Lasell College Self Study Report

In preparation for

Reaccreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges

2012
Institutional Characteristics Form

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INTRODUCTION

This self-study describes and evaluates an institution that has doubled its enrollments and full time faculty since the 2002 self-study, and has grown significantly since Michael Alexander assumed the presidency five years ago. Since fall 2007, undergraduate enrollment has increased by 340 students, or about 26 percent; graduate enrollments are four times what they were five years ago, as are the number of degree offerings. The full-time faculty has grown by nearly 40 percent.

We launched a new Teaching and Learning Center. First year seminar became an academically focused, three-credit requirement. This fall, we launched a professional advising model for all first year students. We have formed new partnerships with institutions in China, Ireland, and Switzerland, and we have increased the number of international service-learning programs from one to five – with a new program in Uganda occurring this May.

Student activities have also increased dramatically. Over the past five years, clubs and organizations have expanded by nearly 50 percent, and there has been more than a 70 percent increase in student events with a 100 percent increase in student participation in events. Athletics added five intercollegiate teams. There were no theatre productions in President Alexander’s first year; now, there is an annual fall musical and annual spring play.

The College has seen a 52 percent increase in total revenues. Of course, facilities have changed as well:
- East and West Halls, the Van Winkle Courtyard, and the McClelland Fitness Center are all new. This fall, North Hall opened along with an underground parking garage and newly renovated courtyard that replaced a parking lot with a beautiful new green space.
- Last fall we opened the Donahue Center for Creative and Applied Arts.
- Hamel House opened last fall as the new home of the Office of Admission and the Lasell College Visitor Center.
- A newly renovated Valentine Dining Hall opened this fall.
- We formed a Green Campus Task Force which morphed into the Environmental Sustainability Committee and has quietly made major progress on our campus.
  - We implemented single-source recycling.
  - We implemented energy monitoring in many buildings supported by two outside grants.
  - We signed the Presidents Climate Commitment which commits us to reducing carbon emissions on campus by 80 percent between 2008 and 2050.

All of our growth is in accordance with our Strategic Plans (Vision 2012; Vision 2017) and our Campus Master Plan, which was approved in 2008. That plan calls for development of the campus over a 20 year period, structured around open green spaces, and takes into account the need for parking and the movement of pedestrians, and attempts to create a coherence of landscape, buildings, and people.

Our operating budget has produced a modest surplus every year despite all this growth. Sometimes when an organization grows this quickly, it requires an investment that can create temporary deficits. We have managed to maintain a conservative fiscal stance even while making so much progress. Our endowment has grown from $23 million to $29.6 million, an increase of nearly 29 percent, despite the difficulties in the stock and bond markets during that time.

The Lasell Fund has grown 53 percent. Total fundraising over four years was more than $12 million. The Strategic Development Plan described a 10-year plan, in three phases, to help us work towards our ultimate goal which was a $40 million capital campaign with the cornerstone project being a new athletic center. In June 2012 we successfully finished Phase I, the “Bridge to the Future” campaign, which was a $10 million fundraising initiative to grow the Lasell Fund, the endowment and to construct a $5 million academic building. With a $2 million gift from an alumna and Trustee Emerita, a $1 million challenge gift from a long-time benefactor, and a $1.3 million gift from a vendor, the development team raised $10.3 million. The Lasell Fund broke a record for the sixth consecutive year—and exceeded its three-year goal of $2 million by $480,463.
Lasell Village continues to be unmatched as a quality retirement community with its unique learning requirement, adding spice to the flavor of the broader Lasell community. Lasell College is a bigger, stronger, and more visible and recognized institution than it was only five years ago, better equipped to contribute to the personal and intellectual development of each and every student.

**Targeted Areas for Improvement**

Our Strategic Planning process, as well as the analysis underlying this Self Study, has helped us to identify areas where we need to improve. The areas we have targeted for improvement include:

- Raising our first-time, first-year retention rate to a consistent minimum of 75 percent is a priority for the institution. The reasons for student attrition are elusive, and we have worked hard to refine our data gathering in order to understand it better. We have also taken a number of actions in academic support services, student life programming, and facilities improvement, which we believe accounted for our rebound to a 72 percent retention rate for the fall 2011 cohort. We are hopeful that new academic support initiatives and personnel, including a professional advising team for first-year students and a learning specialist hired to support academically at-risk students, further renovations and expansions to our facilities, and new co-curricular programming will help us make further progress.

- Increasing the level of academic challenge is another priority, which should also support our retention goals. The creation of a Center for Teaching and Learning, a focus on writing, speaking, and research across the curriculum, and many other initiatives described in this Self Study are directed toward increasing academic rigor. We also need to revise our approach to general education to make it more integrative with the rest of a student’s education, more interdisciplinary, and more distinctive for the institution.

- Academic assessment has been a tremendous success at the program level; the assessment of general institutional learning outcomes began two years ago with a focus on writing. As described in the Self Study, we need to develop a process for regularly assessing student learning against our established institutional learning outcomes in ways that are both useful to the College and publically reportable.

- The College needs to decide upon and design new graduate degrees as well as determine entreat what rate to invest in the online arena at the undergraduate level. We want to further diversify our student population, especially by increasing the enrollment of international students.

- We need to continue to hire full-time faculty, moving toward our goal of 67% full-time faculty course coverage at the undergraduate level and 50 percent at the graduate level.

- The College needs a new athletic center to serve a population more than double the size of what the current facility was meant to accommodate; and we need to continue our efforts to renovate the campus to create more green space, more high-tech classrooms, and more offices for our growing faculty and staff.

In its November 13th, 2008 acceptance of the College’s five-year interim report, the Commission requested that we address the following in our 2012 self-study:

1. "Increasing diversity and gender balance while reducing the tuition discount rate as projected in "Vision 2020""
2. "Establishing assessment of learning outcomes at the graduate level, including programs delivered through distance education"
3. "Extending its work with program assessment and student success and including analyzing how data in the forms informs the institution in understanding what and how students are learning, providing information useful for improvement."
Additionally, in its November 16th, 2011 acceptance of the College’s Substantive Change request to be granted general authority to offer graduate programs at the master’s level, the Commission articulated that the following should be addressed:

4. Ensuring that an adequate number of sufficiently credentialed faculty are hired to support and enhance all programs
5. Developing and implementing student learning outcomes for each graduate program and systematically using the results of assessment for program and course improvement.

1. Diversity, Gender Balance, Discount Rate
There are two points of clarification in reference to item number one, which Commission staff advised us to address in this self-study. First, Vision 2012 (not "Vision 2020") is the College’s strategic plan referenced in our 2008 report (and, as described in the self-study, Vision 2017 was created in Fall 2011). Second, while we strive to maintain or reduce the discount rate, we did not project a reduction in the tuition discount rate. The NACUBO Discount Survey (2010 is latest available) notes that the economic recession that began in 2007 and continued into summer 2009 caused a rapid rise in tuition discounting. They further report that the average annual change in net revenue was 1.5 percent among small private institutions. Like our sister institutions, our discount rate climbed during this period, but declined almost a full percentage point for FY2012. Unlike the reported NACUBO trend, Lasell experienced a three year average increase of over six percent in net tuition revenue between 2008 and 2010.

