate level programs for a clientele interested in distinct professional fields. Instruction is provided through formal classroom study, seminars and independent research, to give the student the opportunity to acquire advanced knowledge and make contributions to his or her field of study. Personal attention and the recognition of individual needs are distinctive features of graduate study at the College. Classes are scheduled in the late afternoon and evening, as are registration and advisement. Graduate programs serve the needs of both full-time and part-time students. Courses are scheduled during the fall, spring and summer semesters.

Enrollment. The College's graduate programs are advertised primarily through communications in local newspapers, the College website (http://www.wagner.edu/graduate_programs/main), cable television, program-specific publications and by reputation in each distinct market. They attract mainly local students (65% of the graduate students enrolled in spring, 2010 were from Staten Island).

Organization and Management. While the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs oversees graduate programs, day-to-day operations are managed by the departments' graduate program directors, who report to their department chairs. Along with the Admissions Office, they are responsible for helping to recruit, admit, and advise students in their respective programs; they resolve students' problems at the program level; and, in some departments they participate in the hiring of adjunct faculty members. Graduate program directors also play a significant role in maintaining program quality. Coordination and oversight across programs is led by the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, who chairs the Graduate Council, which meets four times a year. The Graduate Council is responsible for the consideration of academic policies for the graduate programs and fostering the welfare of graduate students.

Assessment at the Graduate Level. With the exception of microbiology, the graduate programs offered by the College are reviewed by the accrediting organizations noted earlier in this Chapter. Presented below are some of the changes that graduate programs have made as a result of assessment activity. It should be noted that the programs are presently in a second cycle of assessment where they are measuring the impact of the changes outlined below.

Accounting. The research component of the program was decreased by one course and the substantive material of accounting application was increased by one course. This was in response to the students' requests for more depth of coverage of accounting applications to meet employers' and testing needs.

Master of Business Administration. The program concluded that many of its students were deficient in their oral and written communications skills. As a result, BU 624, Managerial Communications, was added to the curriculum and made a requirement for all the department's M.B.A. programs.

Department of Education. The department has, based on assessment, made changes in its assessment process and in its programs. Assessment changes include: 1) adjustment of the portfolio rubric to emphasize reflection and evidence of what has been learned by teacher candidates from assignments and practical experiences; 2) placing new emphasis on evidence that students working with teacher candidates are learning; 3) simplification and improvement of the rubrics used for evaluating teacher candidate growth and achievement, and 4) altering the Master's Thesis rubric to accentuate the importance of clear, focused research questions, strong, critical literature reviews, and research methods sections that are linked to research questions. Program changes produced an increase in the number of workshops offered on special education and the inclusion of more content into courses focusing on the needs of students with disabilities. The Department is in the process of requiring a Classroom Management Course for all teacher candidates.

Evelyn L. Spiro School of Nursing. A student survey (Appendix 8-5) conducted by the School indicated a need for increased technological competency. In response, the School added more presentation requirements in all courses and NR 631 (Evaluation and Instrumentation) requires students to create an online poster as well as use Moodle. In Nursing 616 (Advanced Health Assessment), an advanced health assessment laboratory session has been added, based on student responses to course surveys that indicated a need for more practice. Also, Nursing 626 (Teaching and Learning in Nursing) was developed and added as a required course, as a response to follow-up surveys that indicated a need for the nurse educator student to have more knowledge of testing and evaluation of learning based on the competencies established by the NLNAC for the nurse educators.

Graduate Microbiology Program. Assessment of the thesis-track of the Graduate Microbiology Program is based on the performance of students during the defense of their research-driven thesis

as judged by the thesis examination committee. However, as a result of a series of poorly conducted thesis defenses that occurred 4-5 years ago, where students were clearly inadequately prepared to defend their work, a revision of the thesis-track guidelines and thesis research courses was implemented. Before revisions, thesis-track students were required to complete two 3-credit research courses (MI798 and MI799) culminating in the writing of a thesis based on their accomplishments in the laboratory. Nevertheless, exactly how these courses were to be conducted and how the student was to be assessed and assigned a grade was unclear and usually based on anecdotal information. To clarify the process, for both students and faculty alike, a set of formal guidelines for the thesis track was drafted based on three 2-credit research courses (MI797, MI798, and MI799). The guidelines clearly state the purpose of each of the research courses and provide firm deadlines for students and faculty to follow. The objectives for MI797 are for the student to develop and write a research proposal (with the aid of the research advisor), assemble a thesis examination committee, and defend the research proposal; the grade for MI797 is based on the overall quality of the proposal defense and students must obtain a B or better to proceed to MI798. The goals of MI798 are to carry out the proposed research and to provide a written progress report to the examination committee by the end of the first semester; the grade for this course is based on the quality of the progress report and only students who obtain a B grade or higher are permitted to register for MI799. The objectives for MI799 are to write the thesis and defend it successfully before the examination committee. Examination committees must now fill out a written report that summarizes their recommendations at each step of the process; the student signs the report, as do the members of the examination committee and the director of the graduate program.

In the two years since the Department of Biological Sciences approved this process, an informal poll of the microbiology faculty indicates that the quality of thesis defenses has improved,

and the overall level of confusion and ambiguity formerly associated with the thesis track has been significantly reduced. The department has also experienced an overall steady increase in the number of students choosing to complete the thesis-track option.

Efforts to improve student performance. The College has made significant efforts to improve academic performance by our graduate students. The College's Academic Review Committee (ARC) reviews the academic progress of students in the graduate programs. Students whose cumulative grade point averages fall below 3.00 are informed by the Associate Provost/Dean of Graduate Studies that their cumulative G.P.A. has fallen below the minimum requirement for graduation. Their graduate program directors are also advised, and students are expected to consult with their graduate directors to review their progress. The ARC will also dismiss from the program students who have received grades of C+ or lower for more than three different courses.

To support graduate students, a writing center was established in fall, 2007. The center, which is staffed by an adjunct faculty member in the Business Administration Department, is available to all graduate students who are seeking assistance with the writing of their research papers.

ONLINE AND DISTANCE LEARNING

A. Online Courses

The College has offered a limited number of online courses during the previous three summer sessions. These courses have been targeted to Wagner students who reside outside the area and are not be able to attend courses on campus during the summer. During the 2008, 2009 and 2010 summer sessions, the College offered a combined total of 31 online courses with a total registration of 239 students. These courses were at the graduate and undergraduate levels, and they

covered a variety of topics. At present, the College is not offering more than 50% of any program online, and there are no immediate plans to offer a fully online program.

B. Distance Learning Initiatives on Campus.

In spring, 2009, the Provost team-taught a course with a faculty member at the Hellenic American University in Greece, using a new videoconferencing system allowing two groups of 12 students each to see and hear each other in real-time. The students used Skype and webcams to collaborate between class sessions. As a result of this course, in February, 2010, the College was awarded the “Bringing the World into the Classroom” award by the American Council on Education. Similar distance learning projects are currently under discussion.

I. Charges to the Subcommittee

Standard 14: Assessment of student learning demonstrates whether at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Individual Department Assessment Reports*
- *Survey of Department Changes and Evidence by the Wagner College General Goals*
- *Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) instrument*
- *(CT)²: Critical Thinking for Civic Thinking*
- *Writing Assessment Project*
- *The First Year Program Survey*
- *General Learning Community Survey*
- *The Intermediate Learning Community Survey*
- *Various direct and indirect measures in the Civic Innovations Program*
- *Assessments of student learning and courses with the Teagle Foundation grant focused on community engagement and experiential learning*
- *The AAC&U Core Commitments program,*
- *The Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)*
- *The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)*
- *Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)*

III. Executive Summary

A. Strengths:

- *Appointment of an Associate Provost for Assessment in July, 2009*
- *Inclusion of annual assessment reports in the annual department reports*
- *The use, by many departments, of the senior learning communities as vehicles for assessment*
- *Graduate programs with external accreditation requirements regularly perform learning assessment activities with validation by independent examination agencies*
- *All academic departments have completed at least one cycle of assessment of their major programs*

B. Challenges:

- *Uneven "buy in," participation, support and learning assessment expertise across departments and among individual faculty members*
- *Uneven emphasis on assessment of general education learning outcomes*
- *The most recent integrated learning intermediate learning community model has not been fully adopted and assessed*

C. Recommendations:

- *Develop additional validated assessment tools for general education learning outcomes*
- *Secure faculty approval of an e-portfolio system to document student learning*
- *Departments must continue the assessment of their majors, identify which of the general education learning outcomes are addressed by courses in their departments, and create and validate tools of assessment that they can use in their assessment of their department's contribution to general education*
- *The most recent integrated learning ILC model needs to be more fully adopted and assessed*
- *More thorough adoption of (CT)² assessment tool is needed*

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

The Committee for Learning Assessment (CLA) oversees a campus-wide assessment system to measure learning outcomes. Since the last self-study, several assessment iterations have occurred across campus and the results were used to adjust academic programs as well as individual courses to better serve the students' learning needs. To discuss and present these results in this format, questions were posed around six areas:

- Since the last accreditation visit in 2001, what have we done to assess the degree to which Wagner College students have achieved the 10 learning goals that are part of the College's General Education Program?
- How have we determined the effectiveness of selected assessment tools to measure student learning?
- What actions have we taken to ensure more reliable, valid measures of student learning??
- To what extent are institution-wide assessment findings being used for curriculum planning?
- How are faculty involved in the assessment and improvement of their academic programs?
- To what extent are assessment findings used for curricular revision within specific academic programs?

A. History

In its June 28, 2001 letter reaffirming accreditation for Wagner College, the Middle States Commission requested a follow-up report by April 1, 2003, documenting further progress in the development of “a comprehensive outcomes assessment plan, which outlines steps to utilize results for improvement.” The follow-up report provided substantial evidence to comply with this recommendation. The assessment section of the follow-up report was divided into three parts:

- **Academic programs**, including individual academic departments and particular college programs (the Wagner Plan, the Honors Program, writing across the curriculum, and graduate programs)
- **Academic services**, including academic advisement and related academic support services, the library and information retrieval, registration, and information technology
- **Student development**, with separate sections on national student survey information, career development, the Academic and Cultural Enrichment Program, and leadership and student organizations

In its July 1, 2003 letter, the Middle States Commission “acted to accept the follow-up report” and requested “a progress letter by December 1, 2004, documenting implementation of a comprehensive strategic plan, and continued progress towards strengthening the institution’s finances.” The non-inclusion of a request for evidence of continued progress towards the outcomes assessment plan was an indication that the college’s progress regarding that issue, reported in the follow-up report, was substantial and ongoing.

While the outcomes assessment plan described in the spring of 2003 follow-up report provided evidence of a plan with a focus on student learning outcomes, the evidence was primarily indirect (e.g., student survey instruments). While such instruments are often useful, they are not direct measures of student learning. It was therefore appropriate to focus on the use of direct measures as part of the academic assessment plan of the College. In December, 2003, faculty and administrators were directed to design and implement a comprehensive outcomes assessment plan that also included *direct* evidence of student learning outcomes. Faculty and administrators agreed that they would use the assessment data for improvement in student learning.

In the spring of 2004, each department was asked to select a full-time faculty member to serve as the departmental liaison/coordinator for assessment. Each department was also asked to prepare a departmental mission statement with specific desired learning objectives and assessment strategies for the academic programs within its purview. The resulting academic plan was presented in Appendix F of the *Wagner College Periodic Review Report for the Middle States Commission on*

Higher Education, June 1, 2006. Each academic department also prepared a spreadsheet showing the specific general education goals that were addressed by each course, presented in Appendix G of that report.

B. Assessment of General Education

Administrators and faculty at Wagner College employ various assessment tools described below, to assess components of the General Education Program. Institution-wide assessments at Wagner College include use of the following: Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA); (CT)², Critical Thinking for Civic Thinking; Writing Assessment Project (WAP); the First Year Program Survey; General Learning Community Survey; the Intermediate Learning Community Survey (ILC); various direct and indirect measures in the Civic Innovations Program, assessments of student learning and courses with the Teagle Foundation grant focused on community engagement and experiential learning, the AAC&U Core Commitments Program, and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the companion, Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE).

C. Assessment of Formal and Informal Writing

The Writing Assessment Project (WAP). Developed during the 2001-2002 academic year, is one of the centerpieces of the College's efforts to develop direct assessments of the General Education Program Learning Goals. Initially, annual cohorts of first-semester freshmen were followed longitudinally throughout their four years. Copies of each participant's formal writing were collected during each academic year and assessed each May by a group of faculty members and administrators. Using a common rubric with clearly stated criteria devised by faculty from the English and Education departments, and the Director of the Writing Center, at least two evaluators read and rated each paper, with a third assessment in case of disagreement. The results were

presented for discussion during the First Year Program's annual May retreat and periodically reported to the Committee of the Whole.

Although many Wagner faculty agreed (at least in principle) that assessing student writing across the general education program using a standardized rubric would provide beneficial feedback, this version of the WAP encountered a number of real stumbling blocks, which included:

- Faculty, who were expected to collect copies of student formal writing and forward the papers to the WAP coordinator, did not always comply
- Keeping track of students after they left the FYP and collecting representative samples of their formal writing was logistically cumbersome
- The three-part standardized rubric used to assess formal writing was found to be too limiting to effectively evaluate the range of writing encountered
- Recruiting faculty assessors following the end of the spring semester became progressively more difficult, in spite of a daily stipend of \$100 to participate

To address these limitations, the WAP was ported to an online format in the fall of 2006. In this online version of the WAP, all students in FYP learning communities were expected to upload copies of their formal writing directly into an electronic database. Faculty responsibilities included uploading descriptions of their writing assignments into the database, instructing students on how to submit their papers, and reminding students to upload copies of their formal writing into the database.

During its first semester, students in FYP learning communities submitted nearly 1,000 papers to the WAP database. From this collection, 160 papers were chosen at random by the computer for assessment. A group of approximately 30 faculty and administrators volunteered to serve as readers/assessors. Each assessor was assigned 12-14 papers to evaluate over a one-month period during the spring, 2007 semester and each paper was read by two different assessors; assessors accessed their papers by logging into a password-protected account on the WAP server, which could be accessed via any computer with a web browser and an Internet connection. Assessors could either read their assigned papers directly off the computer screen or print them out.

Originally, the WAP rubric indicated three levels of effective writing. While the tool was useful as a general benchmark, the three-level measure was inadequate for discerning finer degrees of distinction. After careful consideration, the tool was redesigned to include five measurable levels of writing instead of three (Appendix N of the *Wagner College Periodic Review Report for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, June 1, 2006*). The redesigned rubric was used for the first time in May, 2006, when the student papers (writing samples) collected during the 2005-2006 academic year were evaluated. Today, the WAP remains the primary assessment for evaluating students' formal writing.

The original WAP results did not indicate significant improvement in undergraduate student writing during the four-year period. These results were the focus of several First-Year Program Faculty meetings, as well as several meetings of the Committee for Learning Assessment (CLA). In November, 2005, faculty and administrators convened to discuss the development of written communication skills as a student objective. Everyone at the meeting agreed that this student learning goal was inadequately addressed. In April, 2006, another campus-wide meeting took place with a major focus on how to revise the General Education Program to include more writing-intensive requirements. Discussion also addressed the possible inclusion of writing-intensive courses within each major. Minutes from these meetings were sent to the Academic Policy Committee (APC) for development of specific proposals to address this institutional issue. The quality of student writing remains one of the foci for student outcomes. Institutional leadership for writing quality and assessment across the curriculum is needed.

Starting in the fall of 2007, the WAP was expanded to include all writing intensive courses, not just those in the FYP. The intention was, that by the end of four years, a large enough collection of papers would be available to do a true longitudinal study by having the computer select students

who have submitted formal papers over the entire duration of their tenure at Wagner. Interestingly, even though this version of the WAP has made formal writing assessment a much more convenient and less arduous process for faculty, convincing faculty to volunteer as assessors is still difficult, as is convincing faculty to have their students submit their papers. Since the fall of 2007, students in the first-year learning communities have submitted hundreds of papers to the WAP database. In contrast, only about 30 to 40 papers have been collected from courses beyond the first-year program. Moreover, the comparative results indicate that there are no significant differences in student writing across the communities, quite possibly because of certain curricular restraints, which will be discussed later. In reaction to these circumstances, the Committee for Learning Assessment recommended a second writing assessment, this time of informal writing, which was first administered in fall of 2009 as part of a larger initiative to examine critical and civic thinking in the General Education Program. This assessment is known as (CT)², and is discussed later in this chapter.

Through assessment of writing in the FYP, it was determined that a small number of students were having significant difficulties with writing skills. To reach students who may need assistance prior to completing their first semester, a free non-credit Foundations in Writing program was started in the summer of 2007. Identified by low SAT Verbal scores and/or by the Admissions Office, students were invited to participate in this intensive two-week program held just before the start of the fall semester. Ten students participated the first summer, and six students participated in the summer of 2008. For 2009, the program was revised to try to address the low number of students participating. Faculty teaching in the FYP identified students who demonstrated difficulty with academic writing, and those students were invited to participate during the first half of the

semester, but no students participated. Due to this lack of response, the program is being revised again.

The Intermediate Learning Community and Sophisticated Writing. Partially in response to the information gained through the WAP, in the spring of 2007, the APC and the COW approved a new mission statement, goals, and structure for the Intermediate Learning Community (ILC), which emphasized a focus on communication (oral and written) across the curriculum. Specifically, the new goals stress that students experience “learning by doing,” to be reflected in sophisticated writing, challenging research, and an interdisciplinary project with a written and/or oral presentation. Each ILC faculty member assesses the common project with respect to her or his course. and under the ILC goals on the course syllabus. Moreover, the students upload their papers to a special website for assessment through WAP. Currently, ILC faculty are developing requirements to determine the extent to which their ILC goals are being met.

The Senior Learning Community and Assessment. Like the other learning communities, Faculty members of the Senior Learning Community (SLC) engage in extensive discussion regarding the mission of their learning communities and strategies to achieve it, resulting in the creation of minimum student requirements. The impetus for these changes grew from questions as to what activities actually constituted experiential learning in the various disciplines. As a result of these conversations, the SLC faculty approved a measure requiring that all students complete the following:

- A senior project demonstrating applied learning, substantial and sophisticated writing, and a final presentation
- Summative course content in the discipline
- A 100 hour experiential component
- Experience in the practice of the discipline as a profession
- In-class reflection on the connections between course content, experience, and professional practice.

D. Assessment Tools in use at Wagner

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) Tool. In fall of 2005, the College implemented another assessment component of the General Education Program Learning Goals with the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), which directly measures critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communication. Wagner College was one of approximately 50 colleges and universities selected by the Council for Aid to Education (CAE) to participate in the four-year Lumina Foundation Longitudinal Study using the online instrument. The instrument was applied to a sample of 271 first-semester freshmen during the fall of 2005. Smaller subsets of the same group were tested in their sophomore and junior years, measuring changes in the above outcomes over time. The results, presented in Appendix M of the *Wagner College Periodic Review Report for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, June 1, 2006*, were analyzed by the CAE.

Wagner College also participated in a three-year, cross-sectional study using the CLA. This cross-sectional study compared 100 freshmen and 100 seniors during the 2005-06, 2006-07, and 2007-08 academic years by sampling 100 first-semester freshmen during the fall and 100 seniors in the spring of each academic year. Near the completion of this study, the college renewed its commitment to another phase of the three-year, cross-sectional study, involving the 2008-09, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011 academic years.

Using one holistic score per student, the CLA instrument claims to evaluate critical thinking, analytical reasoning, written communication, and problem solving by using a two-pronged approach. The first involves performance tasks that require students to evaluate “real-life” scenarios, and measures a student’s ability to interpret, analyze, and develop new ideas. The second

approach involves analytic tasks that can be used to measure a student's ability to describe and participate in discussions involving complex ideas.

One advantage of participating in the CLA consortium is the opportunity to see how well Wagner students perform relative to students at equivalent institutions; the CLA might also provide a partial index of comparison for Wagner's own Writing Assessment Project. Nevertheless, as reported in the *2005-2007 Institutional Report (Wagner College)* from the Council for Aid to Education (CAE), Wagner College students consistently perform well below the average of other schools participating in the CLA.