With regard to the College’s efforts to increase diversity and gender balance, Vision 2012 set a goal of 18 percent minority enrollment by 2012. In fall 2011, we exceeded that goal, reaching 20.7 percent minority enrollment. The strategic plan established a goal of 35 percent men by 2012, which was also exceeded in 2011, when males represented 36 percent of the student body. These respective percentages of 36 percent male and 21 percent minority have held constant for the current year. Undergraduate international student enrollment has increased to over two percent, with the percentage of international students among graduate students now at 10 percent.

More information is provided in Standards Two, Six, and the following Appendices: Appendix B: Strategic Planning Report 10.15.07; Appendix C: Strategic Plan Report 9.30.08; Appendix D: Strategic Plan Report 10.03.09; Appendix E Strategic Planning Report 10.02.11.

2. & 5. Graduate Programs Assessment
Graduate academic programs at Lasell now conduct assessment on multiple levels. Every five years, the Graduate Committee conducts a review of program effectiveness and connection to College goals. Each department conducts an ongoing assessment process in order to monitor and improve programs, curriculum, and student learning on a regular and continuing basis. Finally, Graduate and Professional Studies conducts surveys and focus groups each year with students and faculty.

Beginning in March, 2010, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and the Chairs of Marketing/Management, Communication, Sport Management and Education developed a set of goals and outcomes for graduate education at Lasell, and then framed a process and timeline for assessment. Each area produced an assessment report (see Appendix A: Graduate Program Assessment Reports).

The first outcome assessed by Management, Communication and Sport Management was the ability to communicate effectively in writing. Both Management and Sport Management developed rubrics involving structure (writing is clear and understandable with appropriate beginning, middle and end); content (there is evidence to support assertions, appropriate terminology is used, citations are in APA); and mechanics (word selection, sentence structure, spelling etc.). Communication diverged slightly from these rubrics, using instead the following five criteria: context and purpose, content development, format and presentation, sources and evidence, syntax mechanics.
The table below shows the average scores across the three programs for the first outcome and components for Professional Communication:

Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Outcome: Ability to Communicate Effectively in Writing</th>
<th>Average Score (Using a Likert Scale where 1 represented the lowest performance and 4 the highest)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Management</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Context and Purpose</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content Development</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Format and Presentation</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sources and Evidence</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntax Mechanics</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of this first attempt to assess graduate student progress, we developed some clear action steps to aide students in developing stronger writing skills:

1. Develop a closer relationship between the Academic Achievement Center and the Graduate Program: This included extending evening hours for graduate students and the development of an online tutoring program, which we launched this past spring by contracting with “Smarthinking”
2. Develop workshops for graduate students on both writing skills and APA formatting: Many students expressed an interest in having a refresher course in writing research and other types of papers. We offered one workshop for students that included both a refresher on APA formatting and a conversation on learning styles. We plan on holding a similar workshop in the spring term of 2013.
3. Develop a writing guide that students could access on Moodle: This guide could give them the basics of proper writing and direct them to various website such as the OWL writing center which is an invaluable resource for students who want to improve their writing skills. Our plans are to work with writing faculty and develop this for graduate and adult undergraduate students in fall of 2013.
4. Explore technology that can be added to Moodle that would allow students to present online: We have licensed Adobe Connect and some faculty have utilized this tool for student presentations quite successfully. We plan to work with the Teaching and Learning Center to provide workshop in using Adobe Connect. Currently all faculty who participate in the 6-week online training course are exposed to Adobe Connect.
5. Continue to survey students in the programs and invite them to participate in focus groups to hear their experience in the program and their own assessment of progress in developing and enhancing their communication skills: Information from these surveys and focus groups will be used in the assessment process to strengthen program supports for student writing.

The Commission’s Substantive Change Report expressed the need for a assessment program that was directed more specifically to the graduate level. As a result, the Dean and Chairs met throughout the fall of 2011 and spring of 2012 to develop program goals more in step with graduate education. These goals are outlined in the Report and while each program has developed its own set of goals, they are all informed by themes of leadership, global awareness, communication, and critical reflection. In fall 2012, each program will collect data and assess student progress.
In addition, in the fall we will also assess student learning outcomes across delivery models. This will only be relevant for Communication and Management since these are the only programs that offer both hybrid and online delivery. In the fall, we are offering courses in both delivery models for both programs so it will be possible to assess whether delivery model impacts learning outcomes.

More information regarding the process and results of assessment is provided in Standard Four and Appendix A: Graduate Program Assessment Reports and Appendix M: Graduate Strategic Planning Report.

3. Program Assessment, Data Collection, Assessment Informing Action

Clearly, program assessment, particularly formative assessment, is at a far more advanced stage at the undergraduate than at the graduate level at Lasell. In fall 2006, Lasell launched an assessment process for undergraduate programs with the aim of improving programs, curriculum, and student learning on a regular and continuing basis. As of fall 2010, all undergraduate academic departments had developed and articulated student learning goals and outcomes, produced curriculum-maps, and designed rubrics for scoring student work; some departments developed surveys for students, internship supervisors, Advisory Board members, and/or alumni. The academic assessment process now includes steps at the course, program, and institutional levels, as well as procedures for using assessment results to improve student learning. Additionally, Lasell’s participation in the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education has resulted in analyses and actions at both the institutional, program, and course levels.

More information regarding the process and results of assessment is provided in Standards Two and Four, and Appendix I: Assessment Report 08-09; Appendix J: Assessment Report 09-10; Appendix K: Assessment Report 11-12; and Appendix L: Writing Assessment 2011-2012

4. Faculty Hiring

Graduate faculty are expected to hold a terminal degree and have extensive professional experience in the field. While in most cases a doctorate is considered to be the terminal degree, we also consider standards set by accrediting agencies or professional practice in some fields. Thus faculty holding an MBA, JD, MFA or Master’s in Sport Management with substantial professional experience are considered qualified to teach in our graduate programs. Over the past two years, all the academic departments that offer graduate programs have endeavored to increase their full time faculty numbers and all recent faculty hired into these departments have as part of their load the responsibility of teaching in the graduate program.

The Communication department has hired two new faculty this year, who join two other full time faculty teaching in the Communication graduate program. The Marketing/Management Department Management made a new hire last year, joining three other full time faculty teaching graduate courses in this area. The Sport Management Department hired a chair this Fall, who will be teaching in the graduate program. The Education Department hired a new faculty member this past Spring, who joins three other faculty eaching in the Education graduate program. All of the faculty referenced above hold doctorates in their fields. These full-time faculty are joined with long-term adjuncts who bring extensive experience in their chosen fields. We feel that students have an ever increasing exposure to both full-time and part-time faculty and we are moving to have more and more coverage by full time faculty. However, in doing so, we want to maintain our commitment to providing our students with instructors who bring rich and varied professional experiences and contacts to the classroom.

More information regarding the faculty hiring is provided in Standard Five.
SELF STUDY PROCESS
Lasell College began its institutional self study in September, 2010 – at which time we launched a series of town meetings in preparation for a new strategic plan, formed a self study steering committee, and, by early October, formed subcommittees for each Standard review. The College has undergone significant growth since 2002, including a 60 percent increase in its undergraduate population and the graduate population increasing from just 12 students in that first year to what is projected to be 300 this term. Vision 2017 establishes the basis for the following report, setting forth ambitious priorities for the future, all of which are centered within core principles of the College mission.

The Steering Committee was formed in September, 2010 to be comprised of 20 individuals, including the Senior Management Team, the three Academic Deans, Subcommittee chairs, Director of Institutional Research, and student and trustee representatives. The Steering Committee served as the working committee for Standards One and Two, and the other Subcommittees (including three for Standard Four and two for Standard Six) included representatives from various constituencies throughout the College. Thirty percent of the full time faculty served on committees, as well as 10 students, six trustees, and staff representatives from key areas of the College. The Vice President for Academic Affairs has overseen the self-study process. The College posted the opportunity for Public Comment, as specified in the Commission’s Policy and Procedures for Public Comments, on the College website on August 30, 2012; this notice will remain through November 7, 2012, the final day of the visiting team evaluation.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LASELL COLLEGE
Lasell College, a four-year and graduate degree granting institution of higher education for men and women, has a long and rich history. Founded in 1851, it is one of the oldest colleges in greater Boston. The College’s founder was Edward Lasell, a graduate of Williams College who became a professor of chemistry at his alma mater. While on leave teaching at Mount Holyoke Seminary, Professor Lasell was impressed with the quality of scholarship exhibited by women. By emphasizing both the practical and the scholarly, Lasell departed radically from the “finishing school” attitude toward women’s education so prevalent in the nineteenth century and stressed the practical aspects of higher education. Within a year he established the Auburndale Female Seminary. Edward Lasell died of typhoid fever in the school’s very first semester, and it was renamed Lasell Female Seminary in his memory.

After the Lasell family ended its control in 1865, the institution was led for over seven decades by two principals/Presidents: Dr. Charles Bragdon and Dr. Guy Winslow. Adoption of the name Lasell Junior College came in 1932, and the College began issuing associate degrees instead of diplomas in 1943. In 1989, the College amended its name to Lasell College and its charter to include both associate and baccalaureate degrees. The first baccalaureate students at Lasell College graduated in May 1992. In October 1997, the Board of Trustees amended Lasell’s mission statement to admit men. Lasell College launched the first of its graduate degree programs in Fall 2002.

Lasell’s future emanates from a vision of innovation and experimentation. What Edward Lasell started, his focus on innovation responsive to societal change, has continued into the 21st century with the concept of connected learning. Connected learning is “learning by doing,” where, through on- and off-campus experiences, student imagination and energy are engaged beyond the walls of the classroom while always being linked to reflective activity within the classroom. Connected learning facilities on campus include two nationally-accredited child study centers; exercise science and athletic training labs; an on-campus radio station; a multi-media lab, fashion design and production labs; and the Lasell Fashion Collection. The Center for Community-Based Learning engages students across the curriculum in service-learning — academically based public service projects. In Spring 2000, the College opened Lasell Village, the nation’s first educational continuing care retirement community. The following fall, a state-of-the art academic center, Winslow Hall, was added to the campus. Since Fall 2000, the College has built eight new residences. A new campus center opened in Fall 2004 and the Donahue Center for Creative and Applied Art opened in Fall 2011.
STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND PURPOSES

DESCRIPTION
The Lasell College mission statement has been revised twice since Lasell’s reaccreditation in 2003, most recently in October of 2011:

Lasell College engages students in the practice of their fields of study through collaborative learning that fosters lifelong intellectual exploration and social responsibility.

This mission statement is best understood as an articulation of a central purpose close to that of the college founded by Edward Lasell in 1851. A key focus is the regular integration of coursework with practical experience. Like many small colleges, Lasell offers extensive internships and service-learning opportunities, but it takes experiential learning a step further by expecting that students involve themselves as investigators and practitioners in their academic fields. The focus on connected learning reflects the belief that when students are immersed in the work of their fields, they perceive connections between course learning and issues and events in the world beyond the classroom. Lasell faculty often organize classes around projects or around problems; students often work in teams, while the faculty member guides students in the acquisition of requisite skills and the identification of necessary reading or research. We believe that our connected learning philosophy yields learning that is more engaged, has more lasting value for students, and results in greater retention of knowledge. The mission statement also emphasizes the development of lifelong intellectual curiosity, a commitment to one’s community and to society in general, and an appreciation for issues of social justice.

APPRAISAL
In October of 2007, a new mission statement was crafted through a process designed by Michael Alexander, who began his term as president of the College in July of that year. The President invited forty-two members of the Lasell College community to the fall 2007 strategic planning retreat, a three-day weekend event held annually as part of a new approach to strategic planning for the College (described further under Standard Two). The participants represented key College constituencies and included trustees, alumni, faculty, senior management, staff, Lasell Village residents, and students. Retreat participants were challenged to enter a two-week contest in which participants worked collaboratively to produce a robust and concise mission statement capturing all that the College was and all that it achieved. Two key principles guided the President’s instructions: A good mission statement should reflect the core values of an organization, and it should be easy to remember and to recite. The contest comprised two phases. During the two weeks prior to the weekend retreat, participants submitted their ideas via email, and every submission was shared with the group. Submissions could be either new statements or modifications of earlier entries. Near the end of the two weeks, entries began to look quite similar as the participants converged around shared ideas and language. In a second phase, entries were discussed and modified at the beginning of the strategic planning retreat. A new mission statement was selected by consensus and was approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees in November 2007: Lasell College integrates challenging coursework with practical experience in an environment that fosters lifelong intellectual exploration, active citizenship, and social responsibility.

In October 2011, the President once again held a three-day strategic planning conference that included forty-three participants representing all of the natural constituencies of the College: faculty, students, staff, trustees, overseers, senior management, alumni, Lasell Village residents, and neighbors. Participants reviewed the mission statement created during the 2007 strategic planning process. The group felt that its articulation could be sharper, especially in reference to our connected learning philosophy; participants also thought that active citizenship and social responsibility were somewhat redundant and chose to keep the broader social responsibility. The term collaborative learning was added, in recognition of the vital role of faculty and other students in the learning process. The current mission statement was approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees on October 17, 2011.
At the October 2007 and 2011 strategic planning retreats, participants also reviewed the College’s statement of values, prioritizing those values that seemed most meaningful and useful. Participants decided to keep the three values that the College has long espoused: student focus, innovative education, and social responsibility. They also chose to add a fourth value, that of integrity, honesty, and ethical decision making. The revised statement of values reads as follows:

- Student focus
- Innovative education across the lifespan
- Integrity, honesty, and ethical decision making
- Social responsibility, mutual respect, and kindness

The added words “across the lifespan” acknowledge the College’s educational programming for learners between six months (in the Holway Child Centers) and 100 years (in the Village) of age. Likewise, the added words “mutual respect, and kindness” prioritize civility as a primary value.