In response to these results, some faculty members have questioned the validity of the CLA as an assessment tool. They have raised concerns that may provide at least some explanation for the poor performance of Wagner students on the CLA. Of these, the following observations, as per the minutes of the Committee for Learning Assessment meeting of March 3, 2009 (Appendix 9-1), may have impacted the performance of Wagner students most significantly:

- In general, sustained participation in group-learning situations leads to poorer CLA performance; however, at Wagner College, group or community learning is not only encouraged but is an integral part of the Wagner Plan
- The greater the number of hours students spend working for money, the less growth they display in CLA scores
- Membership in fraternities or sororities is associated with poorer scores on the CLA
- First generation students (neither of whose parents attended university) display less growth in test scores than those with university educated parents
- Pre-college performance, for example, their performance on the SAT, has an impact on CLA performance, but the advantage of having a high SAT score is taken away in the CLA test by a reporting system that divides students up according to their SAT score; Wagner College tends to accept students with higher SAT scores
- Faculty were so negative about the CLA their comments may have discouraged students from taking the instrument seriously
- Some faculty were critical of how various Colleges administered the CLA, giving students differing incentives to take the test seriously, contributing to its unreliability

Based on these concerns, and on the paucity of data supporting the validity of the CLA tool, the Committee for Learning Assessment decided that the development of an internal institution-

wide tool for measuring the critical thinking ability of Wagner College students was necessary before asking the Committee of the Whole to make college-wide changes in the curriculum

(CT)²: Critical Thinking for Civic Thinking. As a result, the Committee for Learning Assessment developed a new assessment tool based on the one used by selected faculty in the National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded project, *(CT)²: Critical Thinking for Civic Thinking*. The new assessment tool is designed to gauge not only critical thinking skills, but also civic thinking—which we define as the mode of thinking students manifest or engage in to prepare for civic action—and informal writing ability. Among its strengths is the opportunity for individual faculty to develop assessment prompts that have direct bearing on their particular courses.. The new assessment initiative was implemented for the first time in the fall of 2009 in the First Year Program, intermediate learning communities, and senior learning communities. The results of this initiative will provide an internal comparison for those generated by the CLA. The campus needs to more fully adopt this tool.

Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities (SENCER). During the fall of 2002, five First-Year Program learning communities—each including a science course—participated in a grant-funded project (“Application of SENCER Approaches in the Teaching of Science in Wagner College’s First-Year Program”). Each participant embedded in the learning community pedagogical approaches for (1) developing critical thinking skills, (2) understanding scientific inquiry and reasoning, (3) developing a basic knowledge base, and (4) understanding how science comprehension is crucial and empowering for all responsible citizens dealing with complex, unsolved, public issues. Degree of achievement of these SENCER objectives and other learning goals were evaluated using an online assessment survey called SALG (Student Assessment of Learning Gains, <http://www.sencernet/assessment/sencersalg.cfm>) tailored for each learning community. In general, the SALG results indicated that the SENCER ideals were approached in all

five participating learning communities. In 2004, one of these learning communities was selected as a national pedagogical model by the National SENCER Program (http://www.sencer.net/Resources/pdfs/Models_Print_Web_2004/Abstracts.pdf, page 12).

Additional Assessment Tools. The three learning communities—comprised of the First Year Program (FYP), Intermediate Learning Community (ILC), and the Senior Learning Community (SLC)—have been assessed for over a decade mainly with two tools, the first year program survey for the FYP, and a general learning community survey for the ILC.

Throughout 2009, the faculty, staff, and administrators reviewed and consolidated many of the assessment tools centered on student learning and civic engagement. In the spring, a new survey was administered to students in the 12 Civic Innovations-linked courses. The data (n=118) were compared with the results of earlier assessment tools, revealing similar trends. A majority of students reported that:

- The community experience helped them learn effective communication strategies in community settings (66%)
- The community experience helped them become more comfortable working with diverse communities (58%)
- They feel more able to engage in community problem solving as a result of their community experience (58%)
- They felt a stronger sense of personal responsibility for the health of youth on Staten Island as a result of their community experiences (64%)

In an effort to validate these findings, interviews were also conducted with participating students, faculty, and community partners. The interviews corroborated these survey results

Through a grant from the Teagle Foundation, Wagner College has partnered with Belmont University to promote and measure community engagement in relation to learning communities using a variety of direct and indirect measures. Data collected included: rubric scores for one assignment, student questionnaire, pre-post scenario assignment; (CT)², faculty questionnaire, and other student feedback. Collected data will address these questions:

- What are the relations between experiential learning in this course and the students' achievement of course learning outcomes?
- What is the role of the professor's classroom practices in achieving the learning outcomes?
- What can be recommended to other faculty as "best practices?"
- How might the data from this research contribute to the national discussion about effects of experiential education on student learning and about best practices for student learning?

The three-year project will be completed at the end of the 2010-2011 academic year.

Wagner College is a member of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) led to the Core Commitments program, a grant-funded initiative involving 23 colleges from across the country concerned with personal and social responsibility. Wagner students, faculty, staff, and administrators have participated in the program's survey. The College also administered the National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE] in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009, as well as the companion Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), in 2009. These tools provide insights into how students and faculty perceive the degree of student involvement with various aspects of Wagner College. Currently, a major assessment effort is funded by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U): *Bringing Theory to Practice*. It is using multiple existing assessment tools to ask the question: Is there a relationship among different models of experiential learning/civic engagement, psycho-social well-being and persistence toward graduation?

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT PRACTICES AND CURRICULUM REVISIONS

All the academic departments at Wagner College assess their programs relative to the 10 General Education Program Learning Goals. While disciplinary differences make it impractical for individual departments to address all ten goals, across the board, all the learning goals are assessed in multiple ways. Appendix 9-2 demonstrates how each department addresses general education goals in its courses.

Academic departments have reported on the changing and managing of their assessment tools, as well as the modifications they have made in their programs based on their assessment of learning outcomes. In conducting their assessment activities, departments relate assessment to their mission. Representative examples follow:

Department of Art. In the last three years, the Art Department has instituted changes regarding its assessment practices. Studio art majors are assessed by faculty examination of their work as well as an oral interview. In 2008, the questions were changed to make them more relevant to the works of art. Further, in response to the data, a zero-credit drawing lab was added to the requirements. Junior art majors were required to submit a portfolio to provide feedback earlier in the students' programs. Additionally, Gallery Management (AR221) was redesigned to give arts administration majors more information about the field. Art majors are now required to write a senior thesis in the capstone course. This thesis is evaluated by one of the two art historians. It is graded as part of the course requirement. The thesis is also assessed outside of class by both Art History Professors using a rubric developed by the Department. After the first year, it has become clear that the students need more preparatory work to develop research writing skills, so this year (2010-11) a rough draft is being required.

A big change for the department in the last few years has been the creation of a new art history major. Like the other art majors, the students in this program are required to submit a portfolio of work in their junior year, but in addition, they also do it in their senior year. In the capstone course, they complete a thesis that is expected to have more of an academic focus than that of a studio major. Further, art history majors complete a questionnaire which assesses understanding of art history, critical thinking, and the application of the discipline in real-life, professional situations.

In the assessment of their students, the department's professors have identified several challenges and issues. First, the art studio majors, in general, have poor drawing skills. Second, in AR221 (Gallery Management), the arts administration students indicated that they were unaware of any professional opportunities in the fine arts field. Third, despite evidence to the contrary, the senior assessment questionnaire suggested that students were not able to analyze the formal properties of art in a historic context. And fourth, in the capstone course, students were struggling with developing their theses and incorporating the appropriate use of evidence.

In response to these data and other reflections and observations, the professors introduced variety of changes. They incorporated career opportunities into the Gallery Management course required for all arts administration majors. They revised the senior assessment questionnaire to enable students to apply examples from their own works of art - historical and formal analysis. Finally, a number of requirements were added or enhanced:

The drawing lab was made more rigorous by requiring students to submit a portfolio for faculty evaluation and critique at the junior level. Students were required to conduct presentations. Peer evaluation increased emphasis not only of the senior portfolio but also at other program points along the way. Results indicate modest improvements thus far.

Department of Biological Sciences. The department developed an assessment plan for biology and microbiology majors that would present useful information for determining how to modify curricular programs to improve student learning. In the fall of 2003, the department faculty agreed that biology and microbiology majors should be assessed in their senior year, to see how well they had mastered fundamental concepts. The assessment exams were fashioned to directly measure student learning outcomes, using the Graduate Record Examinations subject test as a guide. While the students' grades were not impacted by this assessment, the students were asked to take the

assessment seriously and to give their best responses. Beginning in fall, 2007, the department added critical thinking as a student-learning goal. Seniors were given a critical thinking exercise presented as an open-ended scenario followed by a question designed specifically to challenge the student to think critically. Student responses were directly assessed using a modified seven-level version of the Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO) taxonomy.

For both the biology and the microbiology knowledge-based assessment exams, the mean score over the past five years has been 43% - 53%. In fall, 2008, it was the general opinion of the departmental faculty that the comprehensive exam did not accurately reflect our students' true abilities. Faculty members cited many instances where students scored very high in class, yet scored very low on the comprehensive assessment exam. During the implementation of an NSF-funded research project titled *(CT)²: Critical Thinking for Civic Thinking in Science*, a faculty member found that a significantly higher performance level was attained when students were given a *(CT)²* assessment prompt during a final exam (i.e., when they thought they would be graded), compared with when they were asked to respond with no associated grade. It became clear that, without grade motivation, students spent little time focusing on the assessment tool, and their resulting scores were therefore not representative of their true understanding of core concepts in their major. Making curricular changes based on such inaccurate assessment results would have made little sense.

As a result, beginning fall semester, 2008, the department began a different procedure for assessing student knowledge in the different areas of biology and microbiology. The department faculty agreed to assess majors as they completed each of the core courses in the biology major and the microbiology major. The results of the 10 to 20 multiple choice or true/false questions (chosen by each instructor) on the final exams for each of the courses are now tallied and forwarded to the department assessment coordinator at the end of each semester. Because these questions count

toward the final grade for the course, the students are more strongly motivated to do their best. The results so far indicate that such is the case: the majors are performing at a much higher level when the questions are embedded in the final exams than when they are part of a separate assessment tool for which there is no grade.

The Department of Education. The department has changed two assessment instruments as a result of student feedback. One change has to do with the portfolio that every student is required to complete. Students are now held to a higher standard in selecting documents, and are also asked to justify their inclusion. Students are also asked to evaluate how helpful particular documents have been in supporting their learning as teachers or in supporting the learning of the students with whom they work. The department has observed a slight increase in the quality of the reflective entries teacher candidates provided and in the reasons given for including certain artifacts or documents. Teacher candidates also are doing a better job demonstrating how the materials they chose for the portfolios supported their claim that their teaching resulted in more positive outcomes for their students. Unfortunately, many of the teacher candidates were not aware of the changes in expectations. In 2010-2011, the department is making a more concerted effort to communicate to all teacher candidates completing portfolios that the criteria for completing these portfolios have been changed.

Professors in the Department viewed their assessment results and realized that students in ED414 (Methods and Curriculum Development for Inclusive Middle Childhood Education Grades 4-8), part of the intermediate learning community required for majors, needed to improve their classroom management skills and develop better ways of teaching students with disabilities. Two workshops have consequently been added each semester to deal with these issues

In addition, the criteria have evolved to evaluate all master students' theses. Originally, the rubric failed to capture all of the desired knowledge, skills, and dispositions embedded in the portfolio process. In response to the data, the faculty discovered that the instrument was inadequate for its purpose, and a new rubric was developed and introduced in spring, 2010 that relates directly to the quality of the theses.

Mathematics and Computer Sciences. In the summer of 2009, the department made a change to one of the questions on the departmental test of assessment of critical thinking given to all graduating seniors who are math majors. The reason behind this change was the perception of several faculty members that one key question did not provide sufficient evidence of critical thinking, and that the correct answer could have been obtained by chance. While the faculty acknowledged that sheer chance alone could not lead directly to the answer and some amount of critical thinking must be used, they agreed that it was all but impossible to gauge, grade, or assess the exact amount of critical thinking involved. Consequently, the question now has two parts, the first part being a pure critical thinking proof that the student is required to explain in writing. The second part is the old question, which now can be safely assessed in the larger context: if the student correctly answers both parts, full credit is given. If the student answers only the second part, at most 20% credit is awarded, which demonstrates a deficiency in critical thinking.

Assessment results indicated that many students were not performing to expectations in the area of critical thinking, particularly acute in the advanced topic courses geared for the majors. A noticeable change occurred between 2008 and 2009, and as a result, pedagogical changes were implemented to increase proficiency from 68% to 75%. The department moved to increase the role of the student in the learning process. An increased problem-based approach seems to have been successful, as the students discovered on their own certain aspects instead of just taking them from

the instructor. This increased the likelihood that those concepts were better absorbed and less likely to have been forgotten quickly. The department's most recent (2010) assessment test indicated that students were indeed more likely to retain a concept and use it later if it was in some sense their own discovery.

Department of Modern Languages. The department, which comprises Spanish, French, Italian, and German, devised an assessment system in 2007 that aligned the programs with professional standards. Results of the assessment revealed some deficiencies. Even those students on the intermediate level, accelerated track were experiencing difficulties understanding text and context. At the conversation and composition levels in all four languages, students were struggling with reading and analyzing advanced texts in Spanish, French, and Italian 232, students and instructors were relying too much on in-class film viewings for students completing the required analytical essays; and there was a question as to whether students in upper-level literature courses were being exposed to canonical works in a systematic fashion.

In light of these results, the faculty members made several curricular changes. The Italian and French programs currently follow the same two-semester track for students taking Intermediate I and II before entering the 200-level courses. This allows for more in-depth study of grammar and vocabulary acquisition. Furthermore, all students at the intermediate level are now required to read a number of literary texts and/or essays, including short stories, poems, one-act plays, or newspaper articles. The conversation and composition classes in Spanish, Italian and French were redesigned in 2008. These courses are now thematically based as they focus on the visual arts (231) and social issues (232). In both courses, students now read a short novel or play in addition to several short stories. Students also attend several film screenings outside the normal classroom period. In the spring of 2009 and 2010, the Spanish section organized a departmental film festival (Cine-Café) specifically designed for students in Spanish 232 (People and Politics in the Hispanic World:

Advanced Spanish Composition and Conversation), but also open to the general public. In the upper-level courses, a conscious effort has been made to offer survey courses on a regular basis so as to expose students to canonical texts. Furthermore, the members of the Spanish section prepared a list of readings that students should familiarize themselves with before graduating. Perhaps one of the most significant improvements to the Modern Languages curriculum was established in the spring of 2009. All students taking Spanish, French or Italian 232 are now required to take a ten-minute oral proficiency exam administered by a faculty member in the department other than the instructor teaching the course. Students are responsible for 3-5 literary readings and must be prepared in terms of content, vocabulary, and grammar. This exam has proven to be most effective in determining whether or not students are well prepared for upper-level literature courses and study abroad.

Currently, the faculty are studying the feasibility of changing the Italian and French programs so that all language students take Intermediate I and II before entering the 200-level courses; in SP111 and 112, as well as FR117 and SP117, students must read a minimum of five short stories, poems, one-act plays, and/or articles to gain text and context; in SP231, FR232, and IT232, students must read a short novel or play; films will not be a part of Spanish, French, or Italian 232, but students will be encouraged to watch them outside the classroom; and all students in SP232 are required to take an oral exam to determine if they are prepared for upper-level literature courses and the study abroad program. The faculty members are in the process of analyzing the results.

Department of Music The two core elements in the department's direct assessment of student learning are a comprehensive examination taken by seniors and portfolios created by music majors

as they progress through the program. The comprehensive examination was instituted during the academic year 2005–2006, and the portfolio system began in spring, 2007.

Student portfolios were envisioned as electronic collections of papers and other written assignments, as well as concert programs, audio samples, and other documents, that each music major maintains over the course of his/her program of study. These are collected on a CD held by the department administrator and are available for consultation by department faculty for assessment purposes. Creation of the portfolio was to be centered in several courses designated by the department. However, only the instructor of the Senior Reflective Tutorial (MU400) actually required material for the portfolio, with the result that student portfolios remain incomplete and are rarely consulted by department faculty.

The comprehensive examination is administered as the final examination in MU 491 (Senior Seminar), which is given in the fall semester. The exam is a test of knowledge and skills specifically designed to document the meeting of the department's student learning goals in both music theory and music history. Student achievement in each section is evaluated as high pass, pass, low pass, and failure. Students who fail a section of the test receive the grade of Incomplete for the semester and must repeat the failed portion of the test as soon as possible in the spring semester until they pass. In fact, very few students succeed in the first attempt, and the Senior Seminar was modified in fall, 2007, to prepare students for the comprehensive exam by providing a review of material that students should have learned, but in fact have not. Thus far, this has not led to significant increases in the success rate of students. Beginning in 2009-2010, all music faculty began collaborating in writing and evaluating questions for the senior comprehensive exam.

Department of Psychology In their assessment of student learning, the Psychology faculty discovered that students were experiencing problems with utilizing and evaluating basic statistical

techniques, locating primary literature, and using the American Psychological Association (APA) documentation format in tables and figures for empirical reports. Furthermore, they uncovered evidence that students who selected the independent research project in PS400 (Senior Reflective Tutorial) over the community placement option, were disadvantaged in the quality of the experience. At one point, a very similar experience was offered as an option for the Senior RFT placement, but students were disadvantaged because the experience did not expose them to new supervisors, different research techniques, or new research tools (such as equipment). In addition, after careful deliberation, the faculty realized that the availability of the course offerings was problematic for many students. In response to these assessment results, the professors revised an existing course, PS241 (Psychology of Gender), to be part of a integrated, team-taught ILC, which met the College's American Diversity General Education requirement. Likewise, they allowed more opportunities for students to complete their senior experiential learning hours by offering PS400 and PS441 (History of Psychology) on the same days of the week. They also offered more evening courses, developed an advanced counseling course, and expanded their regular rotation of courses that fulfill the experimental psychology requirement for the major. The professors also switched the online research software from ExperimenTrak to Sona Systems, because the students were finding ExperimenTrak difficult to use. More students are now choosing to use this program for their research, which allows them to collect data from a broader range of participants. Faculty members have also increased communication with potential research participants from PS101 (Introduction to Psychology) by creating a Moodle page dedicated to dissemination of information regarding the PS101 Research Requirement.

FACULTY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Faculty members are involved in all phases of assessment of their individual departments' programs. They take part in the development and implementation of assessment tools. Departmental assessment coordinators (a faculty member within each department) are usually in charge of collecting and summarizing data, but this differs on a departmental basis. Individual departments share their data in meetings, discuss them, and then use them to implement curricular changes in a variety of ways. Evidence suggests that the data are used to guide changes regarding the majors' programs, individual courses, and co- and extracurricular programming. The entire process is initiated and carried out by faculty.

The College is also moving towards the introduction of e-portfolios throughout the campus. Some departments, notably Education, already make use of e-portfolios. Plans are being developed that would lead to a "pilot program" that the College would implement in order to determine how e-portfolios can be used effectively in the assessment of learning outcomes.

A. Changes to Majors and Minors

Across the Wagner College campus, the assessment of majors and minors has led to changes in curriculum. Faculty members are directly involved in the evaluation of assessment and in the determination of the classes which should be added and deleted from the major and minor requirements. For instance, the Theatre Department found that students in the Performance Concentration would benefit from more intensive musical theatre foundation courses. Therefore, the department added TH291 (Musicianship for Actors) and DA295 (Musical Dance Theatre). The English Department, based on an assessment of the senior theses, determined that majors were not performing up to acceptable standards in the area of theory. Therefore, EN212 (Introduction to Literary Analysis and Theory), has become a required course by the end of a student's sophomore year..

B. Changes to Classes

Based on assessment results, faculty members frequently make changes to individual courses as well. For example, Physics faculty determined that students were not familiar enough with bibliographic searches within their discipline. PY 543 (Senior Thesis) and PY212, (Intermediate Physics Laboratory), have consequently been redesigned by the faculty to include a more rigorous bibliography component. Faculty members have followed up with the Horrmann Library staff to ensure the availability of a wide array of sources. History faculty members individually evaluate a certain number of courses, collectively covering all of the department's course offerings. Based on their work, changes to courses are made, and consensus regarding the entire program is reached. English professors engage in a similar process with like results. For example, English faculty found that certain skill sets needed more emphasis in particular classes: information technology literacy, hands-on archival research, and comparative theoretical essay-writing. In reaction to these findings, English professors have embedded these skills in courses across the programs. History faculty also decided to set standards for all levels of class, to be met by both adjuncts and full-time professors. As a result of assessment, the Nursing faculty have revised curricula to increase the full-time faculty involvement in NR353 (Dimensions of Health Assessment), the revision of NR351 (Dimensions of Health Promotion in the Community) and the restructuring of the simulation laboratory. The Government and Politics faculty have initiated the following changes: GOV251 (International Politics), incorporates more lectures and readings on the topic of international relations; GOV103 (Introduction to American Politics), emphasizes the nature and processes of the Congressional committee system; GOV 230 (Comparative Politics), incorporates higher-level readings, and GOV371 (Modern Political Thought), spends more time on social contract theory.