There was also extensive discussion around student focus and a determination that, as members of the Lasell community make decisions, they should always be asking what best contributes to student learning and growth. The primacy of students’ intellectual and personal development should underlie the work of every department, service, and academic program at the College.

PROJECTION
The College’s mission and values will be reviewed periodically as part of the strategic planning process.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
The process that the President introduced in 2007 underscores the importance of a mission statement and accompanying values, as they are foundational in the formulation of strategic goals and objectives. The mission statement and values established by and for the Lasell College community are guides to Lasell’s practices and beliefs. They directly inform the establishment and assessment of academic goals and student learning outcomes described in Standard Four.
STANDARD TWO: PLANNING AND EVALUATION

DESCRIPTION

Institutional Research and Evaluation
Despite the relative newness of the Institutional Research (IR) office, established in 2008, Lasell has a longstanding history of using data to inform and evaluate decision-making. Instead of a new function at the College, the creation of IR represented a desire to centralize institutional research. Broadly, the role of IR in planning and evaluation at Lasell has been to create intelligence in three main areas: (1) Building and maintaining a data infrastructure for reporting, planning, and evaluation, (2) Supporting institutional effectiveness efforts, and (3) Supporting academic program assessment.

Building a Planning and Evaluation Data Infrastructure
The IR office is charged with building and maintaining a data infrastructure that allows for analysis. Currently, IR does so in five main ways, through: (1) Updating the College’s dashboard, (2) Creating a college data mart and data storage techniques, (3) Building a platform for predictive analytics, (4) Participating in the ACES study, and (5) Conducting Clearinghouse queries.

First, IR updates the College’s dashboard twice yearly before the fall and spring board of trustees meetings. The dashboard tracks various proxies of institutional health and compares the College to itself over the past five years. Although 36 metrics are shown in the dashboard report, more than 130 are collected each semester and considered for inclusion. A screen shot of one section of the College’s dashboard is below. The current dashboard has been so effective that plans are underway to create an additional, finance-specific version beginning this fall.

Second, IR performs a business intelligence function at the College. Lasell relies on a transactional database of student information. Historically, the registrar takes an assortment of snapshot reports each term to “freeze” student data. The College has this and other freeze data going back for many years.

Third, IR has recently purchased the predictive analytics and data management software, Rapid Insight. This software will be used to supplement our enrollment and retention modeling efforts, with a goal of creating an in-house enrollment model in the next year to work in conjunction with the modeling done by our consultants.

Fourth, Lasell will participate in the ACES Validity Study for the fifth time this fall. While designed by the College Board to test the validity of the SAT exam, the 200 schools participating in the study receive a comprehensive data file with additional student-level information about their freshman class and a school-level validity report. These longitudinal data will become increasingly valuable as IR builds capacity.
Finally, each fall, IR queries the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker to find our accepted but not enrolled, denied, and non-retained students; this helps us better understand our students and our peers. By pairing continuing student enrollment figures with information gathered from the Clearinghouse Student Tracker, we found that 88-91 percent of students in the 2008-2010 cohorts, (incoming fall, first time, full time students) were either persisting with Lasell or had enrolled at another institution by fall 2011. The majority of non-persisting Lasell students identified in Student Tracker attended either a public 4-year college or a 2-year college, suggesting that cost of attendance is a factor in students’ decision to leave Lasell. This winter, we will query the database to see whether the same story is true for the 2011 cohort.

Supporting Institutional Effectiveness
The IR office also analyzes information in support of institutional effectiveness. Four examples of this are: (1) Conducting in-depth retention analysis, (2) Collecting and analyzing data through internal student surveys, (3) Conducting ad hoc analyses to evaluate initiatives and new ideas, and (4) Acting as the Authorized Organization Representative on federal grants.

First, Lasell has historically tracked our overall undergraduate retention and graduation rates, but last year we completed a drill-down analysis investigating any common threads of who succeeds with us, and why. We looked at a variety of items over the past three years, including race/ethnicity, gender, athletics, major, honors program participation, high school GPA, and Pell eligibility.

Second, Lasell conducts a handful of student surveys each year. The First Impressions survey is a key tool in the effort to raise retention rates. It is administered to all new freshmen after their first few weeks of school. The First Impressions survey is designed to gather initial feedback and provide the College with an actionable roadmap of suggestions for improvement.

Third, IR conducts ad hoc analyses to support institutional effectiveness efforts. Two examples of this are analyses of study abroad and minority representation.

The fourth way IR supports institutional effectiveness is by acting as the College’s Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on federal grants. In the spring of 2012, Lasell submitted a proposal for a Title III, Strengthening Institutions Program grant. By ensuring that IR is part of the grant process in an official capacity from the beginning to the end, it is able to provide evidence to help inform the grants process.

Supporting Academic Program Assessment
The IR office supports academic assessment on both a regular and ad hoc basis. Examples of this include: (1) Helping identify the population for a new program serving at-risk students, (2) Using data to identify appropriate levels of academic challenge in the English composition program, (3) Conducting analysis to understand the pervasiveness of service-learning at the College, and (4) Assisting with academic program reviews.

First, IR analyzed the success rates of prior freshmen classes in order to gather data in support of a new program for at-risk students. The “2+1 program” provides a group of higher-risk students with a more intensive first year seminar and also gives them the opportunity to take a lighter credit load their first semester with an online summer make-up class to keep their annual credit balance on track. IR determined that the program should be targeted at those incoming freshmen with a lower than 2.5 high school GPA and less than 900 combined SAT score. As this pilot program progresses, we will continue to evaluate the selection of students invited to participate in it.

Second, one of the action items out of the College’s May, 2012 Strategic Retention workshop was for IR to pair with the chair of the humanities department to identify data to explore appropriate levels of challenge for the College’s introductory English courses. This project is expected to commence later this fall.

Third, service-learning is a principal way that the College’s philosophy of connected learning is delivered in the curriculum. Students participate in service-learning either through courses that have an embedded component, or
by adding a “linked credit” to another course. Given the different ways to participate, it can be difficult to track the pervasiveness of service-learning in our curriculum. The IR office has been analyzing service learning for the past few years and has found evidence to support that service-learning is, indeed, central to academics at Lasell. In AY2011-2012, 59 percent of all undergraduate students had at least one service learning experience.

Finally, IR supplies department chairs with data needed to conduct regular program reviews. Typically, this includes an historical headcount of new students in major and/or historical headcounts of overall students in major, as well as historical headcounts of graduates.

**Academic Assessment**

Since 2006, when the faculty launched a focused assessment process, whereby each academic department articulated goals and outcomes for their majors, mapped the curriculum, and devised an action plan for gathering direct and indirect evidence of student learning, the faculty has been constantly engaged in meaningful assessment, devoting time and energy every semester to this work. This organic, bottom-up approach has produced a robust culture of assessment among the faculty, and as a result of this regular work, departments have implemented curricular changes designed to enhance student learning through more effective pedagogies within their departments. Academic assessment is discussed further under Appraisal and at length under Standard Four.

**Strategic Planning**

In September 2007, Lasell College built on the successful planning and evaluation process that had been developed in preparation for the 2002 NEASC reaccreditation self-study. Through community-wide town meetings and intensive planning sessions, the College produced a new strategic plan -- *Vision 2012*.

*Vision 2012* was the result of a process that included seven town meetings (with faculty, students, staff, alumni, Lasell Village residents, and trustees) and a three-day planning conference led by President Alexander and attended by forty-two representatives from all college constituencies. President Alexander identified the defining principle in these deliberations: “We based our prioritizations on a collective mental balancing of the costs and benefits of each item, where costs were defined as not just money but also time, energy, pain, opportunities lost, and difficulty of execution. Relative to other items under consideration, how much benefit would the College receive from an item per unit of cost, or more generally, per unit of pain?” This prioritization principle was fundamental in the development of *Vision 2012* (see Appendix B: Strategic Planning Report 10.15.07).

*Vision 2012* represents the ways in which Lasell College might be expected to differ in fall 2012 from the College as it stood in October 2007. The figures in *Vision 2012* are intended as minimum benchmarks. The *Vision 2012* five-year plan was supported by the articulation of a new mission statement, core institutional values, and a positioning statement for external audiences (all of which are still operational, as described in Standard One), and it was accompanied by a list of short-term objectives. Within twelve to eighteen months, these objectives would move the institution in concrete ways toward fulfillment of *Vision 2012*.

In fall 2008, the Lasell community reviewed and evaluated the documents produced in 2007 through another series of town meetings and a planning conference. Progress on the short-term objectives was assessed, and a new set of short-term objectives for the following twelve to eighteen months was delineated. The planning conference participants reorganized the objectives of *Vision 2012* so as to permit the assignment of responsibilities and the coordination of action plans. In 2008, the Board of Trustees approved a Campus Master Plan for the physical development of the campus that was consistent with the goals and objectives of *Vision 2012*.

The process was repeated in the fall of 2009, the community reviewing progress toward *Vision 2012* through assessment of movement on the short-term objectives formulated during the previous two years. 2009 planning conference participants revised *Vision 2012* slightly and developed twelve- to eighteen-month objectives, generating important ideas for implementation of several of the prioritized objectives. The results of yearly planning meetings have been reported to the College community through e-mail and the Intranet and have been shared at meetings and forums. Each year since its inception in 2007, the Vision’s long-term goals as well as the accompanying short-term objectives have informed budget planning, from the departmental level to the level of
Senior Management and the Board of Trustees. In January 2011, we were well on our way toward achieving or exceeding most of the goals and objectives established in *Vision 2012*. Fundamental to deliberations regarding budgets, capital plans, and resource allocations has been the principle that decision makers at any level ask what best contributes to the intellectual and personal development of Lasell students. What makes Lasell distinctive is the consistent application of its connected learning philosophy across all programs; what gives the College its value, however, is the persistent reinforcement of its vision and its student focus.

In the summer of each year, each member of the Senior Management Team submits to the President a one- or two-page list of goals and objectives. The President reviews these lists with the appropriate vice president at midyear and at the end of the academic year, before a new list for the new academic year is formulated. The President and the Senior Management Team develop and evaluate these goals and objectives in light of *Vision 2012*, always bearing in mind the broader institutional goals and objectives and, in particular, the institutional value on student focus. In its deliberations, especially regarding the allocation of resources, Senior Management is also guided by the institutional goals and objectives in the establishment of priorities.

After holding several town meetings in spring 2011 and fall 2011, the President convened another three-day strategic planning conference from September 30 to October 2, 2011; forty-two representatives from all College constituencies attended. At this conference, the group developed a new list of long-range objectives for 2017, as well as short-term goals for the next twelve to eighteen months that will move us toward the achievement of the objectives in *Vision 2017*. The group also developed ideas for reinforcing the College’s position, as defined in 2007 in terms of its connected learning philosophy; the main focus was the perception of external audiences. Following the suggestion of several participants, the group revisited the mission statement and revised the wording to improve the articulation of the mission (see Standard One).

**Vision 2017: What will the College be six years from now?**

**Academic**
- Online undergraduate and degree completion program
- Eight total master’s degree programs
- Competitive compensation for adjuncts (at mid-point of peer group)
- Two additional signature/niche programs
- Summer term for undergraduates (may be online)
- 100 percent of classes using Moodle for course work and grades
- 67 percent of undergraduate courses taught by full-time faculty
- Implement distinctive general education program
- Determine credit structure best suited to connected learning

**Institutional**
- Capital campaign, sufficient to support these goals, in progress
- Reduce electricity, gas, and water consumption by 10 percent
- Consistent retention rate > 75 percent

**Students**
- Professional advisors for all first-year students
- 24/7/365 online support for students
- 500 graduate students (headcount per semester)
- 1,800 undergraduate students (with at least 100 online)

**Facilities**
- New athletic center
- Renovate Wass Hall
- Renovate Valentine Dining Hall
- Renovate Woodland bathrooms
- SMART technology in all classrooms
The items above taken together present a picture of what we expect to find different about Lasell College in the fall of 2017 from what exists today. The numbers in the above items are meant to be minimums, not maximums. In other words, we expect to have an enrollment of at least 500 graduate students by 2017; it may well be more.

APPRAISAL

Research and Evaluation
Since the implementation of the strategic plan, the hiring of a Director of Institutional Research has represented a major step toward easier access to data and to resources for data interpretation; this step has supported the planning and evaluation process at all levels.

Currently, as part of IR’s graduation and retention tracking process, IR has partnered with IT to take a larger snapshot of all undergraduate students at each semester’s freeze for use in addition to the registrar’s reports. These snapshots collect hundreds of data points on each student and are critical to our ability to meaningfully analyze our student population over time. While this is a good start, we understand the limitations of flat files and the need to have a more robust system in place. Consequently, IR and IT have partnered in the creation of a student information data mart. Development is underway, and we anticipate the first download of undergraduate student data into the data mart to occur in fall 2013, with graduate student data to follow.