C. Changes in Departmental Curricula Designed to Impact Non-Majors

Some of the departments have reported changes since the last self-study to individual classes and programs, to enhance the learning experiences of non-majors. For example, the Theatre Department has developed more production-related activities for non-performance students and majors. The Department of Biological Sciences offers a course on evolution, BI 135, adding to the variety of courses for non-majors. The Philosophy and Religious Studies Department administers surveys asking how their courses meet the objectives of the general education programs such as developing skills of writing that enable effective communication and expression.

D. General Departmental Changes

Assessment frequently leads to faculty-implemented changes that affect the entire department. Based on assessment results, the Nursing Department has updated computers for use with assessment exams. The Art Department, as a result of assessment of student portfolios, has encouraged faculty to critique students in writing in every class, affecting the classroom habits of full-time faculty and adjuncts. The Art and Psychology Departments require all student majors to complete a community service component in their senior year, a fundamental departmental change that fits in well with the Wagner Plan. Departments such as Government and Politics and Mathematics and Computer Science have increased the number of higher-level readings and analytical and critical thinking assignments in upper level courses, suggesting that assessment has motivated faculty to increase academic requirements within departments.

In general, the academic departments report that they are continuously realigning their curricula to the Wagner Plan.

E. Changes in Co/Extracurricular Programs by Departments

In many cases, faculty endeavor to identify extra-curricular programs that enhance their departments' offerings. This includes, for instance, investigation into study abroad programs (e.g., Theatre and Art Departments). Theatre professors recommend their students to take part in particular extra-curricular programs that have more academic value. Art history professors investigate which study- abroad programs are both experientially and academically strong. The Departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry/Physics, and Psychology involve students in research and encourage them to participate in conferences such as the Eastern Colleges Science Conference, in which Wagner students have become prominently involved. The Office of the Provost financially supports such student participation.

CONCLUSION

While all academic departments have completed at least one cycle of assessment of their major programs, assessment of general education learning outcomes remains a challenge. The Collegiate Learning Assessment tool has not received the support nor does it have the confidence of a significant number of faculty members. The College has institutionalized a new assessment instrument, *(CT)*² developed by a member of the faculty, which is intended to measure critical thinking and civic thinking. The College has made a number of curricular adjustments as a result of the campus-based writing assessment program to address formal writing skills and is now beginning to assess informal writing using written student responses to the *(CT)*² exercises that are also used to evaluate levels of critical and civic thinking.. However, there is a need to involve all departments more deeply in the assessment of general education learning outcomes.

CHAPTER 10-CAMPUS LIFE (STANDARDS 9 AND 13)

I. Charges to the Subcommittee

Standard 9: Student Support Services - The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities - The institution's programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Minutes from meetings:*
 - *Athletics Advisory Council*
 - *Student Athletic Advisory Council*
 - *Student Government Association*
 - *Diversity Action Council*
 - *Intercultural Action Council*
- *Publications*
 - *Parent Handbook*
 - *Student Handbook*
 - *Student Athlete Handbook*
 - *Recreational Services Newsletter*
 - *NCAA Athletic Certification Self-Study and Peer Review Team Report*
 - *NCAA Sport Sponsorship & Demographic report*
 - *Campus Life Annual Reports*
 - *Diversity Action Council (DAC) blueprint*
 - *Internationalization Action Council (IAC) blueprint*
 - *External Programs Course Catalogs*
 - *Health and Counseling Services Annual Reports*
- *Websites*
 - *Center for Intercultural Advancement*
(<http://www.wagner.edu/departments/centerforinterculturaladvancement/>)
 - *Co-curricular Programs*
(http://www.wagner.edu/campus_life/co_curricular_programs)
 - *External Programs* (<http://www.wagner.edu/external/>)
 - *Health and Counseling Services*
(http://www.wagner.edu/campus_life/health_services)
 - *Office of Residential Education*
(http://www.wagner.edu/campus_life/residential_education)
 - *Student Government Association* (http://www.wagner.edu/campus_life/sga/)
- *NCAA Academic Performance Rate (APR) and Graduation Success Rates (GSR) report*
- *Federal IPEDS Graduation report*
- *NEC Compliance Audit*
- *NCAA Financial Audit*
- *Equity in Athletics Disclosure (EADA)*
- *Surveys (Orientation, ELI, TLI, Be the Change)*
- *Senior Athletes & Transfers Exit Interviews*
- *Residential Education Quality of Life Surveys*

III. Executive Summary

A. *Strengths:*

- *Deep and genuine collaborations among faculty, administration, and staff maximize the collegiate experiences of our students as well as the College as a whole.*
- *Student-athletes continue to demonstrate academic excellence at the campus, regional, and national levels.*
- *Athletics has upgraded key staffing positions since the previous self-study and is more aligned with our benchmark institutions*
- *The student-athlete experience has a strong emphasis on campus integration. The Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) has been formed and integrated into the general Student Government Association(SGA).*
- *There have been significant athletic facility upgrades since the previous self- study (e.g.,: construction of Spiro Sports Center, installation of field turf and renovation of the stadium and softball field, the new varsity weight room and the new scoreboard on the football field).*
- *New programs have been developed to meet external and internal community needs (e.g., certificate programs for external programs, Civic Engagement Certificate Program, co-curricular transcript, Expand Your Horizons (EYH), study abroad consortiums, First-Year Residential Experience, Senior Year Residential Experience, etc).*
- *There is now a deep commitment to diversity and internationalization through the creation of a Dean for Internationalization and a Director for the Center for Intercultural Advancement as well programs such as Expanding Your Horizons (EYH), study abroad exchanges, and collaborations, including the Diversity Action Council (DAC) and the Internationalization Action Council (IAC).*
- *The Academic and Cultural Enrichment (ACE) Program attracts prestigious national and international speakers and engages students intellectually both in and outside of the classroom.*
- *More comprehensive educational support services programs have been implemented to ensure higher academic standards,(e.g., Writing Center, Peer Tutors, Research Intensive Tutors, Student Success Seminars, and the Honors Program)*
- *There are enhanced academic support services via integration of offices dealing with advising, career development, peer tutoring, and writing.*
- *There has been a focus on training for student leadership. (e.g.,Peer leaders, Community Standards Review Board, Emerging Leaders Institute, Transitional Leaders Institute, Peer Education, Civic Engagement Certificate, and Co-Curricular Competencies Program).*
- *There has been a growth in spirituality and religious diversity on campus, as shown by the extension of Kairos House to include the faiths of Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and the Muslim faith*
- *Serious attention has been given to safety issues on campus (e.g., sprinklers in all residence halls, cameras in parking lots, blue light emergency phones, escort system, outdoor PA system, campus-wide alert systems).*
- *The new residence hall (Foundation Hall) opened January, 2010 for junior and senior students, with a focus on programming for student success and transition to either the professional or graduate path.*
- *The First Year Residential Experience (FYRE) and Senior Year Residential Experience (SYRE) connect the out-of-classroom learning experiences of students to their learning inside the classroom.*
- *The Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) Program and the Center for Intercultural Advancement have contributed to globalization of the Wagner campus*

B. *Challenges:*

- *The nature of the class schedule and the propensity for upper-level classes to be offered in the afternoon and evenings hinders student-athletes in balancing their academic and athletic practice schedules.*
- *There is an economic challenge to sustaining a competitive Division I athletic program.*

- *Deferred maintenance for on-campus facilities (e.g., residence halls, outdoor track, Main Stage Theatre) is a major challenge*
- *With the long-term vacancy of the Dean for External Programs, there is a need for vision that will create a strategic plan that expands the role of the unit within the College and the larger community.*
- *The full potential of certain programs (e.g., ACE, Civic Innovations, Honors Program, Co-Curricular.) is not being explored due to limited resources (both staffing and budgets)*
- *Tracking data for individual students is not integrated in the CX database. Information about students with early alerts, mid-semester warning, those thinking about transferring, disciplinary concerns, etc., is collated on a case-by-case basis. Outreach to students is limited by this lack of integration.*
- *The Civic Engagement Certificate Program, still in its fledgling stage, has not been assessed for its relationship to student retention and student commitment to personal and social responsibility.*
- *There is a lack of multi-purpose programming spaces on campus for student activities, formal and informal student gatherings, and meeting spaces.*
- *There is a need for additional security measures in the residence halls which would include full-time professional staffing*
- *There is a need for the regular availability of kosher foods and to engage a Muslim chaplain.*

C. *Recommendations:*

- *Optimize class scheduling to allow students an opportunity to balance academic obligations and co-curricular opportunities*
- *Upgrade the CX database system so that integration of data entry, reporting, and analysis can occur*
- *Create a strategic long-term plan to increase revenues from the Office of External Programs*
- *Implement a strategic long-term facilities and capital improvement plan.*
- *The College should investigate the feasibility of adding a k-2 component to the Early Childhood Center*
- *Given the impressive growth of the Academic and Cultural Enrichment program over the past 10 years, further attention should be placed on showcasing its' endeavors through an on-line gallery and through creation and dissemination of a promotional brochure*
- *Consider additional staffing to address the growing and complex nature of internationalization and diversity efforts on our campus (e.g., support, visas, programming, grants).*
- *Continue our commitment to restructuring services to meet the residential student population.*
- *Create more multi-purpose spaces in the residence halls as existing structures are evaluated and reconfigured.*
- *Continue to examine the relationship between student co-curricular programs and retention.*
- *Increase assessment of the College's academic and student success programs to measure their effectiveness and make changes where necessary.*
- *Renovate the physical facilities in the three older residence halls (Guild, Harborview, Towers)*
- *Enhance security in the residence halls by increasing full-time staff and installing security turnstile systems in each hall.*
- *Consider adding weekend hours at the Health Service Center and Counseling Services*
- *Kosher/Halal food available on a regular basis and engage a Muslim chaplain*

INTRODUCTION

Wagner College is committed to learning in all aspects of a student's education, both in and out of the classroom. The philosophy in student support services is mirrored in the Wagner College mission statement: "... (To) prepare student(s) for life, as well as for careers, by emphasizing scholarship, achievement, leadership, and citizenship." Through student organizations, athletics, internship opportunities, and support services outside of the classroom, we look to support, create, and partner to "...offer a comprehensive educational program that is anchored in the liberal arts, experiential and co-curricular learning, interculturalism, interdisciplinary studies, and service to society..." To achieve these goals, student support services work closely with each other and with the faculty to ensure integrated learning and reflective practice. This report identifies key areas and programs that enhance students' co-curricular experiences.

A. The Department of Athletics

The Department of Athletics has a significant role in enhancing the overall student experience through its NCAA Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Program and recreational services. The philosophy of the department focuses on the core principles of the College's mission and the Wagner Plan. Specifically, all student-athletes are encouraged to develop their academic skills, athletic abilities and attributes articulated in the College mission.

Wagner College's Intercollegiate Athletic Program is an NCAA Division I FCS program (formerly known as I-AA). The program operates and complies with the rules of the NCAA, the Northeast Conference (NEC), the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC), the Eastern Collegiate Athletics Conference (ECAC) and the College. Over 400 student-athletes (23% of the overall undergraduate student population) presently participate in the 20 sponsored intercollegiate varsity teams comprised of eleven women's teams (basketball, golf, lacrosse, soccer, softball, tennis, cross country, indoor track, outdoor track, water polo) and nine men's teams (baseball,

basketball, football, golf, lacrosse, tennis, cross country, indoor track, outdoor track). The College discontinued women's volleyball and men's wrestling at the conclusion of the 2008-09 academic year. The Department had reviewed all 22 intercollegiate sports, taking into account institutional and athletic strategic plans, Northeast Conference (NEC) affiliation, available resources, facilities, competitiveness and the guidelines of Title IX.

The goals of the department are as follows:

- provide student-athletes with a quality intercollegiate athletic experience
- provide quality recreational opportunities for the College community
- provide the opportunity for student-athletes to more fully meet the institutional mission through athletics
- manage a fiscally sound budget by efficiently utilizing available resources and producing revenue through sales, promotions and fund-raising opportunities
- support the College by assisting with fund-raising efforts, alumni programming and public relations efforts
- assist the Admissions Office with enrollment management initiatives through the recruitment of academically prepared student-athletes drawn from geographically and demographically diverse populations
- comply with all College, NCAA, and conference rules and regulations governing academic and competitive eligibility
- incorporate the Wagner Plan and the strategic initiatives of the institution into the daily operations of the department
- collaborate with academic and co-curricular offices, as necessary, to support student-athlete success and meet the institutional mission.

The policies and procedures for the Department of Athletics (www.wagnerathletics.com) and the *Wagner College Student-Athlete Handbook* are defined by Wagner institutional policy and the rules and regulations of the NCAA, the Northeast Conference (NEC), the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC), and the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC).

The department's policies and procedures are reviewed annually by the Athletics Subcommittee of the Board of Trustees, the Athletic Advisory Council, the Student-Athlete Advisory Council, and the Institutional NCAA Financial Audit. The policies were extensively reviewed during Wagner's 2004-2005 NCAA Athletics Certification Self Study and a subsequent

Peer-Review Team site visit in May, 2006. Similar to the Middle States accreditation process, the NCAA Athletics Certification Self-Study is performed every 10 years. The NCAA Athletic self-study focused on governance and a commitment to rules compliance, academic integrity, equity and student-athlete welfare. The compliance audit, which was performed by the Northeast Conference in both 2004 and 2008, provided an additional external review. In all three external reviews, the department's policies and procedures were deemed comprehensive and satisfactory.

The department is audited annually three ways: the Annual Athletics Financial Audit, the NCAA Financial Expenditure Report, and the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Report. The student-athlete experience is evaluated through end-of-year student-athlete surveys and senior exit interviews. The consensus conveyed by the student-athletes is that their academic and athletic experiences have been positive. However, they have expressed concern with their inconsistent practice times due to facility conflicts and class scheduling issues. Additional issues include "fundraising fatigue," continuity of the coaching staff, and overcrowded locker rooms. In the 2008 Administrative Survey, students gave the Athletics Department a positive rating of 4.60 on a 5-point scale. The median score for services evaluated was a 4.57. Overall, the student-athletes indicated in their end-of-the year surveys that their college athletic experience has met their expectations and that they have been able to meet their educational and athletic goals.

For the 2008-09 academic year, Wagner student-athletes achieved a 3.252 cumulative G.P.A. compared with 3.265 for the overall student G.P.A. In two of the last three years, Wagner athletes were recognized by the Northeast Conference with the Institutional GPA Honor, for the institution having the highest student-athlete G.P.A. in the conference. In the past decade there have been three national Academic All-Americans, numerous district All-Americans, and two NCAA postgraduate scholarship recipients.

The department must submit annually data used to determine the NCAA academic performance rate (APR), and the NCAA graduation success rate (GSR). The APR is a four-year average that evaluates academic eligibility and retention. Wagner athletes have performed well above the 925 benchmark and the national average. An additional academic comparative is the federal IPEDS graduation rate: where Wagner student-athletes have graduated at a 64% rate compared to a 62% rate for the entire Wagner student population (2008).

The NCAA mandates that an institution must have institutional control of its athletics department. Wagner ensures the principle of institutional control and integration through its shared compliance initiative. This is achieved by incorporating key campus constituencies in the monitoring process. [See shared compliance flow chart in Appendix 10-1]

A concerted effort has been made by the department to implement recommendations made by the Middle States accreditation review in 2001. In particular, the department has developed outreach programs to promote understanding between athletes and non-athletes. The Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) was organized under the auspices of the Student Government Association (SGA), and has been active in campus-wide community service projects. Additional outreach activities include life skills programming (e.g., Risky Behaviors) co-sponsored by Athletics and the Office of Campus Life, as well as a night of dodge ball, and other promotional activities. Co-curricular Programs has helped subsidize fan buses for off-campus competitions and student giveaways for home games. An additional recommendation that has been implemented is a plan with a stronger focus on gender, hiring, and racial diversity in the athletics program. Gender equity was reviewed in the NCAA Athletics Certification process (2004-5), and an Equity and Minority Plan was implemented. The Athletic Advisory Council formed an Equity Subcommittee to

monitor the Plan's initiatives. The department is also active in the institution's Diversity Action Council (DAC). The most significant developments of the past 10 years include:

- recreational service opportunities have grown (e.g., yoga, pilates and kick boxing)
- a men's lacrosse team (2000-01), and women's water polo (2001-02) were added while the women's volleyball and men's wrestling team were eliminated (2008-09)
- significant facility upgrades began with the opening of the Spiro Sports Center in 1999, followed by the renovation of the stadium field and turf installation, the renovation of the softball field, and the relocation of the baseball practice and competition site to off-campus at the Richmond County Ball Park at Saint George (a facility which meets the baseball facility standards established by Major League Baseball)
- the installation of a new varsity weight room and a new scoreboard at the football stadium
- the Northeast Conference (NEC) football financial aid policy changed (2007) from a financial need-based model to the traditional athletic grant-in-aid model (all Wagner teams offer athletic grants-in-aid, but allocations differ depending on NCAA limits and institutional goals)
- staffing upgrades have occurred, including the addition of three Assistant Athletic Directors (Academics and Compliance, Marketing, and Business Affairs and Finance); and the elevation to full-time status of two Head Coaches (Women's Soccer and Water Polo), the Strength and Conditioning Coach, and three assistant athletic trainer positions

B. The Office of External Programs

External Programs delivers an extensive array of on- and off-campus and online professional courses and development programs, career building, personal enrichment and children's courses and programs. Its scope extends beyond certificate and non-credit courses, to include conference services, providing information for location shoots to production scouts, and sports camps. During the past decade, External Programs has become an integral contributor to the College's mission based on its ability to enhance the reputation of the institution through its educational, community outreach and international initiatives with international student groups (e.g., Italy, Spain, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and Belgium).

Most of the Office's programs target the non-Wagner community (exceptions: the Kaplan Test Preparation courses and computer skills workshops). Professional and personal development

programs include health care, fitness, legal studies, certified financial planning, certified human resources management, business management, event planning, emergency management/fire safety, and the arts.

The Office collaborates with academic departments on occasion. For example, while the Department of Business Administration offers for credit “Exploring International Business Environments” study/travel courses, individuals wishing to participate in such a course on a “non-credit” basis may register through External Programs. The “Summer Scholars” program, a summer academic enrichment program underwritten by a grant from the New York State Legislature, was a joint project between External Programs and the Department of Education.

The College community contributes to the success of External Programs through the involvement of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff. Besides the enrollment in the test preparation or computer skills workshops, Wagner students have participated in internship and employment opportunities as instructors in the summer youth programs. Faculty members teach in the Summer Scholar’s Program and summer camps. Members of the IT staff teach computer skills workshops, while administrators from the offices of Career Development and Admissions contribute to the career exploration program for teenagers.

External Programs’ activities are assessed in multiple ways ranging from revenue performance, formal evaluations by program participants, the growth in popularity of programs, and returning groups with repeat enrollments (Appendix 10-2). Since the last self-study, 55 television programs, movies or commercials have been filmed on campus (Appendix 10-3). During the past 10 years, revenue has increased from \$600,000 to \$1.3 million. This increase in revenue has been impressive given that a key position, Dean, was not filled.

C.The Early Childhood Center

The Wagner College Early Childhood Center (ECC) was established in 1946 and was Staten Island's first early childhood educational program. The ECC provides half-day and full-day services to children ages two years, three months through age six, and it promotes a developmental approach to learning through individualized programs that stress social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. The curriculum includes creative music and art, movement activities, math, language arts, science and computer activities. Several times the ECC has investigated the possibility of extending the age to include beginning school years (through grade 2). Various factors, including the lack of space, have prohibited this expansion.

Wagner students, particularly those specializing in early childhood studies, have benefited from the ECC's presence on campus. The ECC is a venue for undergraduate education majors to complete their early childhood observation hours. Professional and educational opportunities for graduate students are available through the ECC's graduate assistantships. Additionally, faculty and staff benefit from ECC services through discounts and the convenience of having their children attend the ECC. This has helped with the recruitment of faculty and staff with younger children.

The ECC is licensed by the state of New York and must undergo an extensive certification process every two years. Internal assessment is ongoing through staff meetings and teacher-parent conferences.

D. Center for Academic and Career Development (CACD)

During the summer of 2007, the Academic Advisement Center and the Career Development Office merged to form the Center for Academic and Career Development (CACD) to consolidate student services creating a more integrated program and culture to address the needs of students during their time at Wagner. The Associate Dean for Learning Communities and the Center for Leadership and Service are housed within the same suite of offices.