In its tracking of retention and graduation rates, in some areas, the results reflected our expectations based on national data (e.g. athletes retained at a higher rate), but did not in other areas, (e.g. minority student retention did not consistently underperform white students). We will continue to collect data on subgroups as we maintain the broad focus of raising our overall retention rate.

Last year, the First Impressions Survey was administered online as part of students’ First Year Seminar course, and we had a response rate of more than 90 percent. The results prompted Lasell to move on a range of issues, from small housekeeping items such as leaky sinks and banging doors, to helping inform the strategic planning objectives of overhauling the Woodland Hall bathrooms and moving to a professional advising model for our first year students. In addition to providing an opportunity to inform quick action, results of this survey are shared college-wide and provide an opportunity for community self-reflection.

Late each fall, Lasell also conducts undergraduate and graduate student satisfaction surveys (SSS). The undergraduate SSS survey has been administered to our students for more than 20 years, and has been administered by IR since 2008. The graph below provides a summary of overall undergraduate student satisfaction levels over the past four years. Results of this survey are also shared college-wide.
The graduate school has administered its own SSS since 2009; the IR office analyzes the results. This survey is used as a health check by the director of graduate admissions, the associate director of graduate student services and the dean of graduate and professional studies. The following table shows the 2011 survey results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008 Good / Excellent</th>
<th>2009 Good / Excellent</th>
<th>2010 Good / Excellent</th>
<th>2011 Good / Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Facilities</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Services</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Overall Experience</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The College Total</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graduate school has administered its own SSS since 2009; the IR office analyzes the results. This survey is used as a health check by the director of graduate admissions, the associate director of graduate student services and the dean of graduate and professional studies. The following table shows the 2011 survey results.

In the summer of 2012, IR added another instrument to our survey research agenda, the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI). The CSI is a retention management tool that provides nationally normed benchmarking data as well as profiles of individual students that will be used to inform advising. The questionnaire measures students’ strengths and challenges under the broad categories of academic motivation, general coping ability, and receptivity to support services. Currently, we have more than a 90 percent response rate. The College’s new professional advisors have been trained and are eager to use this new tool with the incoming class.

Our 2011-2012 one year study abroad participation rate was seven percent, but upon deeper analysis, we learned that a full 26 percent of our May, 2012 graduates had an experience abroad during their time at Lasell. This information helped us understand just how pervasive study abroad has become, especially given that our office of International Student Services is only a few years old.

An example of ad hoc analysis is tracking Lasell’s minority representation. As part of Vision 2012, the College made a commitment to increase minority enrollment. At President Alexander’s request, in spring 2012, IR created a longitudinal analysis of our minority representation across populations. The chart below summarizes the results of this analysis.
While the role of IR director is less than five years old at Lasell, the culture is one that has a longstanding history of using data and information to inform decision making. The office continues to make progress in data collection and has created analysis that has informed strategy. As our data infrastructure and capabilities continue to grow, we expect so will the ability to support the College’s need of remaining evidence-based.

**Academic Assessment**
A systematic process is in place for the assessment of student learning outcomes, and, as demonstrated in the E1 forms, the faculty regularly uses the results of this assessment to improve academic programs. The Curriculum Committee formally reviews all academic programs every five years, and these reviews have become more thorough and meaningful in recent years; samples of these reviews are cited in the Standard 2 data form. The assessment of student learning outcomes should be tied more closely to the strategic planning process. Although each department regularly consults with its professional advisory board, moreover, and some advisory board members participate in the assessment process as evaluators of student work, the institution would benefit from increased attention to external perspectives on its effectiveness. The College is acquiring more and better information about the success of its recent graduates but must augment and improve this information, should analyze it in the context of student learning outcomes, and can then consider the results in strategic planning deliberations. Although there is a “robust culture of assessment among the faculty” that supports a process of using data for continuous improvement, we have not yet been successful at producing a well-documented public report of achievement of student learning outcomes that demonstrates the value of a Lasell education.

Lasell became a participant in the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education in 2008-2009. The results of the initial study and related focus groups in 2010 revealed a number of notable trends among our students, including relatively low levels of academic motivation, interest in reading, and openness to diverse ideas and cultures, but relatively high levels of interest in being successful in business and in making money. The Wabash data also suggested that, after their first year, our students expressed a lower level of satisfaction with teaching and interactions with faculty and experienced a lower level of academic challenge than expected or desired. The institution immediately addressed some of the latter concerns by creating a Center for Teaching and Learning, the director of which has already implemented several programs designed to support faculty in providing a more challenging learning environment. The Center provides leadership and support for faculty in improving pedagogy,
with programs including an intensive self-study group, book groups, discussions around particular pedagogical issues, and an extended orientation program for adjunct faculty, offered both face-to-face and online. The CTL plays a pivotal role in translating assessment results into actions for improvement of student learning.

The preliminary results of the Wabash Study, as well as departmental assessment data, prompted the faculty to take a closer look at the General Education curriculum, which is also discussed below under Standard Four. Lasell’s General Education Core Curriculum, in effect since 2004, takes a “menu” approach to the traditional liberal arts foundation, requiring students to choose one course from a list of many under each of seven “Areas of Inquiry.” This curriculum did not have clearly articulated student learning outcomes associated with it, and as a result, it was difficult to assess, although our college-wide efforts at assessment revealed, not surprisingly, that certain student learning outcomes, like writing, research, and ethical decision-making, are common to our wide-range of majors (i.e., Fashion Design, Athletic Training, Accounting, Human Services etc.), and some of these were being assessed by individual departments.

In the fall of 2010, the Dean of Undergraduate Education convened a task force charged with writing measurable student learning outcomes for our General Education program and revising the way in which the curriculum is delivered to our students. Representing all academic departments, this faculty task force worked diligently and thoughtfully over approximately eighteen months to develop institutional student learning outcomes for the General Education Core Curriculum. In AY2011-2012, the faculty developed and articulated explicit learning outcomes for general education based on the American Association of Colleges and University’s (AAC&U’s) Essential Learning Outcomes. These institutional learning outcomes are now listed in the College Catalog. Currently, the College meets these outcomes as follows:

LASSELL COLLEGE
Institutional Learning Outcomes

♦ Read and respond in an informed and discerning way to written texts of different genres
Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments associated with the common reading they do during the summer before their first year, discussions and reflections in First Year Seminar and first-year writing classes (ENG 101/102); they continue to emphasize and reinforce these competencies in assignments in one lower- and one upper-level writing-intensive course in each major, as well as in other major and General Education requirements (i.e., Area of Inquiry courses), culminating in reflections and research papers assigned in major capstone courses.

♦ Write clear, well-organized, persuasive prose
Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in the first-year writing sequence, ENG 101 and ENG 102; they continue to emphasize and reinforce these competencies in one lower- and one upper-level writing-intensive course in each major, as well as in other major and General Education requirements (i.e., Area of Inquiry courses), culminating in reflections and research papers assigned in major capstone courses.