The Center offers a comprehensive array of resources and services for undergraduate and graduate students, alumni, faculty, and employers. Students find their own answers to the question, “What’s Your Wagner Plan?” as they follow a four-step process of self-inquiry, major and career exploration, reflection and decision making, and strategic action - either job search or graduate school pursuit. Specialized academic advisement is provided to international students, students with disabilities, and students on academic probation. Alumni are encouraged to remain life-long learners, using career development resources and services for their own job search or graduate school plans. A number of programs are administered through CACD.

Merit Award Program. This program introduces students to a wide range of competitive national scholarships, fellowships and awards, including the Fulbright, Truman and Udall scholarships. Students are provided with workshops (e.g., resume writing, business etiquette and interviewing skills) through the Center. Faculty members participate as panel interviewers, faculty mentors, and/or as faculty representatives for select scholarship programs. During the first year of the program (2008-2009), 145 students participated; 50 students participated the second year (2009-2010).

Career Development. Since 2000, the College has been committed to quality programming to reach an audience with different career interests. Programming content includes resume and cover letter workshops, interviewing workshops, graduate school workshops, and company-specific information sessions (See Appendix 10-4 for a summary of programming).

The Center also conducts one-on-one sessions with students, as well as alumni. During these sessions, participants gain assistance with resumes, cover letters, curriculum vita, interviewing techniques, job and internship search, and career exploration. In 2009-2010 the Center established a drop-in service at the new residence building, Foundation Hall. Three afternoons per week are set

aside for one-on-one or group meetings for students who need immediate assistance. On one day each week, drop-in hours are available at the CACD office in the Union.

Some changes to the makeup of the Center's work occurred since the last self-study. Resume referrals that were set up by Center staff are now managed through the Wagner Internship and Career Search (WICS) website, an online jobs database that allows students to apply for positions via the web (<http://wagner.experience.com/er/security/login.jsp>). On-campus interviewing has recently declined as the number of available positions has declined. However, the number of career-related programs offered by the CACD staff each semester has experienced a large increase. Students are encouraged to utilize the Center's services throughout their four years at Wagner, carefully reflecting not only on their career interests but their community and co-curricular involvement, assessing the skills gained and how they apply in the professional world (see Appendix 10-5 for WICS usage statistics).

A review of the post-graduate plans of students (Appendix 10-6) shows that 79% of the Class of 2004 reported being employed within eight months of graduation, while 47% of the Class of 2009 reported being employed. This may reflect the impact of the Nation's struggling economy, and/or it may indicate a shift in the career and educational plans of students, with more students entering graduate school before seeking employment. A higher percentage of the Class of 2009 (42%) reported attending graduate school than was the case with the Class of 2004 (20%).

Call to Serve. In 2009, Wagner joined the Partnership for Public Service, whose mission is to increase the awareness and interest of students in employment with the federal government. The Center's staff members participate in monthly webinars to better understand the federal employment landscape. In November, 2009, Wagner hosted Federal Opportunities Week, bringing

to campus alumni and guests employed by the FBI, EPA, IRS, FDA, Department of State and a former White House intern, now serving as the COO of the William J. Clinton Foundation.

Alumni Engagement. Through the Center, alumni may receive life-long support in their career aspirations; they may also provide assistance to both students and other alumni involved in career exploration/transitions. An alumni advisory board is being formed. It will consist of 3-5 alumni involved in recruiting and HR. The alumni advisory board will assist the Center's staff in developing a strategic plan.

Alumni learn about career development programs and services through announcements in the monthly Alumni E-Blast (coordinated by the Office of Alumni Relations), *Wagner Magazine* (published by the Office of Communications), personal conversations with development staff, Linked-In and through targeted e-mails sent by the Center's staff. Since the last self-study, there has been an increase in the number of alumni volunteering their time and expertise for the following programs: Alumni Speaker Series, Mock Interviews, and Resume Reviews. Alumni are encouraged to attend programs offered by the Center. Staff members facilitate introductions between alumni when a mutual career interest is discovered.

Internships. After completing four units, students may elect to participate in an internship. The CACD provides students with The Internship Program: Information and Application packet, which describes the process for registering for an internship. Students may elect to take an internship for credit or not for credit. Internships taken during the summer are treated as a summer school course at an additional cost to the student. An internship taken for one unit requires 105 hours of work and an internship taken for two units requires 210 hours of work. A faculty member must approve of the proposed internship prior to registration.

The reporting and recording of internships has not been consistent, due in part to the variety of ways that students gain credit for experiential learning, including student teaching, clinical rotations for nursing and physician assistant students, and work done through the senior learning communities (SLCs), where students are required to complete at least 100 hours of experiential or field-based work (see Appendix 10-7 for data on the number of students who have registered for an completed an internship). Students have expressed confusion between an internship that counts as a separate course, and an internship that is embedded within the SLC. In reviewing the data, the numbers for internships seem low in comparison to the student population. Some of the factors that may influence low participation include: inconsistent use of the 397 or 497 internship designation across majors, students' lack of knowledge of how an internship can fit within their major requirements, summer internships not taken for credit and not reported because of the cost of tuition, the fee for a non-credit internship as a disincentive to registering, and students not reporting internships they found on their own.

Writing Peer Tutoring Centers. The Horrmann Library houses the Writing and Peer Tutoring Centers, which report to the CACD. These two centers were recently consolidated under the supervision of the Associate Dean of Academic Support. Previously they were separate entities supervised by two different administrators. All undergraduate students are eligible to receive free tutoring services either through individual requests or faculty referral.

In addition to their Writing Center duties, Writing Intensive Tutors (WITS) are assigned to the First Year Program's Learning Communities. WITs are invited into the classroom by the professors to work with students on their writing and peer-editing assignments. WITs also give in-class workshops and presentations on how to do research and how to format a paper.

During the 2008 – 2009 AY, the Center provided a total of 213 tutoring sessions and 616 writing sessions. Forty tutors worked in both the fall and spring semesters. While some students and professors fill out evaluation forms, little formal assessment has been done. We recommend that a regular assessment regime be put in place for this program.

Based on the high demand for tutoring in the introductory courses in organic chemistry and economics, the Peer Tutoring Center began to offer supplemental instruction for students in these subjects. Two tutors in each discipline work closely with department faculty. They attend classes and meet with students once a week for an hour. These tutors use special study guides that are prepared by faculty in the introductory courses.

Student Success Seminars. Beginning in the fall of 2006, The Center implemented Student Success Seminars, designed for students deemed to be academically at risk. Preliminary data comparing students who attend all, some, or none of these seminars suggest that there may be a positive effect on both grade point average and number of academic units successfully completed among students who attend ‘All’ the offered seminars, and in some cases among those who attend some. However, as the available data are aggregated, more information is needed to track the long-term success of the program. We recommend continuing the seminars, as well as tracking the success of individual students in the current categories, specific numbers of seminars attended, and whether the seminars differed from one another in content.

E. Other Co-Curricular Learning Programs

Research Intensive Tutors (RIT). Research tutors, as information facilitators, are a key element of the peer-tutoring program. The tutoring model focuses on teaching the tutee to master the skills of the information retrieval process. To achieve this, RITs must understand how collections and services are physically organized and accessed; the interrelationship of library departments,

sections, and units; and research strategies, database searching, and the location and evaluation of information. Tutors are also responsible for being thoroughly informed about library policies and procedures, and tutoring best practices.

The RIT Program has been active since the 2002-2003 academic year and was connected to a research course, MDS 210 (Library and E-Research Peer Tutoring) from 2002 through 2005, which has become CS112 (Internet and Database Research Techniques) since then. Students who wish to be RITs must successfully complete CS112 and have the recommendation of a faculty member, or take training workshops taught by Library faculty.

RITs work an average of 10 hours per week during the spring and fall semesters. Since 2002, they have fielded over 1,000 questions from students, teaching them to find books and scholarly articles in print and on the Web, using subscription article databases, search engines, and library catalogs, as well as how to develop keywords and search strategies. Tutors also assist students with the proper application of citation styles (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago) for their papers, and how to use Microsoft Office applications such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint to present their research. Tutors also regularly field IT-related questions, including how to use assistive technologies (e.g., Kurzweil text readers, voice-recognition software, and screen magnifiers), computer logins, printers, scanners, Moodle, and email. As with the WIT program, no systematic assessment program exists for this program; we recommend that one be created.

Wagner College Forum for Undergraduate Research. This publication was created in 2002 in response to the substantial increase in student scholarship that has occurred since the inception of the Wagner Plan. Its goal has been to provide an arena where students can present their research to a wide audience and see what areas of academic intellect and expertise are being explored at the

College. The journal was intended as a springboard for discussions among students and faculty and to provide motivation for future endeavors, thus promoting a more scholarly atmosphere.

Typically, nine papers are selected to appear in each issue, which is published once each semester. The distribution is usually one for the natural science section, two or three for the social science section and four to six for the critical essay section (the tables of contents of each issue are found in Appendix 10-8)..

Academic and Cultural Enrichment Program (ACE). ACE offers the College community, as well as the general public, a diverse array of lectures, symposia, workshops, performances and concerts in various intellectual and creative arenas. Originally designed to expand the classroom experience, ACE has become a forum in which faculty, students, visiting national and international scholars, activists and artists can make their work part of a public conversation (see Appendix 10-9 for Recent Events). Students, scholars, and the general public are invited to discover common ground across disciplines, thereby cultivating a greater appreciation for a diverse world. The ACE Program has expanded tremendously over the past 10 years, giving Wagner the opportunity to attract prestigious scholars and public figures to campus. In light of Wagner's commitment to internationalization, ACE is also committed to inviting at least one international scholar to campus every year. The Program is overseen by a director and graduate student assistant. Due to budget restraints, the annual budget, kept at \$32,930 for the past several years, was reduced to \$17,930 for the 2009-2010 AY.

Though the campus is extremely supportive of bringing external speakers and intellectual verve to the campus, maintaining a critical mass in attendance is a challenge. It is important for faculty to commit to integrating the speaker's content, as appropriate, with their syllabi and requiring or encouraging attendance. Support from the Communications Office by way of an

attractive promotional brochure may help with audience development and with promoting Wagner as a source of intellectual and cultural enrichment for the community.

OFFICE OF CAMPUS LIFE

The Office of Campus Life is committed to facilitating and supporting student learning in all facets of the educational process, both in and out of the classroom. The mission of Campus Life is to encourage active participation in the Wagner, New York City and global communities, as well as to encourage responsible and accountable leadership, to create an inclusive and respectful campus culture. The office is staffed by three deans and one administrative assistant. They supervise the following offices: Residential Education, Co-Curricular Programs, Center for Intercultural Advancement, and Health and Counseling Services.

A. Leadership

Emerging Leaders Institute. In November, 2008, the Office partnered with the Office of Co-Curricular Programs, the Center for Leadership and Service, and the Student Government Association (SGA) to conduct a three-day leadership conference to train 20 students in diversity, leadership development, and communication. In November, 2009, the institute included national peer education training for 23 students. They were certified by BACCHUS, a university and community based network that focuses on comprehensive health and safety initiatives. A new peer education program was developed (SECs—Students Empowering for Change(s)).

Students Empowering for Change (SECs) SEC is a group dedicated to facilitating and shaping an evolving, safe, and inclusive campus environment by developing peer to peer communication. This group seeks to empower peers by providing information and support about responsible decision making and positive role-modeling to help improve the Wagner campus community. This is a peer education group advised by Campus Life administrators. Four subgroups within SECs focus on the following peer-

to-peer educational topics: alcohol and drug education, diversity, wellness, and healthy relationships. All members are nationally certified through the Bacchus and Gamma Network.

Transitional Leaders Institute. In April, 2009, the Dean of Campus Life Office sponsored the Transitional Leader Institute to provide skills to help student organizations facilitate smooth transitions between old and new student executive board members. Another leadership conference was held in spring, 2010.

Alternative Spring Break. The Alternative Spring Break Program offers students an opportunity to spend spring break providing community services for underserved communities outside of Staten Island. Students engage in projects that challenge them to examine issues of poverty, racism and privilege. Past trips have included projects in Toronto; Boston; and New Orleans. To date, a total of 60 students have participated in this program (see Appendix 10-10 for evaluations of the program).

Peer Leader. Selected students serve as peer leaders for incoming students. They contact new students the summer before their arrival at Wagner. During orientation on campus, peer leaders provide insight on college life, assist with the transition to a new community and help newcomers navigate the campus and New York City (see Appendix 10-11 for evaluations of Orientation and Peer Leader training).

WAGCARE Peer Educators. During the fall of 2008, state grants helped develop WAGCARE (Wagner Community Advocating Responsibility), a peer education program that focuses on areas such as alcohol and other drugs, healthy relationships and safety in New York City. The program was in fall, 2009, to include diversity and wellness. To date, we have 22 peer educators.

B. Student Conduct

Community Standards Review Board (CSRB). The CSRB comprises students who participate on a rotating basis to adjudicate violations of campus policies. They are trained to review incident

reports and listen to witness accounts to determine responsibility and formulate recommendations for appropriate sanctions. Approximately 10 students serve on the board yearly to hear mid-level student contact cases through the Dean of Campus Life Office. All members complete three hours of training during of the fall semester before hearing any cases. Inclusion of students on the Board (1) gives additional responsibility to the students who welcome the challenge to serve the Wagner community, and (2) communicates to the students who appear before the Board that their behavior is being reviewed by their peers.

Administrative Hearing Officers (AHOs). AHOs are full-time administrators who participate on a rotating basis to adjudicate violations of campus policies. They are trained to review incident reports and listen to witness accounts to determine responsibility and formulate recommendations for appropriate sanctions.

C. Residential Education

Wagner College has four residence halls with a total capacity of 1,562 beds. Additionally, the College leases 25 apartments in the Grymes Hill Apartment complex (located directly across Howard Avenue from the campus) for graduate students and some staff members, with a capacity of 78 beds. With the 2010 opening of Foundation Hall, Residential Education staff have de-tripled all rooms and begun assessment of spaces to create more common areas. Based on a spring, 2008 housing satisfaction survey, 75.1% of residential students were not satisfied with the common spaces in the residence halls. In response to these data, each floor lounge in Harborview was furnished with modern fire-retardant furniture in the summer of 2008, which improved student satisfaction on the survey in spring, In the summer of 2010, the lounge in Guild Hall was upgraded, and a convenience store/coffee shop/breakfast bar was installed, offering late-night hours in an

inviting setting. However, the survey data still suggest a need to continue improvements in this area, as 61.6% of residential students report dissatisfaction with residence hall common areas.

The Office of Residential Education adopted a new name (formerly Residence Life) in the summer of 2007, as it redefined its mission and direction. In addition to providing basic living facilities for students, Residential Education supports the academic mission of the College through the student residential experience. Its mission is to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive residential community that supports and challenges student growth and development through educational, social, and leadership opportunities. The Office's staff members encourage and value group collaboration, the celebration of diversity, rational decision-making, consideration of different viewpoints, and respect for individual dignity. Success in the classroom is supported through the enforcement of "quiet hours," making student lounges available as study spaces, and making appropriate referrals to faculty and staff.

In addition, the Office has begun two programs to connect the out of the classroom experience of our students to the learning inside the classroom through the First Year Residential Experience (FYRE) program and the Senior Year Residential Experience (SYRE), now called the Bridges Program. Both of these initiatives have students, staff, and faculty on their advisory board.

The primary goal of the FYRE Program is to link academic and co-curricular experiences which foster holistic well-being and personal growth. Through FYRE, first-year students are introduced to campus involvement with access to campus resources; feel a strong connection to the first year cohort in particular and to the students, staff, and faculty who comprise the college community; find a balance of academic and co-curricular involvement through time management, problem solving, and decision making skills; and gain a global perspective through interactions with peers from a variety of backgrounds.

The Bridges Program is housed in Foundation Hall and is targeted towards juniors and seniors. This program, the result of a collaboration between Residential Education, Campus Life, the Center for Academic and Career Development, and the Office of Alumni Relations, offers events to support students as they transition into careers or graduate programs. Students participating in Bridges:

- Understand the job search and graduate admissions process, specifically the development of a resume, interviewing skills, networking skills, professional etiquette, and negotiation skills
- Develop a post-graduation plan regarding employment, employment alternatives, or graduate school
- Gain life skills such as managing personal finances, cooking and securing an apartment
- Balance the senior year workload and experiential learning or thesis while planning for the future
- Establish and maintain relationships with members of the Wagner College alumni network
- Reflect on past experiences at Wagner as the final component of the Wagner Plan

Residential Education staff are available around-the-clock to provide support to students with medical and personal emergencies or concerns, as well as to ensure the safety of all residential students. All residence halls now have wireless internet, lounges and common areas were re-furnished in the past year with modern fire-retardant furniture. All residence halls are now equipped with fire sprinklers and a new fire alarm system to enhance student safety.

Resident students have opportunities to develop their leadership talents through serving as a resident assistant or desk attendant, through active participation in the Residence Hall Association, and through informal participation in programs and activities. Educational, social, and cultural programs are offered each week to initiate dialogue and responsible action among the student population as well as to respond to student interests and needs.

Residential Education is supervised by a Director, who reports to the Dean of Campus Life. Each residence hall is managed by one of four full-time Resident Directors (RDs), and one or two

graduate students called Assistant Resident Directors (ARDs). There are five graduate assistants in the Office overall. The RDs and ARDs supervise 42 undergraduate Resident Assistants (RAs). An Assistant Director of Residential Education oversees the facilities, operations, and student conduct components of the Office. Critical incident response is covered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through a rotation of RAs, with a Supervisor on-call at the next level (RDs and ARDs rotate this role), and a Director on-call at the next level (rotated between the Director and Assistant Director).

Security at the residence hall front desks needs to be enhanced. Hiring full- and part-time professional desk attendants and installing security turnstile systems in each hall would greatly improve the safety and security of our residential facilities.

D. Office of Co-Curricular Programs and Student Organizations

The Office of Co-Curricular Programs encourages the active participation of students in the development of leadership skills, personal responsibility, and social awareness; it celebrates individuality and the connection to the Wagner community. Programs and services offered by the Office include:

Clubs/Organizations. Approximately 70 clubs and organizations offer many opportunities for students to become actively engaged members of the community (http://www.wagner.edu/campus_life/co_curricular_programs/Clubs_and_Organizations). They include: academic based clubs, honor societies, fraternities, sororities and cultural/religious clubs. Membership is open to all Wagner students with a minimum 2.0 G.P.A.. Each official club must have at least five currently enrolled students and a faculty/staff advisor.

The Coffeehouse. Located in the basement of Reynolds House, The Coffeehouse is a student-operated venue for musical performances, poetry readings and low cost snacks. The Coffeehouse is open six days a week and serves over 600 students monthly, providing a club-like atmosphere.

Greek Accreditation Process. An internal accreditation process was created in 2008 to provide guiding principles and standards for the nine social Greek organizations on campus. To maintain an organization, each is expected to meet acceptable standards of community service/philanthropy, academic excellence, community involvement, chapter leadership and chapter operations. (See Appendix 10-12 for full process outline).

The Student Government Association (SGA). SGA serves as the umbrella organization to which all recognized student clubs must report. SGA includes the Senate, elected annually, the Club Congress which includes two representatives from each club/organization and the House of Commons, of which every student is automatically a member. In spring 2006, the SGA voted to enact a student activity fee. The SGA receives approximately 60% of the student activity fee for allocation to various student organizations. SGA oversees these funds, which support the assistant director for co-curricular programming, the late-night van service to the Staten Island Ferry, and student activities and clubs.

Wagner Campus Activities Board (WAGCAB). WAGCAB serves as the programming arm of the SGA. WAGCAB plans events both on and off-campus, including monthly trips to Broadway shows, pre-release movies on campus and trips to professional sporting events.

Spiritual Life. Regarding spiritual opportunities currently open to students, Wagner is now experiencing an increased robustness in its religious offerings. Just seven years ago, Wagner had no rabbi or active Hillel Jewish student organization. Now there is a full-time rabbi on the faculty who ministers to a Hillel chapter that is one of the most active student groups on campus. There are about 150 Jewish students at Wagner (10 years ago, there were very few). Until two years ago there was no Muslim voice on campus. Today there is a newly emergent Muslim students' association led by a faculty member. The Catholic community meets weekly for Mass and has a dedicated sister as

advisor. A revived Lutheran student movement, harking back to Wagner's Lutheran roots, is served by a pastor who oversees the college chaplaincy and has brought an earnest quest for spirituality to many college events by organizing multi-faith services and programs as part of the general college calendar. There is a chapel on campus used by all faith communities. The Kairos House, traditionally the Lutheran Chapel, now holds Friday services for Jewish students, Wednesday and Sunday Christian services (both Lutheran and Roman Catholic) provides prayer rugs for Muslim daily prayers, and now houses a statue of Ganesha, an elephant-headed deity honored as the remover of obstacles at the chapel for students of Hindu faith.. It is also available as a spiritual place for students to just drop in and reflect.

Additionally, and uniquely, Wagner is making a substantial effort to bring questions of the spirit and of faith into dialogue with the rest of the student experience. There is a Faces of God series that brings in a variety of speakers to address religious and spiritual issues. This puts spiritual matters inside the academic conversation, and offers students a space within which to explore faith in a substantive intellectual manner. For the past five years, the Campus Rabbi and a Lutheran (ELCA) pastor teach a class for Muslim, Christian, and Jewish students (as well as students of other faiths) in which they spend between 10 and 14 days in Israel learning of each others' faiths.

The Wagner Plan's stress on service, combined with the "Faces of God" series and an emphasis on diversity, all contribute to a framework within which students may explore spirituality in a way that connects their searches with the wider Wagner experience. In answer to specific questions raised by the self-study design, the very increase in programming and participation in spiritually based activities, along with the extension of faiths in the Kairos House chapel, suggests that Wagner is growing its spiritual life on campus. The availability of chaplains across numerous faiths offers students the opportunity for pastoral counseling on a daily basis. The chaplaincy itself

is active. Its members are both formally and informally in touch with each other to organize campus multi-faith services, compare attendance, refine programs, and seek support from each other through regular meetings.

Campus Publications. There are a number of publications to highlight student writing and display student creative work. The *Kallista Yearbook* is compiled and edited by undergraduates. All work published in the yearbook is gathered by the yearbook staff. They face some challenges, however, such as generating interest among their fellow students. They have also had a difficult time getting more people to join the staff. Because the yearbook takes time to publish, many people grow impatient. Other publications like the *Wagnerian* or *Nimbus* have several issues published during the year. The *Kallista* on the other hand, unfortunately cannot provide instant gratification, and staffers must wait a year to see a tangible copy of all of their hard work. Support for the Yearbook must be explored.

Nimbus is a literary magazine that provides the Wagner community with the opportunity to display artwork, poetry, and/or written literature. *Nimbus* publishes twice a year, during the fall and spring semesters. It takes approximately two and half weeks to assemble and print.

In 1918 Wagner College introduced its first official student newspaper called the *Wagnerian*, focusing primarily on student issues and concerns. The *Wagnerian* has a staff of student editors, reporters, photographers, and page designers whose mission is to “serve, inform, listen and entertain, while also encouraging a free exchange of ideas.”

With planning, collaboration and communication, the *Wagnerian* staff is able to produce the most integrated, and useful news report possible for the campus. The goal of each story in the *Wagnerian* is to help Wagner students make useful decisions that will enhance the quality of their lives. The newsgathering process and presentation is balanced, thorough, sensitive and accurate.

Every story written for the *Wagnerian* is expected to conform to the best journalistic practices: newsworthiness, determining facts, and balanced opinions.

F. Health and Counseling Services

All registered Wagner College students are eligible for care at Health Services. In addition to first aid for accidents, the Health Service Center evaluates and treats minor ailments, and provides any needed laboratory testing, inhalation therapy, crutches and medications. The office functions as a screening, diagnostic and treatment center, but does not maintain an infirmary. One recommendation is to increase the Health Service Center hours to include weekends when students can have access to a nurse for minor illnesses and injuries. This would continue to strengthen the commitment to being a residential campus.

Counseling Services are offered on campus as well. Service availability has increased from 20 hours per week to 50 hours per week in 2010. Also, a new student support group, SAGE (Substance and Alcohol Group Exploration) was formed for students to have a non-judgmental place to talk about substance issues and choices. In response to an increasing number of students requesting mental health counseling, the Health Service increased the number of hours available to students. Additionally, a male counselor (intern) was added to create a counseling staff that is male and female, to better meet student needs.

G. Center for Intercultural Advancement (CIA)

The CIA was created in 2008 to encompass the activities of the Diversity Action Council [DAC] and the Internationalization Action Council [IAC]. The Center supports and promotes Wagner College's mission statements by creating opportunities for social justice dialogues, sharing information about different cultures through programming and theme months, and assisting with the strategic initiatives to internationalize and diversify the campus (see Appendix 10-13 for Social

Justice Dialogue topics, Theme Months and for latest DAC and IAC Blueprints for the College). The Center also provides support for our international students.

Staffed initially by a graduate assistant who worked under the Dean of Campus Life and Internationalization, a full time coordinator was added to the staff in 2008. Subsequently, the position was upgraded in 2010 to Director. The impact of the IAC, DAC, and the CIA has been significant. In six years the number of students having short/long-term experiences increased from 10 students annually to 250 students. The following sections identify the impact in each area. Each of the following has been instituted since the establishment of the DAC, IAC and CIA:

Intercultural Awareness Workshop. One of the first steps in internationalization of a campus is to provide the community with common language and ways to discuss differences. In order to accomplish this in a systematic way, Wagner College has created an Intercultural Awareness Workshop (IAWs) for the community. This three-four hour workshop was developed to help the campus community engage in conversations related to intercultural communication and diversity. These workshops have become an integral part of the campus conversation around improved intercultural communication on campus. During the first three years of workshops, over 1300 students and 125 faculty/staff have taken part in workshops. Workshop assessment indicates that the reason that these activities have been successful on our campus is because participants report that the workshop climate has been interactive, non-threatening and provides not only theory, but skills to interact with people who are different from themselves in race, culture, gender, etc.

Expanding Your Horizons. Expanding Your Horizons [EYH] features courses that provide opportunities for experiential learning with a one to three week off campus travel experience led by both a faculty and a staff member. After completion of the trip abroad, the course continues through the spring semester. Each one-unit course is part of a student's spring course load. One of the

unique pieces of this program is that it fosters deeper collaborative relationships between faculty and staff as well as staff and students.

Examples of past EYH courses include Environmental Health and Pollution (Bangladesh), Understanding Different Faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Israel), Stories of Love and Death in Garcia Marquez (Colombia), and Arts Administration and Marketing (London). The number of EYH courses offered and the number of students who participated between 2006 and 2010 is presented in Appendix 10-14

Study Abroad. Wagner established an affiliation with the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) in 1991 and has sent students on IES study abroad programs since that time. In addition to IES study abroad programs, Wagner students have participated in programs through International Service Learning, the American University in Paris, and other opportunities through accredited colleges and universities. In 2006 Wagner began laying the foundations for establishing student exchanges with Université Lumière Lyon 2, in Lyon, France and Universidad de Almería in Almeria, Spain. In addition, Wagner established partnerships with St. John's University Semester in Rome program as well as with Rothberg International School at Hebrew University through a partnership with the Staten Island Jewish Community Center (JCC), the United Jewish Federation and the Pisgat Ze'ev community in Jerusalem. The others are Semester in China/Japan with North Central College, Semester in Costa Rica with North Central College and Hamline University's program in Senegal.

In 2009-2010, the number of students participating in semester-long study abroad programs declined by 4.6 percent from 2008-2009, the first decline since the College institutionalized its study abroad activities (see Appendix 10-15 for data covering 2003/04-2009/10). It is believed that this slight decline was due to the economic recession. This year witnessed a rebound for the

upcoming year (2010/2011). The IAC is conducting a survey to better assess where students/faculty want to study abroad and to look at factors impeding study abroad before making strategic recommendations to the Provost (Appendix 10-16).

PUBLIC SAFETY

The goal of the Department of Public Safety is to do everything possible to create an environment where people feel safe to learn, work and visit. The Department strives to be service oriented, which distinguishes its operations from the traditional role of security. The Department employs 15 full-time public safety officers and 10 part-time public safety officers. Shift supervisors are present on campus for all shifts. All Supervisors and public safety officers are state certified, and background checks are required for new hires.

In addition, the College employs police officers from the paid detail unit of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to patrol off campus problem areas and special events on campus. This has proved to be a great community relations connection with our neighbors.

An Emergency Response and Disaster Plan has been developed for timely response to any emergency situation on campus, from evacuation to inclement weather. As part of this plan, a Building Captain Program provides all buildings on campus with real time information via pagers issued to the Captains.

When an incident occurs on campus a public safety officer and a Supervisor are dispatched to investigate. The incident is evaluated by the Supervisor and a report is written to document the incident. A follow-up investigation is conducted by the Dean's Office to determine if further action is warranted. A report may be filed with the New York City Police Department if the student requests such action or if the College deems such action appropriate and necessary.

Pursuant to the *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act)*, the College annually compiles and publishes crime statistics for incidents that occur on or about our campus. One highlight to note is that the number of motor vehicle thefts on campus have declined. In 2003, there were 14 reports of motor vehicle theft; in 2008, 1 vehicle was reported stolen. This can be attributed to the installation of surveillance cameras and increased physical patrols in the College's parking lots. The reports covering 2001-2008 are presented in Appendix 10-17.

Services provided by the Department of Public Safety include:

Escort Program. Public safety provides an inner campus escort program. The escort van starts at 8:00 pm and runs until 4:00 am seven days a week. The van runs in a continuous loop around the campus, stopping at all Residence Halls and parking lots.

Ferry Shuttle. The free Ferry Shuttle departs from Wagner, stops at St. John's University and then proceeds to the Staten Island Ferry terminal beginning at 6:40 a.m. on Monday to Sunday and runs until approximately 11:30 p.m., Sunday to Wednesday. There are three vans running at all times including all Holidays. Public Safety has partnered with Student Government to provide extended hours of service on Thursday, Friday and Saturday with one van running till 2:30 a.m. funded by Student Government. Based on an analysis of ridership, the schedule was modified during the spring 2010 semester to provide more frequent service.

CHAPTER 11-SPECIAL EMPHASIS FORUM: THE WAGNER PLAN AFTER A DECADE

I. Charges to the Subcommittee

Review the ways in which the Wagner Plan has evolved over the last decade and the challenges that lie ahead in the next decade. How has the Wagner Plan impacted the curriculum, co-curricular activities and the perceptions of students, faculty, and the wider community? The committee was divided into five working groups, each of which researched one of the five questions listed below:

- *Have we clearly articulated how the “Wagner Plan” reflects the Mission and Goals of the College?*
- *How well have we integrated the various components of the “Wagner Plan” so that they are a coherent whole to our students?*
- *How well have we extended the “Wagner Plan” to the co-curricular activities of the College?*
- *To what extent have the College’s Graduate Programs adapted the “Wagner Plan” to their curricula?*
- *What impact has the College’s commitment to civic engagement had on our students, faculty, other Wagner College stakeholders and the broader community?*

II. Sources of Evidence

- *Faculty Guide to the First Year Program*
- *Intermediate Learning Community Goals and Mission*
- *Intermediate Learning Community Guide*
- *Senior Learning Community Guide*
- *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletins 2008-2010*
- *Student Focus Group Conducted September-October 2009*
- *Teagle Civic Innovations Core Commitments Survey Spring 2009*
- *Civic Innovations Student Survey 2006-2009*
- *National Survey of Student Engagement 2005, 2007, 2009*
- *First Year Program Learning Community Survey, 1998-2008*
- *Intermediate Learning Community Survey, 1998-2008*
- *Experiential Survey, 1998-2008*
- *Freshmen Year Survey, 1998-2008*
- *Team Taught Intermediate Learning Community Survey 2004-2008*

III. Executive Summary

A. Strengths

- *Since its inception in 1998, the College has significantly advanced The Wagner Plan as a model pedagogy, in part by responding to recommendations in the 2001 Middle States Self Study Design*

- *The Wagner Plan, as currently implemented, reflects the mission and goals of the College, including the goals of scholarship, achievement, leadership, citizenship, interdisciplinarity, and service to society.*
- *The College has made significant progress in extending the Wagner Plan to the College's co-curricular activities.*
- *The Graduate Programs and the Graduate Faculty reflect and foster the major missions and principles of the Wagner Plan.*
- *The Wagner Plan's commitment to civic engagement has had a significant impact on our students, our faculty, on other Wagner stakeholders, and on the broader community.*
- *Wagner College has received multiple national awards and recognition for the innovative nature of the Wagner Plan and for its impact on student learning and the community.*

B. Challenges

- *Integration of the Learning Communities (LCs): There is a need to better integrate the three LCs into a cohesive whole that supports the principles of the Wagner Plan. For example, not all seniors are up to the challenge of sophisticated writing and research required by the Senior LC. Three separate bodies (the First Year Program Faculty, the ILC Faculty, and the Senior Council) have been working in isolation from each other to design these three components.*
- *Diversity Issues Across the LCs: Meaningful interaction between students of different races or ethnicities, as reported in the NSSE data, varies from year to year. It would be beneficial to operationalize and institutionalize students' exposure to diverse individuals and increase opportunities for successful intercultural interactions*
- *The Freshmen LC: Freshmen LCs sometimes enroll more students (up to 5 more) than called for in the original Wagner Plan. The First Year Program deeply connects students to the College and their peers during the first semester. However, the First Year Program does not have a strong second semester component.*
- *The Intermediate LC: While improvements have been made, the ILC remains the weakest of the three LCs that make up the Wagner Plan. ILC challenges include assuring proper integration of the two paired courses; logistical issues of grading shared among courses; making the most efficient use of the ILC as a bridge to upper level and disciplinary study; insuring more joint interdisciplinary assignments, events (such as course trips, civic engagement activities or lectures), and readings; and especially finding a way to ensure a rigorous and intensive research assignment which integrates the two disciplines in courses that are often at the introductory level (to allow them to be accessible to non majors) and in courses with large numbers of students. It is important to offer a sufficient number of ILCs across the curriculum, each semester to meet the needs of the student body.*
- *The Senior LC: Each department follows different imperatives that do not necessarily intersect easily with the four basic elements of the Wagner Plan.*

Definitions of what constitutes the “experiential component” of the Senior LC vary from discipline to discipline. The ongoing work to develop the SLC has been hampered by the fact that the Senior Council is not acting as a voting body that can recommend standards to the departments. The Senior LC lacks a consistent cross college survey measuring the learning outcomes of our senior program.

- Field Placements. Wagner continues to face logistical challenges in coordinating and/or facilitating transportation for students to their placement site
- Explaining the Wagner Plan to Incoming Students: Students arriving at Wagner do not feel that they understand the Wagner Plan well enough to describe it to a peer at another school. We need to be more effective in explaining and consistently reinforcing the major elements of the Wagner Plan for incoming and returning students.

C. Recommendations

- Integration of the LCs: Institutional reforms are needed to insure that the three separate bodies governing the three LCs (the First Year Program (FYP) Faculty, the ILC Faculty, and the Senior Council) work collaboratively to meet the needs of all students. The Freshman LC, ILC, and Senior LC need to be designed and communicate across councils in a manner that forms a coherent whole advancing the learning goals of the Wagner Plan.
- Diversity Issues Across the LCs: Further work is needed to insure integration of the diversity component into all the LCs. Exposure to alternative forms of diversity—religion, sexual orientation, ability—should be increased.
- The Freshman LC: When needed, additional Freshman LC courses must be created and offered in order to ensure that classes be kept to the ideal limit of 12 per RFT and 24 per LC.
- The College needs to identify a second semester component which continues the deep connection to the campus, the faculty, the students, and the community. The college should consider creating a way to extend these connections throughout the second semester of the freshman year.
- The Intermediate LC: The ILC must be strengthened as an arena for sophisticated writing and research so as to better prepare students for work in their major and in their Senior LC. Faculty need to more fully adapt and assess most recent model for ILC disciplinary integration. Steps must be taken to ensure that a sufficient number of ILCs are offered each semester to meet the needs of the student body, especially during the freshman and sophomore years. More joint interdisciplinary assignments, readings, and events (such as course trips or lectures) should be incorporated into the ILCs, and in a manner consistent across all ILCs.
- The Senior LC: A consistent cross college survey measuring the learning outcomes of our senior program must be created and implemented. Standards defining what constitutes an appropriate experiential component for the Senior LC should be

- developed. The Senior Council should clarify that it is a policy-making body that can write and implement (subject to approval by the Academic Policy Committee and the Committee of the Whole) the standards for Senior LCs across all majors.*
- *Field Placements. The College must more effectively address students' transportation needs in regards to placements and experiential field trips*
 - *Explaining the Wagner Plan to Incoming and Returning Students: We need to be more effective in explaining the Wagner Plan to our incoming students while re-explaining and reinforcing it to returning students. Our publication materials (such as the viewbook and any other related documents) need to better reflect current conceptions, practices, and examples of the program.*
 - *Commuter Students: Efforts must be made to facilitate commuter student participation in the co-curricular activities related to the Wagner Plan (e.g. a re-examination of the current class schedule). Efforts must be made to help commuter students feel more connected to the campus (e.g. the SGA proposal for a class-free, practice-free "common hour").*
 - *Organizational Design and Support: The administrative support structure for the Wagner Plan should be reviewed so that the design is efficient and meets the needs of the Wagner Plan. This includes support for the program implementation, external grant development, and continuous contributions to the national higher education conversations and print materials.*

INTRODUCTION

The Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts states: "Wagner College has developed a curriculum that unites deep learning and practical application. The Wagner Plan incorporates our longstanding commitment to the liberal arts, experiential learning and interdisciplinary education with our geographical location and enduring bond with New York City." (http://www.wagner.edu/wagner_plan/).

Under the Wagner Plan, students complete three Learning Communities (LC's): One in the first year, one during the intermediate years and one in the senior year in their academic major (see Chapter 8 for a more detailed discussion of the structure of the Wagner Plan). The Wagner Plan has become the signature program of our college. It is one of the most important parts of our public

identity, recruitment strategies and recognition amongst our peer institutions. It is now impossible to imagine our college without it, so much has it transformed our curriculum and mission. While there is still work to be done, the last decade has seen enormous growth, nuance and creativity in all aspects of the Plan. Wagner is considered a true leader in the field of experiential placement and civic engagement, thanks largely to the Wagner Plan, which has led to an embrace of this mission throughout the entire curriculum, support offices, and campus community.

When the program was launched a decade ago, numerous questions and issues faced us. We have addressed the majority of these issues in a successful manner and through systematic assessment have continually sought to improve the program. Our surveys indicate that in nearly all areas we have maintained—and often increased—our level of commitment, energy and success in achieving the goals outlined for the program. In particular, two major challenges now lie ahead: transforming the first year program from what is now really a first-semester program into a full freshman year program; and building a particular identity for the intermediate learning communities, while using it to assure continuing development of sophisticated research and writing skills.

Below we articulate where we have been with the Wagner Plan, state some of the essential questions raised by this Program, and consider the future of the Wagner Plan.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE 2001 MIDDLE STATES SELF STUDY

1 .To enhance students' training in reading, writing and critical thinking skills, there needs to be greater consistency in the number, length and difficulty of reading and writing assignments across learning communities. Faculty should participate in workshops to train them in improving writing skills of their students. The expectations and uses of the Writing Intensive Tutors should be clarified. (2001 MSSS)

RESPONSE: In the beginning years of the First Year Program (FYP), there was much confusion and disagreement among faculty as to the proper quantity and level of difficulty for reading

assignments, particularly for the Reflective Tutorial(RFT). See Appendix 11-1 for examples and description of what constitutes a Learning Community and a Reflective Tutorial. In 1999 standards were established, noting in the FYP Faculty Guide that “students should be taught to engage with difficult texts” and that the Freshman Learning Community (LC) should “accustom students to the demands appropriate to the college level” and prepare them to “identify the most important arguments or ideas in a text” through “challenging scholarly materials.” This allowed for disciplinary flexibility while ensuring a fairly consistent level of challenge and depth in reading assignments. In 2004 the First Year Faculty created The FYPRC (First Year Program Review Committee) and charged it with reviewing all FYP syllabi to ensure that these standards are being met by each and every LC.

Over the past decade, a great deal of time and resources have been dedicated to training and supporting the faculty in teaching writing across the curriculum. Several sessions each semester have been devoted to writing workshops, writing across the curriculum training, and sharing of best practices at the monthly FYP meetings, as well as at the annual FYP retreats. Experts in the field have been brought in to further this training. While some faculty members still feel somewhat uncomfortable in this area (particularly in the sciences) the vast majority of FYP members have seen their confidence and skill in this area increase. In 2005 a contest for "best FYP writing assignment" was introduced; winning assignments are shared with all FYP faculty.

The type of writing is left to the discretion of the FYP instructors, but must include at least one formal research paper, involving multiple drafts and one analytical paper assignment. The 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) notes that Wagner students are more likely in their first year to write more than four papers between five and 19 pages (57%) than schools in their

comparison group (32%) During the last several years about 90% percent of students agreed that the Freshmen LC improved their writing skills. (FYP LC Survey 2004-8).