♦ Use listening and speaking skills to express and information clearly and confidently in a variety of settings
Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome in First Year Seminar, and to some extent in the first-year writing sequence (ENG 101/102); they continue to emphasize and reinforce these competencies in one lower- and one upper-level speaking intensive course in each major, as well as in other major and General Education requirements, often culminating in presentations and discussion classes in major capstone courses. Many students demonstrate achievement of this outcome in presentations at the Connected-Learning Symposia held at the end of every semester.
Apply quantitative reasoning to solve problems effectively
Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome in foundational Mathematics courses, based on placement. All students emphasize these competencies in courses taken to fulfill the Quantitative Area of Inquiry requirement, and many reinforce these competencies in course work required for their majors. Many majors at Lasell, such as Management/Marketing, Accounting/Finance, and Fashion include assignments that emphasize quantitative reasoning skills. All students may choose to minor in Mathematics, which is the most popular minor at Lasell.

Use appropriate technological tools to solve problems efficiently
All students use technology to select courses and manage/monitor their academic progress (SelfService), to communicate with others on campus (Outlook, MyLasell), and to manage academic course work (Moodle). Through our Technology Across the Curriculum initiative, the Technology for Learning Center provides workshops and tutorials on a “just in time” basis to help students develop competencies in using software applications and other technological tools specific to their majors. Many students demonstrate technological competencies (e.g., PowerPoint, EXCEL, audio/video editing) in presentations at the Connected Learning Symposia held at the end of every semester.

Collect, analyze, and synthesize appropriate data and sources effectively, ethically, and legally
Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome in basic skills course work in the General Education curriculum, specifically in ENG 102 (Writing II), in which all students participate in information literacy sessions at the library and write a research paper. Many of the Area of Inquiry courses also provide opportunities for students to reinforce the research skills learned in the first year, and students emphasize these skills in work they do progressively in their majors. Many students enhance their research skills in projects and assignments, as well as guided independent research, supported by the Research Across the Curriculum program, as well as in research linked credits. Finally, most students demonstrate competency in various capstone research assignments in their majors.

Work effectively in collaborative settings
Because of our Connected Learning philosophy, Lasell students regularly work on group projects, from First Year Seminar through their major capstone courses. Many majors emphasize team work as an essential learning outcome, which is reflected in many of the assignments in major courses, as well as in courses in General Education. Students also demonstrate collaborative skills in undergraduate research projects, as well as in service-learning projects, and these competencies are on display at the Connected-Learning Symposia every semester.

Experience modes of self-expression and creativity
All students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in courses they take to fulfill the Aesthetic Area of Inquiry requirement. Some majors like Fashion Design and Graphic Design emphasize these competencies. Many students emphasize and reinforce these competencies through elective courses in the arts and through participation in student theatrical productions and the chorus. Studio Art is a popular Minor.

Apply the process of scientific inquiry to comprehend the natural world and to solve problems
Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in courses they take to fulfill the Scientific Area of Inquiry requirement. Students who choose majors like Athletic Training, Exercise Science, and Environmental Studies have many opportunities to develop more advanced proficiencies in this area through assignments in major required courses.
• **Interpret and analyze the complex interrelationships and inequities in human societies in a global and historical context**

Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in courses they take to fulfill several of the Area of Inquiry requirements: Historical, Psychological & Societal, and Multicultural. Some students emphasize and reinforce these competencies through course work in their majors (e.g., History, Sociology) and/or minors (e.g., Sociology, Human Rights). All students can reinforce these competencies by participating in programs regularly offered by the Donahue Institute for Values in Public Life and Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies, as well as through service-learning projects, international service-learning trips, and study abroad.

• **Evaluate and understand how individual differences in mental processes and behaviors relate to beliefs, values, and interactions**

Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in courses they take to fulfill the Psychological & Societal Area of Inquiry requirement. Some students emphasize and reinforce these competencies through course work in their majors (e.g., Psychology, Human Services) and/or minors (e.g., Aging and Intergenerational Studies, Psychology). All students can reinforce these competencies through service-learning projects, international service-learning trips, and study abroad.

• **Analyze how meanings and knowledge are created by diverse cultures and how they evolve over time**

Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in courses they take to fulfill several of the Area of Inquiry requirements: Aesthetic, Historical, and Multicultural. Some students emphasize and reinforce these competencies through course work in their majors (e.g., English Literature) and minors (Literature, Studio Art). All students can reinforce these competencies through service-learning projects, international service-learning trips, and study abroad.

• **Respond critically and analytically to moral issues and make informed, ethical decisions**

Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in courses they take to fulfill the Moral and Ethical Area of Inquiry requirement. All students emphasize and reinforce these competencies in required courses in all majors, and often through internships. All students can reinforce these competencies through service learning projects and by participating in programs regularly offered by the Donahue Institute for Values in Public Life, the Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies, and the Center for Spiritual Life.

• **Participate actively as a citizen in communities both large and small**

Students initially demonstrate competencies in achieving this learning outcome through assignments in First Year Seminar; students in the Honors Program have a number of additional opportunities to emphasize and reinforce these competencies, especially in the sophomore Leadership course. All students can reinforce these competencies through service-learning projects required in all majors, as well as through optional linked credits, various activities offered by the Center for Community-based Learning, international service-learning trips, and by participating in programs regularly offered by the Donahue Institute for Values in Public Life, the Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies, and the Center for Spiritual Life.

The current General Education curriculum does not map out the methods of assessing these outcomes sufficiently. All are introduced to all students, but some are emphasized and reinforced more than others, often depending on the student’s major. While the task force has been working on the revised General Education curriculum, the faculty began to assess one of the outcomes common to all departments, one that appears on the new list of institutional learning outcomes. In Spring 2011, all departments evaluated upper level writing from 2010-2011 using a common rubric. Leading up to that event, the faculty reviewed the rubrics and recalibrated their scoring where needed to insure inter-rater consistency; they considered and discussed the common parameters of effective
writing, deciding that although each department would also need to evaluate discipline-specific elements of writing, a common rubric could be used effectively and consistently for assessment of writing across all disciplines. The process was repeated in 2011-2012 with some adjustments (e.g., types, length, and timing of assignments) based on the faculty’s experience in the previous year. This process and its results are discussed under Standard Four.

**Strategic Planning Effectiveness**

The past three years have witnessed considerable progress toward the achievement of the strategic plan’s goals and objectives. The effectiveness of the College’s strategic planning process is evidenced by the success in meeting its goals by target dates. We are reinforcing the message that what makes Lasell distinctive is the consistent application of its connected learning philosophy across all programs. Similarly, we reinforce our values every chance we get. We are particularly careful to remind ourselves constantly to make decisions that will best contribute to the intellectual and personal development of our students. This principle provided the foundation for many of our decisions regarding budgets, capital plans and resource allocations.

For the Goals set in *Vision 2012*:

- **Students – 1,600 undergraduates; 300 graduate students**
  - Undergraduate enrollment for Fall 2012 is 1,646; the graduate program is projected to reach 300 students by Session II in the Fall.
- **67 percent of undergraduate courses taught by full-time faculty**
  - Full-time faculty is 50 percent larger than during the 2006-07 academic year.
  - The percentage of credit coverage by full-time faculty has grown modestly from 52 percent in AY2006-07 to 55 percent in AY2011-12. The 34 percent increase in enrollments over that time has prevented this percentage from growing more quickly. Soon undergraduate enrollments will level off and this percentage should increase.
- **Clearly defined physical campus with entrances and beautification efforts**
  - We have installed four new signs and expect to add one more within the next two years.
  - We have developed a plan and design for the standardization of way-finding and building signs.
  - We have increased the budget for landscaping and planted more flowers.
- **Increase staff by 25 percent, including administrative support for faculty**
  - In the last four years, we have added 40 (just over 33 FTE) new staff positions, an increase of 21 percent.
  - We have added two Administrative Assistant positions in Academic Affairs, as well as four professional advisors and a learning specialist.
- **Four service learning abroad programs**
  - Our third service-learning program successfully completed its first trip to Ecuador in Spring 2010.
  - Our fourth service-learning program to the Amazonian jungles of Brazil began in Spring 2011.
  - Our fifth service-learning program in Uganda will launch in May 2013.
- **Four new masters programs**
  - We have added three new Masters degree programs: an M.S. in Communication; an M.S. in Sport Management; and an M.Ed. with licensure programs in Moderate Disabilities and Elementary Education.
- **Three new athletic teams**
  - We added men’s and women’s Track and Field (Indoor and Outdoor), so we now field 17 intercollegiate teams.
  - Women’s crew and men’s rugby clubs were started by students in 2009-10 and appear to be building interest.
  - Next prospects for additional sports include tennis and golf.
• Diversity: Faculty/Staff/Board 10 percent minority each
  • The faculty comprises 18 percent self-reported minorities
  • The staff includes 15 percent minorities
  • Three of the 27 current Trustees are African-American, which equals 11 percent of the Board

• Diversity: Undergraduate students 18 percent minority; five percent International students; 35 percent Men
  • The Vision 2012 Plan called for 18 percent minority enrollment by 2012. In fall 2011, the College exceeded that goal, reaching 20.7 percent minority enrollment. The strategic plan established a goal of 35 percent men by 2012, which was also exceeded in 2011, when males represented 36 percent of the student body. The percentage of undergraduate international students has increased to over two percent. The percentage of international students among graduate students, however, is 10 percent.

• Endowment of $40 million
  • We have recovered all of the loss of principal that occurred as a result of the turmoil in the financial markets in 2008 and 2009; but we lost about two years’ time in our efforts to reach our goal.
  • The endowment total is approximately $29.6 million, about $5,500,000 above the peak value in 2008.

• Annual fund: $1 million
  • Despite two of the most challenging years for fundraising in the history of higher education, we have increased the annual giving total every year, including a 5.6 percent increase in 2009-10. Annual giving this past year reached $853,682
  • We still have ways to go to meet our $1 million goal, especially considering the Bridge to the Future initiative taking place at the same time. The goal is targeted to be met at the end of this year.

• Alumni giving participation: 25 percent
  • We revised this goal to 15 percent because we added 3,000 alumni to the donor base.
  • Alumni participation this year was: 13.2 percent.

• 1st year cohort retention: 75 percent; sophomore to junior retention: 65 percent
  • Retention of the first year cohort rose from 62 percent in Fall 2006 to 73 percent in Fall 2009, but fell back to 70 percent in Fall 2010 and 64 percent in Fall 2011. It recovered to 72 percent this Fall.
  • Sophomore retention into the third year increased from 56 percent in Fall 2006 to 69 percent in Fall 2009, but fell back to 66 percent in Fall 2010. The retention rate rose back to 70 percent for Fall 2011.

• IT, Library, Shuttle, Food until 2 a.m. five days a week
  • We expanded hours for the computer labs, the library and the shuttle to midnight on most nights. We also added Friday evening hours in the library
  • We expanded the time for dinner in the dining hall from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m., added a take-out service for those who can’t make the regular dining hours, and increased the food service hours in the Campus Center.
  • Based on the usage of expanded hours, we plan to continue to expand the service hours gradually over time.

• Nurse coverage until 7:00 pm during the week and two hours on weekends
  • We added Monday evening hours during 2009-10 and are monitoring usage before deciding whether to increase hours further.
  • A study of comparable institutions found that our health center hours are similar to other colleges.

• Complete Myrtle Ave project (renovation of two buildings next to Yamawaki)
  • Construction of the Donahue Center for Creative and Applied Arts was completed in May 2011.
Three new residence halls

- We opened two new residence halls, East and West, on Woodland Road in fall 2009. A third, North Hall, opened this fall.
- The East/West project included an accompanying courtyard, which has been a big hit with students and neighbors, and a new fitness center. The North Hall project includes another courtyard and an underground garage for students.

New athletic facility

- Target date extended to 2015.
- Site chosen on the corner of Myrtle Avenue and Grove Street

Renovate Valentine Dining Hall

- The newly renovated dining hall opened this past September.

The planning process has produced realistic short-term objectives that have been attained; where the College has fallen short, moreover, there has been enough flexibility to reconceive the objectives in light of changing external and internal factors. There is some concern about the need for more data in the planning process; the newly established Office of Institutional Research will continue to provide easier access to a greater variety of data pertinent to the planning process (see also Appendix C: Strategic Plan Report 9.30.08; Appendix D: Strategic Plan Report 10.03.09; Appendix E Strategic Planning Report 10.02.11).

In addition, there is some concern regarding sufficient representation of diverse views in the planning process. The faculty has also expressed a concern that academic affairs were not represented adequately in Vision 2012. In response to these concerns, the President conducted separate town meetings for staff and faculty, in order to obtain the unique input from each constituency and to allow the faculty to focus on academic affairs more effectively. The President also encouraged faculty to advocate more aggressively for their priorities during the culminating planning meeting in Fall 2011.

PROJECTION

Vision 2017 will drive the priorities of the Senior Management Team. As SMT continues to develop specific department goals on an annual basis and review progress semiannually, it will implement plans and coordinate activities with the faculty and staff in order to improve operations at the College and, in particular, to ensure improvement of the student learning experience.

A large, representative strategic planning group will convene as needed to review progress toward the goals of Vision 2017, revisiting the short-term goals and developing new ones to ensure continued progress toward the ultimate goals of Vision 2017. Every five or six years, the long-range strategic planning process will begin again, with town meetings and a planning conference/retreat to produce a plan that will move the College forward during the subsequent five- or six-year period. The Director of Institutional Research will provide more focused, specific data to inform and help drive decision making, planning, and evaluation in all areas of the College.

The faculty has added a new