While data suggest that Wagner first-year students write at a higher level and frequency in comparison to their peer groups, and while surveys continue to indicate a high level of challenge, the plan as a whole does not seem to sufficiently increase student writing skills. This issue is further addressed in our question # 2. The Writing Assessment Program (WAP) data suggests that student levels are falling after the first year. This indicates a need for a far better bridge between the First-year and Intermediate learning communities: the ILC must be strengthened as an arena for sophisticated writing.

2. To improve students' active learning and to increase students' awareness of the needs of outside communities and sense of civic responsibility, further changes need to be made to the experiential component. The College must ensure that agencies function more competently in utilizing students in an interesting and informative manner. One means to achieve this goal may include site visits by faculty and/or Learning Community support staff to evaluate experiential sites--especially when students report back early road blocks, disillusionment or other problems. (2001 MSSS)

RESPONSE: The 2001 MSSS noted concerns with student satisfaction in their experiential placements. In the first two years of the program, only 45-68% of students agreed that the community experience was beneficial (FYP Experiential Learning survey). One problem involved the lack of clarity in regard to what constituted a true experience. This was addressed by the first year faculty in 1999, which revised and clarified the options. Faculty are now encouraged to select and design the placement most organic to their course from the following possibilities: civic engagement, participatory learning/mentorships, field trips and community research. Student satisfaction has sharply increased to over three quarters of FYP students since 2003, and on average about 60% of students believe the experience helped to make the class more meaningful. (FYP Experiential Learning Survey).

As highlighted in the 2001 report, another area of challenge was coordination with institutions and organizations. Indeed we have found that LCs which place large numbers of students at the same facility (i.e. school, hospital, on-site research) have largely been the most successful (HEPR Civic Innovations). Over the last decade we have had the opportunity to develop deep and sustaining relationships with a number of organizations including Project Hospitality, Staten Island University Hospital, and a number of public schools. A survey of 900 students involved in the Civic Innovations program (all of them in LC courses) show overwhelmingly positive and promising results: 69.5% believed their community work benefited the community, while 68.6% agreed that doing such work in the community helped them to become aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses. At the last survey count, 77% of all freshmen students reported that their experiential placement increased their understanding of civic responsibilities. (FYP Experiential Learning Survey)

Evidence of improved student awareness of the needs of outside communities and sense of civic responsibilities is covered in detail below in QUESTION 5

3. To increase student awareness of diversity, the College must find an acceptable way of integrating the theme of diversity into the First Year Program. (2001 MSSS).

RESPONSE Over the course of the past decade, several different options were incorporated including guest speakers, readings etc. In 2003 the mandatory diversity play, Theater Night, was introduced: all FYP students were required to attend a play in their first semester chosen specifically to deal with issues of diversity. The end of the performance includes a “talk back” session. Classroom discussion is continued at the next meeting of the RFT.

Students report enjoying these shows, especially the "talk back" portion, intended to directly face controversial issues. However, surveys indicate that some plays are far more effective than others in stimulating conversation.. During the last few years only one out of two students reported

that the play stimulated in depth and relevant discussion. In addition, the first year reading, required of all students the summer prior to their first semester, is chosen with issues of diversity at the forefront. The problem of integrating the diversity issues with the core LC course materials remains a problem in some courses. While many of the experiential placements involve students in situations confronting diversity, not all of them do. The First Year Program faculty, through discussion with the Dean of Campus Life and Internationalization have asked that The Diversity Action Council suggest further creative and effective ways to introduce FYP students to issues of diversity. Every entering student participates in a half-day Intercultural Awareness Workshop, during orientation. This is a significant introduction to diversity and communications skills prior to the beginning of their tenure at Wagner College.

The NSSE longitudinal comparison of Wagner College data shows an increasing level of engagement with diverse students for both freshmen and senior students. For example, from 2003 to 2009, the percentage of students reporting that they had no serious conversation with students very different from themselves dropped from 21% to 5%. Among freshmen the percentage dropped a full point from 2003 to 2009, from 8% to 7%. Put differently, over 93% of reporting students will have some meaningful conversation with a student of differing beliefs or background during their first year at Wagner. Experiential placements have clearly increased students' sensitivity to diversity—reporting increased tolerance toward those with different opinions (66.9%), race (59.3%), and class (58.5%) as a result of their community experience (SP09 Teagle Civic Innovations: Core Commitments Survey Results). These findings are borne out in the First Year Survey conducted during spring semester advisement in the last several years, with large numbers of students reporting exposure to racial issues (ranging from a low of 64% in 2002 to a high of 100% in 2003; in 2009 74%) and economic issues (a low of 53% in 2006 and high of 83% in 2008; in 2009 77%).

Operationalizing and institutionalizing the students' exposure to diversity through the other aspects of the Wagner Plan remains a welcome challenge.

4. To improve the quality of the work that faculty devote to teaching and professional development, faculty workload must be decreased...Most importantly, the College should seriously pursue its long term goal to reduce the normal faculty course load from seven per year (3-4) to six per year (a 3-3 load). (2001 MSSS)

RESPONSE: This goal has been successfully and creatively accomplished. Under the stewardship of Provost Devorah Lieberman, faculty workload has been reduced from 3/4 to 3/3. The program was first used for FYP faculty, then all Wagner Plan faculty members, and finally, applied to the faculty as a whole. This has allowed not only for more serious dedication of time and resources to the development and running of FYP courses, but has also fostered faculty scholarship. FYP Faculty have the option of "banking" a seventh course (during the year) instead, and thereby earning a Professional Development Semester (PDS) after completion of three years in the FYP. These options have succeeded in addressing the workload issue in a dramatic fashion. When appropriately needed, additional First Year Learning Community courses are offered in order to ensure that classes be kept to the ideal limit of 12 per RFT and 24 per LC.

5. Publicize student attitudes toward the First Year Program, student responses to the First Year Program, Learning Community and Experiential Component Surveys. (2001 MSSS)

RESPONSE: Results of student surveys have been shared with FYP annually, at both monthly meetings as well as at the annual retreat. Further discussion of student perceptions of the program are addressed in Question 2.

6. Conduct further research required to determine whether The Wagner Plan is improving the College Experience of commuter students. Also, conduct research to determine whether the Wagner Plan has made it more difficult for students to complete both their core and major is also required to determine whether the RFT can reasonably be expected to succeed in all of its multiple tasks: relating the themes of the linked LC classes to each other, relating the themes of the linked classes to the experiential component and teaching reading, writing and critical thinking skills. (2001 MSSS)

RESPONSE: A decade's worth of student surveys, as well as a recently conducted student focus group, provides us with an abundance of information on these issues. From 2004-2008 about 75% percent of commuter students report feeling more connected to each other, to the campus and to the community, due to the Wagner Plan. During the last few years this number has increased (FYPLC Survey). The length of time for all students to complete their Wagner College undergraduate degree has not significantly increased due to the Wagner Plan. (Institutional Research Common Data Sets 2004-2010).

Regarding student perceptions on how well the LC courses link both to each other and to the experiential placements, on average 75% of students reported a common theme in their LC courses (FYP Learning Community Survey, ranging from 70-86% over the 10 year survey period) while about 62% report the experiential component made the class more meaningful (FYP Experiential Learning Survey). A questionnaire administered in August of 2009 revealed 55.59% of students to be fully aware of the components of the plan. A Teagle Survey of 118 students conducted in 2009 indicated that 69.5% agreed that their community participation helped them in the "real world," and 54.3% agreed it helped them better understand the lectures and readings. These issues are further discussed in Question 2.

7. Improve the design and direction of the Wagner Plan through more faculty (both FYP and non-FYP) and student input to FYP administration, as well as through an ongoing program of assessment, evaluation and redesign involving the FYP faculty. (2001 MSSS)

RESPONSE: Faculty connection to and ownership of the FYP have been cultivated in a variety of ways: through the annual two day retreat; through monthly meetings, through shared governance, and through the FYPRC committee (charged with authority on all matters regarding the program). Five of the seven FYPRC members, including the chair, are full-time teaching faculty. In addition,

the various programs, including the diversity play and guest speakers, have allowed faculty from a wide variety of disciplines to have shared experiences.

THE INTERMEDIATE LEARNING COMMUNITY (ILC)

The ILC is designed to take students to the next level of sophistication in their writing, communication, and research skills and to further their interdisciplinary exposure. This LC needs to be modified to help further the mission of the college, including increasing oral presentation skills and introducing students to upper level research strategies (reflected in the ILC Mission, Goals and Structure Document).

Efforts to make more efficient and mission-oriented use of the LCs has intensified in the last few years and in 2007 the ILC faculty developed an ILC mission statement and established ILC learning goals. The document outlined ways to increase course integration (i.e. through the encouragement of shared assignments and readings and extracurricular events). It also specifically requires that all ILC courses include a sophisticated writing, oral communication and challenging research component (at a level above that of the FYP) in preparation for work in the major and final thesis projects. Significant percentages of students agree that the ILC increased their learning by studying a common theme through different perspectives (76%) and led to a positive learning environment (80%) (ILC Learning Community Survey 2008).

Most importantly to this aspect of the program, a pilot program was introduced in 2004 which allowed for the creation of several team-taught ILC courses. These are offered as one unit (one class) and meet for three hours a week. Surveys and student evaluations have consistently suggested that team taught courses provide students with a more integrated and dynamic ILC, and students report higher levels of joint assignments, common themes, and joint events (Team Taught ILC Survey 2004-2008). These courses allow for professors to share their knowledge and compare

approaches directly before the students. Faculty members are highly motivated and report very high levels of satisfaction on teaching these courses (focus group). Due to budget issues, the number of team taught ILCs are capped each year at three. The college is exploring ways to offer opportunities for interested faculty to engage in team taught ILCs.

Great strides have been made in these efforts but there are still challenges that lie ahead including assuring proper integration of the two learning community courses, logistical issues of grading between the courses, and making the most efficient use of this learning community as a bridge to upper level and disciplinary major study. The challenge is to find a way to ensure a rigorous and intensive research and oral communication assignment in courses that are often at the introductory level (to allow them to be accessible to non-majors) and in courses with large numbers of students. Requiring the preparation of bibliographical abstracts may be one option. A semester-long project, requiring multiple stages from outline to finished draft and oral presentation may also provide a solution in this area.

It remains a challenge to ensure that an appropriate number of ILCs are offered each semester to meet the needs of the student body. One solution has been to open the teaching of these courses to adjuncts. Additional team taught ILCs, which may be better accommodated to students' schedules, might also help to address this problem. The Mathematics and Computer Science Department, as well as the Economics Department have not as yet offered ILCs, due in large part to the small number of faculty in these departments and the necessity of covering major areas. Creative solutions to these issues should be sought.

The ILC faculty members meet four times each academic year. An ILC Review Committee consists of the Provost (or her designee), Dean of Learning Communities, ILC Director, who is a member of the faculty, and two additional faculty members.

Ongoing program assessment is carried on through annual student evaluations, as well as through national surveys adapted to our campus. Assessment of the program, including the first year writing component is further addressed in the chapter addressing Standard 14.

SENIOR LEARNING COMMUNITY (SLC)

In the last several years the SLC has been institutionalized and written guidelines and descriptions have been formulated. Most importantly, descriptions of all SLCs have been collected and are available on department websites and the SLC webpage. Of all the parts of the Wagner Plan, the SLC has required the most flexibility and variation due to its discipline-based nature (<http://www.wagner.edu/media/node/38>).

Departments have been allowed full autonomy in designing the LC and this has taken various forms from standard learning communities of two or more courses with an RFT, to communities run in consecutive semesters (i.e. research conducted in the fall with thesis written in the spring). Many of the SLCs incorporate internships at organizations in the major field but others take a different model of producing a comprehensive senior portfolio to be shared with the Wagner community. While some departments require a standard capstone course, identical each semester, other departments have rotating capstones which often take very different forms and structures. We believe this flexibility is one of the cornerstones and strengths of the program. During spring 2010, the Senior Learning Community Council identified the necessary elements that constitute the experiential component of the SLCs. This is being incorporated into the *Senior Learning Community Handbook* and will be placed on the website.

Part of the development of the SLC has been its documentation. All senior theses are now housed permanently in the Horrmann Library and are available to the larger Wagner community. This includes performances and research presentations as well as exhibits. All SLCs require a

written thesis, often written as part of the RFT, engaging with the current standards in the field, including use of scholarly data bases, skills in data analysis, demonstration of most recent methodologies and theories in the field, etc. Unfortunately, according to the results of the writing assessment program (WAP), not all of our students are up to the challenge: further work must be done to be sure they are entering their senior year with the proper skills and experience to handle upper level course work in the field. See Chapter 9 for further discussion.

Logistical issues still remain—particularly in smaller majors where SLCs are under enrolled. This has been solved in some departments by alternative solutions. The Art Department places both Juniors and Seniors in the RFT, while other departments open the capstone courses to non- majors. While departments have conducted their own surveys and data collection on the program, a consistent cross-college survey measuring the learning outcomes of our senior program must be created and implemented.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Have we clearly articulated how the Wagner Plan reflects the Mission and Goals of the College?

The Wagner Plan has been carefully crafted to achieve the goals of the College. Moreover the goals themselves have emerged from a decade long application of the Plan, which has deeply transformed all aspects of the curriculum. We believe that through the First Year, Intermediate and Senior Learning Communities students are given ample opportunities and exposure to the valuable skills and modes of learning fostered by our mission. Below we discuss each in turn, in relation to the various components of the plan.

A. Scholarship

It has consistently been one of the central aims of the Wagner Plan to integrate quality from out-of-class experience with rigorous academic study. While both the FYP and SLCs offer bold and

new ways of performing scholarship (i.e., through community based research), the ILC is conceived as a bridge to help students hone more traditional and discipline-based, as well as interdisciplinary, skills. All three LCs further the general education goals of “encouraging critical thinking, as well as “competence in listening, speaking and writing.”

One of the primary aims of the Freshmen RFT is to transform the student into a serious partner in his/her own learning. Both quality and quantity of reading and writing are mandated for each LC. The program stresses writing-across-the-curriculum and introduction to basic research methods (all Freshmen LCs require research papers exhibiting competence in accurate citation and documentation). The percent of students reporting an increased competence in their reading and writing skills has improved significantly from the first few years of the program to 75% and 88% respectively (FYP LC survey). In contrast to their peer groups (ANAC 48%, NSSE 32%), Wagner freshmen produce a greater number of papers exceeding five pages (Wagner 57%) (NSSE DATA 2007). It is also in the Freshman LC where students are formally introduced to the library via a formal orientation, as well as the concept of academic honesty and the issue of plagiarism. All incoming freshmen must sign the Wagner College Student Honor Code.

The ILC allows all students to have an interdisciplinary academic experience. Its mission is “to provide a common cohort of students with a heightened interdisciplinary experience including intellectual engagement and the development of enhanced communication skills.” This is achieved through concretizing the goals of the ILC, “sophisticated writing and oral communication” and “challenging research.” Many LCs encourage lengthy research papers crossing disciplinary boundaries. Seventy percent of students reported common themes in the writing assignments of the linked courses) (ILC survey 2008). In particular the team-taught ILCs report a high level of interdisciplinary assignments and over 80% of students who have taken them reported that they

achieved a deep understanding in both disciplines (ILC TT Survey 2005-2008). These data were not available as comparison to traditionally taught ILCs. While all ILCs must include “an interdisciplinary project that concludes with a written or oral presentation,” more joint interdisciplinary assignments and events, such as course trips, lectures or civic engagement experiences, as well as readings, must be offered in some of them. (See Appendix 11-2, “*ILC Mission, Goals, and Structure*”).

More work remains in shaping the ILCs to provide opportunities for more intensive and sophisticated research, for example by requiring the preparation of high level bibliographical abstracts and research papers. The challenge remains to ensure that all ILCs provide opportunities for serious research without disadvantaging students new to the discipline.

In the SLCs all students are required to produce a substantial thesis in their major field, requiring integration of multiple methodological approaches. Advanced research may be conducted in either the RFT or the capstone course. Several LCs offer students the opportunity to begin their research prior to the LC semester (i.e., Art and Biology). For example, the capstone course in chemistry requires student presentations of recently published chemical literature, related to a subject of interest to the student. In Economics, both the RFT and the capstone course emphasize research and methodology in the field. While majors such as Music stress performance, the capstone course is a seminar that introduces students to research and writing on music. Business students, in addition to 100 hours of field placement, must complete a senior thesis project involving applied and/or research-based learning. Evidence of student scholarship fostered by the SLCs are available on line at <http://www.wagner.edu/media/node/37>.

Other indicators show that the Wagner Plan is an excellent breeding ground for student scholarship. In the fall 2008 *Wagner College Forum for Undergraduate Research Bulletin*, four of the eight full length papers emerged from SLCs and three from ILCs.

The Wagner Plan also fosters scholarship amongst faculty. Faculty participating in the FYP may opt for a Professional Development Semester (PDS), a one semester opportunity in which classroom teaching and campus service is replaced by scholarly endeavor or the development of new and innovative coursework. Many journal articles have been produced, which are directly inspired by work in the LC, such as Dr. Laura Wright (English) and Professor Jennifer Toth's (Art) "Animals, Art, and the City," published in *Proteus: A Journal of Ideas, Humans and Animals* (April 2007), and Dr. Sarah Donovan's "Philosophy Outside of the Classroom: One Alternative to Service Learning," published in *Teaching Philosophy* (June 2008).

B. Achievement

The Wagner Plan fosters achievement in all areas of academic life and in civic engagement. In the FYP, emphasis is placed on the process of becoming a mature, responsible and competent student. Specifically, goals include "making the transition from high school to college," "growing critical and analytical sophistication in writing and assessing arguments and sources" and challenging the students through increasingly difficult readings. For example, all FYP students are introduced to the process of producing multiple drafts of writing so that students may improve their writing and critical thinking incrementally. The FYP provides students with key skills needed to succeed at the college level including "the ability to distinguish between primary and secondary literature, recreational and popular publications and to critically evaluate printed and electronic sources" (*FYP Faculty Guidebook*). Students must achieve certain standards in order to successfully pass the RFT, both in terms of writing level and completing experiential placements.

Moreover, since 2002, at least 93% of freshmen students surveyed report actively participating in their LC courses (FYPLC Survey).

In the SLCs, emphasis is placed on self motivation and realization of goals. This often takes the form of a complex research project or creation of a working portfolio in the professional or artistic disciplines. Evidence of student achievement in their disciplines is available online at <http://www.wagner.edu/media/node/37>.

C. Leadership

As noted in our mission statement, the Wagner Plan, by integrating traditional academics and applied learning “best prepares students for positions of effective and responsible leadership in their chosen professions and to the various publics served by them.” The Learning Communities are the arenas in which the general education goal of “competency in learning by doing, where ideas and field based experiences are related, reflected in writing and discussion and applied in ways that improve their world” are made concrete. From their very first experiential experience, students are encouraged to be active participants in their own education and to assume leadership roles. It is truly one of the most impressive aspects of the program: outside the classroom students transform into teachers, researchers, museum guides, interpreters and other positions of leadership. This is amply noted in student logs and surveys. Below are some quotations from student journals (fall '09 RFT for LC5, Perception, Illusion, and the Social Construction of Self) which testify to this transformation:

“This whole experience has definitely made me grow up a little more. I think I try and appreciate more things now. I am very thankful for my time spent at Golden Gate this semester. By the end of this project I can honestly say that I feel a true connection with my resident. Although I may have at first questioned the overall meaning behind this project” (Samantha Hills, whose experiential placement involved obtaining oral histories from Nursing Home Residents).

I understand now that going to visit Ernie once a week allowed him to feel hopeful and new in a way. Visiting Ernie has allowed me to appreciate the elderly in a higher fashion. Originally I perceived many Elderly as people who could not keep up with the times and who had refused to drop prior opinions that they had learned from the past. With Ernie, I saw a very accepting individual who was up for change. After my experience with Golden Gate I can say that I will be more willing to perform acts of community service in the neighborhood. I would also consider working with the elderly more often as the focus on my future service projects.” (From student Jillian Casey)

Through FYP placements, students are often in a position to share their knowledge with others, whether by giving a report on site at a field trip, by weekly visits to elementary classrooms, or by engaging with a specific local community. Seventy percent of Wagner Freshmen complete a practicum, internship or field assignment (NSSE). Moreover, of 900 students surveyed, 66% believe that their exposure to community work enhanced their ability to communicate in the real world, while 75% agreed that it made them better able to engage in community problem solving (HEPR Civic Innovations). High numbers (well over three-quarters) agree that they have opportunities to communicate with faculty (FYPLC).

In the SLC, students must assume leadership roles and act independently. This may be via traditional internships (i.e., in Arts Administration, where students initiate and secure their own placement) or by the creation of a professional portfolio (Art Majors prepare a professional portfolio and work to be included in a final exhibition). In Education, students enter the classroom as student teachers. One senior nursing student summed up the transforming nature of her senior experience as follows: “After my time at Wagner College, I have transformed into a confident, professional, passionate young woman.”

The intimate environment of the RFTs encourages student participation. In the latest survey 93% of students reported actively participating in their Freshmen LC, while 81% reported feeling connected with other students and professors. Many of the LCs also focus on issues of ethics and

professional practice (i.e., Government, Nursing) to help encourage students to be important leaders in their fields.

D. Citizenship

From the very first, the FYP helps students to become aware of their responsibilities as citizens of both Wagner College and the larger global community. This is done in a variety of ways from helping the student transition to a more independent and responsible role in their academic life (i.e. time management skills, introduction to issues of academic honesty), to the thematic topics of the LCs, to the diversity component, to the experiential placements which require the student to engage with the larger community. Seventy percent of Wagner Freshmen participate in community service or volunteer work, while 41% of seniors participated in a community based project as part of their course work (NSSE). The Plan attempts to provide all our students with the necessary practical skills, critical and analytic skills, and interaction with a wider segment of our society. Most obviously this is done through experiential placements. From the start, students must attempt to integrate what they are learning within the classroom with the challenges and complexities they face beyond the classroom. Wagner is the recipient of a Teagle Foundation grant to develop measures of the impact of community service on classroom learning. Over 69% of students responding to the Teagle survey agreed that their community service increased understanding of what they learned in the classroom, while 78% of all freshmen report their experiential placement as beneficial (FYPEL).

Recognition and acceptance of cultural and social differences is often required for success at various placements, whether once a semester or on a weekly basis. The HERP Civic Innovations Survey noted “overwhelmingly strong positive responses across all students in areas of personal growth as pertained to responsibility and citizenship: 72.8% agreed or strongly agreed that through their experience, they became aware that morals and personal values are an important part of

decision making; and 77.2 % agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of their experiential learning, they have a better understanding of their role as a citizen.” Student perceptions that their experience at Wagner has contributed to their development in contributing to the welfare of their community has steadily increased from 2003 on (NSSE 2003-2009; HERP; FYPEL).

The diversity component of the FYP also helps to focus attention on issues of citizenship, by promoting discussion of issues related to diversity among our students (*FYP Faculty Guidebook*). Students are encouraged and often required to reflect on their larger belief systems through readings, performances and real world encounters. Field trips and placements outside the College help to realize the general education goal of “familiarity with the individual’s own culture and other cultures in a global context.” While student experiences vary, the FYP aims to provide all of them with an increased sensitivity to issues of cultural, sexual, racial and economic differences and diversity. By the end of their freshmen year, 88% of Wagner students have had what they interpret as a “serious conversation” with a student of a different race or ethnicity than their own (NSSE 2007). Fifty-eight percent of students reported that their community work made them more comfortable working with diverse communities (HERP Civic Innovations) and 52.5% of Teagle survey respondents claimed that their work made them aware of their own biases and prejudices. Freshmen surveyed agree their LC has exposed them to diversity of race (67-77%) and economic status (53-83%) (FYP Spring Survey). As noted, further work to integrate the diversity component into some of the Freshman LCs is needed, and exposure to alternative forms of diversity—religion, sexual orientation, ability—should be raised.

As noted above in the discussion of leadership, many courses in the FYP (and SLC as well) focus on ethical questions that allow students to ponder deeper issues of citizenship. For 2009, LCs included, for example: LC6, Emerging Global Health Concerns, LC7, Dissident Voices in Politics

and Literature, LC8, Language and Ethics in a Global Context, and LC12, Health and the Environment: Cultural and Economic Perspectives. Such LCs introduce students, from the very start of their college careers, to topical and essential moral and ethical problems, discussed in a comprehensive and intense manner.

By providing all students with at least two semester-long experiential experiences, the College produces not only citizens of Wagner and the community, but of the world.

E. Interdisciplinarity

Just as the academic and non-academic world are integrated at Wagner, so, too the LCs hope to foster integration between disciplines. Both the FYP and ILC help to achieve this integration, notably by pairing courses across disciplines. As such, they help to realize the general education goal of “appreciation of different modes of inquiry that aid in the continuing search for knowledge, understanding and truth” (General Education Goals). Over the years, 76-86% of FYP students have reported that their LC courses were connected through a common theme.

All ILCs require interdisciplinary projects (ILC Mission, Goal and Structure 2007). 2004-2008 ILC surveys set out to measure the level of integration between courses. In 2008, 83% of responding students note a common theme, while 76% claimed learning was increased by looking at the theme from different perspectives. (ILC survey) As noted, the team taught ILCs have resulted in a higher level of satisfaction in regards to thematic integrations with more students reporting joint assignments, events and team teaching.

F. Service to Society

Service to society has been an essential element of Wagner College from its inception. While many schools wait until the senior year, the Wagner Plan introduces this notion in the very first semester. This is true not only through traditional service learning but also in nuanced and

important ways through other kinds of placements. Field trips must encourage interactions with local communities. Out of the Plan have emerged a number of programs.

The Civic Engagement Certificate Program encourages students to contribute to society throughout their four years at Wagner. Students who enroll in this program are required to complete 270 hours of service, as well as take specific courses geared to a deeper understanding of broad social issues. Students who successfully complete the program receive a Certificate in Civic Engagement. The first certificates were awarded in 2009.

Civic Innovations (CI), initially supported by a 3-year grant from Learn and Serve America, is a collaboration between Wagner College and youth serving agencies on Staten Island. CI transforms college and community by implementing institutional and curricular changes that integrate service-learning pedagogy and civic engagement values, while utilizing college student and faculty expertise to enhance the lives of disadvantaged youth. The model coordinates services and provides a means for community-based organizations to share resources and collaborate. Civic Innovations continues at large as well as also focusing on a particular neighborhood: Port Richmond.

Civic Engagement is a natural extension and deepening of the Wagner Plan for the Liberal Arts Program at Wagner College. An analysis of the ways in which the Wagner Plan fosters students service to society is examined in depth in question five.

G. Conclusion to Question on the Mission

It is evident that Wagner's Mission is being well served by the Wagner Plan. In its core principles and structure it assures students receive an education that is interdisciplinary, of rigorous academic pursuit through increasingly sophisticated research and writing projects, and geared toward a deeper understanding and contribution to communities outside of its own. Throughout the

three learning communities, students are given ample opportunity to reflect on the content and nature of their education, to develop themselves deeper as both local and global citizens, and to integrate their academic knowledge with real world issues. Numerous studies, surveys, focus groups and individual accounts testify to students' awareness of the ways in which the Wagner Plan enhances and shapes their education at our institution.

2. *How well have we integrated the various components of the Wagner Plan so that they are a coherent whole to our students?*

We have addressed this question in two ways, looking at the integration of writing, reflection, experiential learning and interdisciplinary study in each component of the WP and then examining the integration of the FYP, ILC and SLC experiences. The *Wagner Bulletin* states that “the three learning communities individually and collectively challenge students to relate academic learning to the wider world, to social issues, and to their own individual experiences.”

A. First Year Program (FYP)

The FYP most successfully integrates these elements. Our observations are based on the cumulative surveys of FYP learning communities since 1998 which show that students have felt that there is a common theme in the courses; this shows their strong interdisciplinary integration. Students also feel that they have been challenged to improve their writing skills, and to communicate with the faculty. The separate experiential surveys report that between 65% and 75% of the students have consistently felt that their experiential learning was beneficial both to them and to the community. There has been some improvement in linking the experience with the classroom, and currently 62% say their experience in the field made the courses more meaningful (the early years of the program saw averages of about 54%). Experiential learning increased 72% of the students' understanding of civic responsibility, and 47% of students felt that their experience in the field increased their problem solving skills.

The most recent detailed survey of entering freshmen in fall 2009 indicates that first year students now arrive with a clear understanding of several of the features of the Wagner Plan. Students were asked “to what extent did each of the following factors enter into their decision to attend Wagner College?” The most compelling reason to come to Wagner was the internships we offer, many of which occur under the aegis of the FYP or the SLC and all of which are an important feature of Wagner’s commitment to experiential learning and “learning by doing.” Fifty-four percent indicated that the Wagner Plan was important or very important to their decision to attend; 50.33% indicated that LCs played an important part; 65.36% said experiences in the community, and 89.22% look forward to doing internships. Fifty-four percent chose Wagner because they wish to take courses linked across the disciplines.

However, students who arrived at Wagner in fall 2009 did not feel that they understood the Wagner Plan well enough to describe it to a peer at another school (only 38.94% were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the idea), but 74.58% indicated that they would be comfortable describing what a learning community is. Fifty-five percent indicated they would be comfortable describing the components of the First Year Learning Community. Therefore, we need to be more effective in explaining the Wagner Plan to our incoming students.

A review of the brochures, or ‘*viewbooks*,’ published by the Wagner Admissions Office since 2002 reveals that the current language describing the Wagner Plan requires some revision. In the 2002-03 description of the FYP there is no mention of the Field Trip model for LC’s. The 2007 brochure repeats the same language verbatim, and still suggests that the only field experience for the FYP LC is placement at a field site. By 2009, this language had been abandoned for a shorter, more generalized description of the FYP. While this has been helpful, additional changes in the

brochure are recommended. Clearly our publication materials need to better reflect current conceptions of the program.

B. Intermediate Learning Community

The ILC surveys, taken between 2000 and 2008, show significant improvement in the following categories: “common theme in both courses” (83% in 2008; 58% in 2000), “content reinforced in both classes” (65% in 2008; 47% in 2000), “deep understanding of both disciplines (74% in 2008, but this fluctuates from a low of 56% in 2004, to 90% in 2007).

In almost every category the team-taught ILC’s scored significantly higher than the two-course ILC’s. For example, only 43% of students in 2008 reported that their two-course ILC “organized joint assignments” whereas 77% of students in the team-taught ILCs indicated “joint assignments facilitated learning.”

According to our limited data, the ILC has not succeeded in integrating the principles of the Wagner Plan as successfully as the FYP. It also appears to lack the support of departments, unlike the SLC which must be the capstone for every major. Faculty members teaching in separate classrooms appear to be less motivated to integrate writing and reflection across the disciplines into their coursework (comparison data from ILC Survey vs. ILC Team Taught surveys 2004-2008).

Earlier Admissions brochures stated that the ILC “prepares students for a greater understanding of their chosen discipline,” which is not what it does, nor what it is designed to do. The 2009 brochure says nothing specific about the structure or philosophy of ILC’s, but gives brief comparisons of four recent offerings.

C. Senior Learning Community

In the Admissions brochure of 2006-07, the language describing the SLC is virtually the same as it is in the earlier brochure of 2002-03, but in the brochure of 2009-10 the discussion of the

SLC as an integrative, culminating experience for students appears to be secondary and instead highlights individual student theses.

Several of the key components of the Wagner Plan—writing, reflection, experiential learning—must be featured in every department’s senior experience, but there have been enormous challenges in implementing this. Such challenges are reflected and captured in the following remarks:

- Experiential Learning: *“Instead of having an open discussion of the difficulties involved in implementing and supervising experiential placements, departments simply began to opt out of this requirement. The policy of a “research/thesis” alternative to the experiential placement came later. In general, the idea of experiential learning at the senior level has evolved from community service to research or performance.”*
- Writing: The writing requirements for seniors that were established by the SLC were a compromise between departments like English and History with intensive writing expectations and others, like the Sciences, for whom writing is less important than lab work. As a result, each department has a different writing expectation.
- Reflection: Many SLC’s do not feature reflection as a key component of the students’ work. The prior SLC coordinators commented that *“Calling library research for a senior thesis a form of “field experience” seems like a dodge. It leads to, among other things, Senior RFT “reflection” on library research.”*

The ongoing work to develop the SLC has been hampered by the fact that the Senior Council is not a voting body and cannot dictate to the departments. Each department follows different imperatives that do not necessarily intersect easily with the four basic elements of the Wagner Plan.

D. Integration of the FYP, ILC and SLC:

From our research, it appears there is a need to better integrate the three programs as a cohesive whole that supports the principles of the Wagner Plan. Three separate bodies have been working in isolation from each other to design these three components. The primary links have been individual faculty members who might coincidentally teach in more than one of the three at the same time and therefore attend the meetings. The three programs do not all appear to be meeting the same mission or standards set forth in our *Bulletin*, and Wagner’s much publicized

commitment to experiential learning in the community appears to be a requirement for all students only in the FYP. A significant commitment to reflection is also found only in the FYP, although some departments do require an experiential component and reflection in the SLC. Neither of these practices are included in the ILC as it is currently configured. The ILC focuses on interdisciplinary learning and is only now beginning to include a writing requirement.

Although students appear to have embraced the Wagner Plan, more study of the ILC and the SLC needs to be done. We recommend the creation of a task force that would more effectively integrate the three LCs.

3. How well have we extended the Wagner Plan to the Co-Curricular Activities of the College?

The Wagner Plan has, and continues to create, diverse opportunities that engage students in the integration of knowledge in and out of the classroom. The mission of the Wagner Plan is to encourage the active participation of students in the development of leadership skills, personal responsibility, and social awareness, which celebrates individuality, diversity, and global citizenship. The Wagner Plan promotes connection to the Wagner community as well as integration into the larger community of New York City.

The Wagner Plan includes courses and co-curricular events on campus as well as off-campus functions, including but not limited to trips to theatrical productions, concerts, lecture series, book signings, poetry readings at many different venues around New York City and the wider Metropolitan area and are linked to coursework at all levels of instruction: the First Year Program, the ILC, and the Senior capstone experiences. In 2009, for example, a group of students attended the Broadway show “Race,” and then had dinner with several African-American actors to talk about their experience. Students also attended The SOUP Show for Women’s History Month and the Quillwork Workshop at the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian.

Co-curricular activities related to the Wagner Plan are carefully crafted to contribute positively to the implementation and enhancement of the Plan's stated goals. The co-curricular activities successfully integrate the liberal arts and professional education with experiential learning.

In conjunction with the Wagner Plan, the Office of Co-curricular activities coordinates community service for campus fraternities, sororities and clubs, which have a required service component each semester. This Office is overseen by the Dean of Campus Life, who has assistance from the Director of Co-curricular Activities and many student office staff.

A. First Year Program: Co-curricular Activities and the Wagner Plan

The integration of learning outside the classroom begins for incoming first-year students before arriving on campus. Each summer for the last six years, students have been asked to read a text in common. Upon arriving on campus, they discuss this text in co-curricular events with Peer Leaders, use it as a text in the RFT, attend co-curricular lectures by and/or about the author of the common text, and write about it in their journals, post to an online forum, or write formal essays.

During Orientation, co-curricular activities related to the Wagner Plan abound. Many of the Freshmen LCs require students to purchase a good guide to New York City (*Eye Guides, Inside New York*) since integration of New York City cultural events as a part of student learning is part of the First Year Program. Tours of different New York City neighborhoods led by students and staff from the co-curricular office are also available. Some of these tours are especially designed for certain LCs: LCs with a Spanish language component, for example, tour the Lower East Side or El Barrio; students in the LC connecting history and literature of New York visit the West Village; students in an LC incorporating art history visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Museum of Modern Art.

The Intercultural Awareness Workshops (IAWs) were developed in conjunction with a national Diversity Consultant in order to help Wagner College meet its strategic mission of engaging our students around issues of diversity. There are three different versions of the IAWs, one for faculty and staff (four hours), one for trainers (seven hours), and one for students (three hours). The Center for Intercultural Advancement, Diversity Action Council, and the First Year Program all have partnered to ensure that all new students participate in the workshop. The workshops allow us to establish a common language around diversity while participating in interactive experiences to gain practical applications to engage in difficult conversations. As of July, 2010, 950 students and 75 faculty and staff have participated in the Workshops.

As the first semester progresses, students in the FYP are required by their different LC teachers to attend on-campus lectures related to their course work. Professors in the LC use funds from the Academic and Cultural Enrichment (ACE) Program and the Co-Curricular office to invite speakers, filmmakers, performers, and authors to campus. Several LCs may require students to write about and reflect upon the same event. For example, filmmaker Astra Taylor (“An Examined Life”) and Kwame Anthony Appiah, one of the thinkers/authors in her film, came to campus in October, 2009. Five LCs that were discussing the issues of “cosmopolitanism” and global citizenship attended the co-curricular event and linked it to their coursework through discussions, essays, journal entries or postings to an online forum.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, students in Spanish language classes at any level must attend activities on campus or in New York City that involve Spanish music, poetry or literature. For example, co-curricular events in the Coffeehouse during the last nine years, through funding by ACE, have included readings and performances by some of the best-known Latino poets and writers: Piri Thomas, the late Pedro Pietri, Tony Medina, Willie Perdomo (national poetry slam

winner), Mayda del Valle, Nancy Mercado, Edwin Torres and the comedian “Camelita Tropicana.” Students then relate the experience of the co-curricular event to readings, writing assignments, and videotaped interviews they are doing in class.

First Year Program courses that include a theatre class routinely go to productions in Manhattan and Brooklyn; those that include an art component visit the many museums and galleries on trips arranged by the course professors; students in science courses visit the Museum of Natural History, laboratories or attend lectures by guest scientists who are experts on the environment, neurobiology, or chemistry. As noted below, NSSE scores show Wagner students to be participating in co-curricular events more often than their peers.

B. Senior Year: Co-curricular Activities and the Wagner Plan

In addition to participating in, discussing, and reflecting on the wide variety of lectures and events connected to courses at Wagner, our seniors are afforded a range of opportunities to support them as they prepare to graduate from Wagner and move forward into the next phase of their “Life after Wagner.” In 2007 and 2009 Wagner Seniors reported a significantly higher level of communication regarding their career plans with faculty or advisors than did students across the board at New American Colleges and Universities (NACU) institutions (NSSE).

One of the objectives of the senior RFT is to introduce students to what it means to be a professional in their chosen field, using a variety of strategies. The Wagner College website offers a place to begin. The website provides access to the Wagner Internship and Career Search (WICS) system (<http://wagner.experience.com/er/security/login.jsp>). Here, students can view job postings, including those in the US Federal Government and non-profit sector.

To assist students in their pursuit of employment, the Center for Academic and Career Development (CACD) provides opportunities for seniors to meet with potential employers through

career fairs, on-campus recruiting, information tables, information sessions (for example, focusing on Women in Science or employment paths in the New York City Department of Education), classroom presentations, and alumni panels and speaker series, as well as site visits. A resume referral system provides potential employers with current resumes of students meeting stated criteria.

A series of workshops also offered by the CACD complements these opportunities and enables students to hone their skills and receive immediate feedback. These include the Etiquette Workshop, interview and resume preparation, mock interviews, Dress for Success, and “You’re Hired!” which focuses on a combination of key skills and helps students develop a resume, prepare for interviews, and appropriate follow up.

Social events take on a new focus when invited guests share their expertise in the academic and career sectors. For example, the Student-Alumni Networking Reception provides time for students, parents, and recent and past Wagner graduates to connect within an informal setting. In addition to preparation for future employment, Wagner career counselors assist students in designing a plan for graduate or professional school admissions that enhances chances for success. These endeavors are aligned clearly with the Wagner Plan’s research and scholarship component. Activities include researching graduate programs, preparing applications, identifying and preparing for admissions tests in a field of interest, learning about Wagner graduate assistantships and fellowships, preparing essays and personal statements, getting ready for interviews, and financing graduate education.

C. Co-curricular Activities and the Wagner Plan across the Years

A clear connection between the Wagner Plan and co-curricular activities is seen in the service and diversity themes that guide many of the on- and off-campus co-curricular projects. In

order to highlight the importance of the service component, as well as to promote this service on and off campus, all clubs/organizations are required, by the Student Government Association (SGA) to hold two service activities on or off campus before their budgets can be approved.

In a broader scope, participation in co-curricular activities data from the NSSE shows an increased score from 2.6 in 2003 to 3.39 in 2009 for seniors. This last score is significantly higher than that of comparison groups such as NACU and other NSSE institutions. The NSSE also indicates a decrease in the percentage of seniors who reported no participation in co-curricular activities, ranging from 39% in 2003 to 14% in 2009.

In regard to the diversity component, the impact of co-curricular programs such as the Spring Community Service, Alternate Spring Break, as well as various activities throughout the academic year that celebrate the diversity of our cultures can be seen in the NSSE data, which shows an increase from 2.8 to 3.12 between freshman and senior years in student's self reports of their ability to perceive an issue from someone else's perspective.

The connection of the Wagner Plan and co-curricular activities has also resulted in an increase in the number of student organizations focused on diversity, international experience and service. In the last three years the campus has seen the re-establishment of Alpha Phi Omega, a national co-ed fraternity seeks to "prepare leaders through service." This fraternity has seen its membership triple in the last three years, with a membership of 70 during the 2009-10 academic year. Additionally the campus now has an International Student Club, and an International Peer Mentors Club. Dialog Circles for Men, Women, and Spiritual Issues also count significant membership, and meet regularly around issues of diversity.

Notwithstanding these efforts, students' self-reports show only a slight, but inconsistent change in other areas. For example in regards to meaningful interaction between students of

different races or ethnicities, as reported in the NSSE data, the average score for senior students increased and then decreased again between 2003 and 2009 (from 2.59, to 2.76, 2.96, and 2.77 respectively for 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009). It would be important to note that although not a significant increase, the 2.96 score in 2007 was significantly higher than comparison groups (NACU and all NSSE institutions).

However, in regards to interaction between students from diverse backgrounds (religious, political, personal values), the campus has seen an average score increase from 2.42 to 2.92 between 2003 and 2009 (NSSE data). These numbers are comparable with NACU institutions.

Commuter students, approximately 20% of the student body, continue to feel only mildly connected to campus and sometimes have jobs that keep them from participating in the co-curricular activities related to the Wagner Plan (First Year Program Learning Community Survey). Students comment on the difficulty of finding meeting times that do not conflict with classes, athletic practices, theatre rehearsals, and the like. Many organizations meet at 9:00 p.m. or later, making it unlikely that commuters will attend. The SGA voted in a favor of a class-free, practice-free “common hour” during the fall 2009 semester.

4. In what way do the Graduate Programs reflect and continue to foster the major missions and principles of the Wagner Plan?

Committed to the ideals of The Wagner Plan, the Division of Graduate Studies offers select high quality programs designed to prepare students for advancement and leadership in their chosen professions. Graduate programs in Nursing, Education, Business, Accountancy, Microbiology, and Advanced Physician Assistant Studies all provide a student-centered learning environment that emphasizes applied experience, intellectual discourse and critical reflection, much like the undergraduate learning communities, but in higher cognitive domains of application and analysis and with professional status/regulatory needs in mind. These programs build upon the discipline-

specific knowledge of the undergraduate programs, and continue field work, research and internships/practicum experiences. Project seminars and research proposals or theses are required for graduation, along with evidenced-based practice in the fields of nurse practitioner and physician assistant.

All graduate programs are anchored in the liberal arts and most full time faculty in participating departments teach at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, have developed and taught in at least two or all three learning community levels, and dedicate themselves to promoting individual expression, reflective practice and integrative learning.

Additionally, many graduate students are products of The Wagner Plan and help embody its best aspects in the graduate program; in the spring of 2010, 38% of all Wagner graduate students received their undergraduate degree at Wagner. This alone indicates that the ideals and aims of the Plan have a profound impact on graduate study here.

Professional writing is a large component of graduate programs with experiential problem-based learning and a separate Writing Center to assist Graduate Students has been established. The graduate programs lend themselves to in depth writing both for class and often for publication, in many instances detailing work experience in their writings, along with research and analysis.

Students are prepared for life as well as for careers within the global community and are offered advanced educational opportunities in a number of professional programs at the masters level. Examples of the kind of experience-based learning practiced by Education graduate students include: student teaching, producing portfolios, writing lesson plans, and serving as graduate assistants. They are often involved in leadership models at schools, in tutoring, and in observations of best techniques and practices.

Nursing students at the graduate level are either in the Advanced Practice Track (nurse practitioner), Post Graduate Certificate Track, or the Education Track (for those who will teach nursing). All students must complete intensive practica in either primary care of patients or teaching at the college level in their disciplines. They must also produce electronic portfolios of their work, and attend professional meetings. Faculty and students attend Lobby Day at the State Capital in Albany each April to become involved in legislation affecting their professions with the New York State Nursing Association (NYSNA), a component of the American Nurses Association. This is a clear example of furthering the Wagner Plan mission of producing engaged professional citizens. In addition, they practice in diverse areas of the Staten Island community including Spanish-language clinics in Port Richmond, a designated Civic Innovation Initiative. All nursing graduate students must complete a project seminar, and many complete theses on a chosen research project. Along with mentoring undergraduates, they also assist in depression screening with the Office of Student Health Services so that they are also involved in the Co-Curricular portion of the campus and see The Wagner Plan in operation. Courses require reflection on practica and life experience as well as evidence-based practice research. Graduate students also participate in Journal Club each fall with a chosen theme that invites other disciplines to share knowledge and discuss the advertised peer reviewed journal articles, a practice that promotes active scholarship. All of this creates a culturally and socially diverse student body actively engaged in political and social initiatives of the community of learners and those of Staten Island.

The Physician Assistant students also have very heavy practicum requirements and writing initiatives requiring evidence-based practice guidelines and research beyond the classroom. Graduate programs in both Business and Microbiology also utilize strategies consistent with the Wagner Plan. Students in the Executive M.B.A. program and the Masters in Microbiology seek

professional careers or enhance present careers by using field work, intellectual discourse and critical reflective writing, as well as case-based learning to advance themselves in the business, finance, and pharmaceutical industries. The curricula of these programs are consistent with The Wagner Plan in that classroom and applied learning interact to assist students in advancing careers and leadership positions.

In the traditional M.B.A., students engage in 200 hour internships. They may participate, along with the EMBA and Accelerated M.B.A. students in overseas business study trips, which thus far have taken Wagner business students to eight different countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland). In the Accelerated M.B.A. program students complete a full-time field work assignment over five weeks as part of their course of study. All three Business masters programs employ the Capsim Simulation which allows students to virtually operate a company with five different aspects from finance to marketing, research and development, production etc. over an eight year period. Students may see the results of their simulation experience during overseas tours. For example, in 2008 students toured the largest steel plant in the world, Arcelor Mittal, in Ghent, Belgium and engaged in a lively discussion with company engineers.

Many of the Physician Assistant and Microbiology graduate students carry out original research, which they defend and present at science conferences such as MACUB (Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists). The Microbiology graduate program has graduate seminar courses that are similar to the journal clubs in the School of Nursing. In the graduate program in Microbiology some of the courses are seminar courses where the students do research and prepare written and oral presentations on current health issues. Many of them were undergraduates in the Wagner Plan (in the Spring of 2010, the percentage was 46%) and after

completion of their Master's degree have found employment with pharmaceutical companies such as Merck, Shering-Plough, and Pfizer, while others are working in government facilities like the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Homeland Security. Others are pursuing doctoral degrees in microbiology.

Classes in the Education Department provide both a foundation for further intellectual discourse and critical reflection and a site for subsequent critical reflection on experiences in schools and other educational institutions. This course work begins with a consideration of the literature on best practices in education that include coverage of how teachers plan lessons, convey content, engage their own students in intellectual and scientific inquiry, and then incorporate formative and summative assessment processes in their teaching to measure the extent and depth of learning. All of this content provides the basis for critical reflection during practica and internships.

The role of applied experience cannot be overemphasized in this process of preparing teachers. The intellectual content has relatively little value unless it can be translated into a set of practices that enhance student learning and enrich professional development. A key part of class work and the opportunity to do internships in schools is directly related to this goal of using what has been learned in real settings that produce positive outcomes and stimulate ideas about how to apply what is learned more effectively in the future. Additionally, graduate students in Education are being prepared to assume their place as professionals who have the potential to become teacher leaders who model excellent teaching practices and possess the ethical and moral dispositions that schools need. The graduate faculty in education do all they can to foster knowledge and skills, but they are just as interested in a set of professional habits of mind and behavior, sometimes referred to as dispositions, that will help to make teacher candidates integral members of the professional learning communities that they join. These habits of mind and behavior include: an appreciation for

diversity, a commitment to lifelong learning, an active desire to contribute to professional partnerships, recognition that teachers have certain ethical obligations to their students and colleagues, and a belief that teaching at its best can change lives for the better.

5. What impact has the college's commitment to civic engagement had on our students, faculty, other Wagner College stake holders and the broader community?

The Wagner Plan and Wagner's commitment to civic engagement has great appeal for potential students. A survey of entering freshmen in August 2009 found that over 54% cited The Wagner Plan as a very important or important reason for their decision to attend Wagner. Over 65% cited experience in the community as a very important or important reason, and over 89% cited internships as a very important or important reason.

Experiential learning is most prevalent in the First Year Program. Each first year student is required to perform experiential learning as part of their First Year LC; moreover, we are able to track the effect of the curriculum among this population. In a 2008 First Year Program Experiential Learning Survey, students indicated an overall satisfaction with their experiential learning experience and appreciation of experiential learning rose from 1998 to 2008. For example, in response to the statement, "Community Experience was Beneficial," 45% of the students in 1998 strongly agreed or agreed whereas 79% of the students in 2008 strongly agreed or agreed. The same trend held with respect to statements about: good agency orientation (49% to 65%), work that benefitted the organization (56% to 71%), experience made the class meaningful (19% to 62%), experience improved problem solving (27% to 47%), and experience increased understanding of civic responsibility (53% to 77%). The steady overall rise in students' appreciation of experiential learning in the community between 1998 and 2008 speaks to the success of this initiative in the First Year Program (HERPC Survey).

The second site in the Wagner Plan where experiential learning is most evident is in the SLC. Each student is required to perform experiential learning as part of their SLC.

The ILC is a secondary site where experiential learning takes place in the Wagner Plan. Through the ILC, Wagner students have some supplementary experiential learning experiences. While the ILC does not include a required experiential component, many ILCs do have a required experiential component (including those funded by the grants discussed below) and most ILCs include required attendance at speakers and other events which bring community concerns into the classroom. Between 2000 and 2008 the percentage of students reporting that their ILC included planned or encouraged joint events increased from 27% expressing agreement or strong agreement in 2000 to 50% in 2008. These numbers were even higher in the team taught ILCs, where students expressing agreement or strong agreement that their ILC included planned or encouraged joint events increased from 63% in 2000 (the first year for team-taught ILCs) to 77% in 2008 (ILC Survey). Indeed, the efforts of ILC faculty to supplement their classroom experience leads to many of the scheduled events on the ACE calendar.

Internships at Wagner College are another venue for experiential learning. Internships allow students to have a “learn by doing” work experience, supervised by faculty and professionals in the field. Through the Internship Program, some Wagner students have extensive additional experiential learning opportunities. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of internships for credit completed by students ranged from 95 to 135 per year (Wagner College Registrar’s Office). This does not include required experiential components of various major classes, including those in Education and Nursing.

While the experiential placements are of demonstrable benefit to our students, they do create a challenge for the College. Wagner continues to face logistical difficulties in facilitating

transportation for our students to placement sites. Given the importance of the experiential placements to the Wagner Plan, the College needs to develop more effective methods of facilitating transportation for our students to their placements.

The Wagner Plan has helped the College attract grants from various government agencies and private foundations to deepen its implementation of civic engagement into its learning communities as well as other parts of the curriculum. Among the donors to the College are the U.S Department of Education, the Teagle Foundation, the Bonner Foundation, Project Pericles, Campus Compact, TD Charitable Foundation and the Northfield Bank Foundation.

Initially sponsored by a competitive external grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Civic Innovations utilizes community-based learning experiences as a means to help students develop skills to be effective actors in civic affairs. A number of courses in Education, Sociology/Anthropology, Government/Politics, Nursing, History, and Business have been taught as Civic Innovations courses, including Freshmen LCs in History, Education, and Sociology and an SLC in Government and Politics. Student survey results indicate that the students are benefitting from their community work. In a breakdown of some of their responses, 66% of students said that community experience helped them learn effective communication strategies in community settings, 58% said their community work made them feel more comfortable working in diverse communities, 75% said they feel better able to engage in community problem solving, and 76% felt that the work they did was of benefit to the target community.

Wagner, in collaboration with Belmont College, has received a grant from the Teagle Foundation to assess liberal learning outcomes achieved through experiential learning requirements that are embedded in the two institutions' general education core. This places Wagner College at the forefront of not just implementing experiential learning for all students, but for demonstrating the

real impact experiential learning has on student learning in the classroom. While this assessment is still underway, an early survey of students involved in Civic Innovations courses found 72.8% of students reported that campus-community partnerships developed their sense of personal growth as it pertained to responsibility and citizenship. Seventy-seven percent strongly agreed or agreed that their experiential learning enhanced their understanding of their role as a citizen. Moreover, 60% felt more comfortable working across racial and class difference, 69.5% believed that combining community work with college course work should be practiced in more classes at Wagner, and 68.6% felt that the work in the community helped them to become aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses. From this, we can conclude that community-campus work combines to help students develop a reflective view of themselves and a sense of responsibility to their communities.

Wagner has used a Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) grant and a grant from the Bonner Foundation to create a Civic Engagement Certificate Program. At the May, 2009 commencement the first group of graduates received Certificates, marking their four-year commitment to coursework and service related to local and global poverty (*Project Pericles Report*).

In May, 2005, at the invitation of the prestigious national consortium Project Pericles, Wagner's Board of Trustees approved an institutional commitment to education for "social responsibility and civic concern" that would impact all campus constituents. Funded through Campus Compact and Wagner College, new courses in Government and Politics, Sociology, and Theatre focusing on civic engagement were developed by faculty. Some of these were regular and team-taught ILCs. Posters were presented by faculty at Wagner's Civic Engagement Day. These courses continued to be developed during the 2009-2010 academic year. Pericles has also funded a Senior Project Pericles Award that recognizes a senior who has done an exemplary senior project

involving work in and/or for the community (*Project Pericles Report*). Since its inception, five students have received this award.

The cumulative impact of all these programs on Wagner students can be found in NSSE results. A longitudinal analysis of student responses between 2003 and 2009 found that in 2003 the average first-year student reported that they “participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course” between “sometimes” and “often.” By 2009, more respondent first year students were reported “often” (2.49 average on a scale from 1 for “never” to 4 for “very often”). More significantly, while the average senior in 2003 (the second class to complete the Wagner Plan) reported that they “participated in a community based project as part of a regular course” between never and sometimes (1.89), by 2009 the average senior response had increased to between sometimes and often (2.18). The NSSE data demonstrates a concurrent increase in the average student’s sense of civic engagement. Between 2003 and 2009 the average student response regarding the extent to which their Wagner experience contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in contributing to the welfare of their community increased from 2.51 to 2.85 (that is, more students reporting “quite a bit-3” or “very much-4” over “some-2” or “very little-1”) among freshmen and from 2.27 to 2.77 among seniors.

The Wagner Plan’s commitment to community engagement has had a tremendous impact on the Wagner faculty.

First and foremost, the implementation of the Wagner Plan required every faculty member participating in the First Year LC to develop an experiential component for his/her LC, and that every department at the College offering a major had to develop an experiential component for their SLC. While many departments already incorporated fieldwork experiences (e.g. nursing, education, sociology), a number of departments needed to develop experiential components for the first time

(e.g. Mathematics, Physics, Literature). Departments had to acknowledge the career tracks their majors were following after graduation, and create elements for the SLC that prepared students for this transition. Faculty unfamiliar with supervising community work needed to learn how to design and oversee these activities, and how to get students to reflect on these experiences through their writing and integrate these experiences into their classroom learning.

A second feature of the Wagner Plan impacting on the faculty was the implementation of regular meetings of faculty participating in the First Year Program (seven per academic year plus one retreat), the ILCs (four per academic year), and the SLCs (four per year). These meetings are venues for reflective discourse on best practices and on the progress of each program, and also provide contexts where training in the effective use of civic engagement takes place.

A result has been an increase in faculty presentations at professional conferences and faculty publications on pedagogy. Faculty have recently presented at conferences held by National Science Foundation (NSF), the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the American Chemical Society, and the Associated New American Colleges to name a few. They have published articles regarding pedagogy in journals such as the *Council for Undergraduate Research Quarterly*, *Proteus: A Journal of Ideas*, *Teaching of Psychology*, *Teaching Philosophy*, *Chemistry Education* (see Appendix 11-3 for full titles). This increase in faculty scholarship on pedagogy has been supported by the Provost's increase in funding for faculty research and travel, to support faculty writing and research through the use of Scholarship Circles, Faculty Forum, and Humanities Seminar, and to encourage acceptance of pedagogical research as scholarship in faculty reappointment, promotion, and tenure decisions.

In some cases, faculty members have truly transformed their scholarship as a result of their work in the community. For example, Dr. Lori Weintrob, a historian with a focus on late nineteenth

century France has recently turned her attention to the study of the history of Port Richmond, a Staten Island community with which she has worked extensively in relation to various Wagner initiatives. Dr. Sarah Donovan (Philosophy) explored these issues in her recent article: "Philosophy Outside of the Classroom: One Alternative to Service Learning" *Teaching Philosophy* (June 2008). Nursing Professor, Dr. Margaret Governo, has had her work transformed by engaging in community issues, as reflected in her April 2010 presentation at Columbia University, "Effectiveness of a Classroom Character Education Program for New York City Fifth Grade Elementary School Students."

As a direct result of Wagner faculty engagement in community-based scholarship we were invited to join the Imagining America consortium in 2007 and continue to be active members. (Imagining America is a national consortium of colleges and universities committed to public scholarship in the arts, humanities and design). Faculty members from a variety of disciplines, from the fine arts to political science, have been featured on the Imagining America website for the ways in which they integrate community concerns with their scholarship and teaching (<http://www.imaginingamerica.org/>).

Community partners are working closely with Wagner to establish lasting and meaningful relationships. One goal of the Civic Innovations Program is to partner departments with a specific agency in order to ensure continuity and development in the work Wagner does for the agency. Groups with which Wagner has sustained contact include Project Hospitality, El Centro del Immigrante, Make the Road, Catholic Youth Organization, St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church, the Northfield Local Development Corporation., P.S. 16 and P.S. 57, the Park Hill community, United Activities Unlimited, the YMCA and, most recently, the Port Richmond

Partnership (which includes a number of community-based organizations in the aforementioned neighborhood). Through these organizations, Wagner students served 7,902 young people in 2009.

The director of United Activities Unlimited, Kim McLaughlin, offered the following insights about Wagner's partnership with her community group: "UAU is growing, and the Wagner collaboration is helping with that growth. Wagner students are missed when they are not in the afterschool program, for they cut in half an otherwise difficult ratio of students to tutors (25:1)." Moreover, McLaughlin goes so far as to say that UAU's goals have become tied to Wagner's goals: UAU works to make Wagner students more cognizant of their surroundings and informed as citizens, while community youth view Wagner students as role models. McLaughlin's feedback is consistent with that from Laura Reardon, of the Park Hill community group. Reardon also emphasizes the important role Wagner students play as mentors, educators, and role models for younger students and for children (Dr. Kim McLaughlin, *Civic Innovations Final Report*). McLaughlin highlights another important aspect of Wagner's work in the community: Wagner's role in bringing together community partners that would not otherwise have worked together. Wagner functions as a catalyst for community development, as is evident in the many new connections that have developed as a result of the new Port Richmond Partnership.

Wagner College has increasingly been highlighted in the national media for its work in the community. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* has published two articles on Wagner in the past three years, the most recent of which focuses specifically on community-based learning. In February of 2009, *The Chronicle* ran a story, "College Makes New Connections with Service-Learning Program," on the front page. Wagner has also been recognized on a national level by *U.S. News and World Report*, which has highlighted the College's innovative integration of community work and experiential learning into the curriculum.

Wagner's participation in the Corporation for National and Community Services Learn and Serve America initiative (http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/programs/higher_education.asp), participation in the Teagle Foundation's Outcomes and Assessment Program (<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/grantmaking/grantees/vaafull.aspx>), and identification as a Periclean institution by Project Pericles (<http://www.projectpericles.org/projectpericles/>) is publicized on these institutions' websites.

Locally, Wagner's work in the community has been covered regularly by *The Staten Island Advance*. The *Advance* publicizes new Wagner initiatives in the community and keeps Staten Islanders apprised of the College's activities. The *Advance* also covers community events on campus such as the annual "Celebrate Diversity" day, an event that brings the community together at Wagner by featuring a different series of cultural/ethnic communities that make up Staten Island each year, and other campus activities that stem from experiential learning initiatives.

We can only conclude that the more the community knows about Wagner's work, the more the College can do to further develop the community-campus initiatives that our Learning Communities, Civic Innovations programming, and coursework already foster.

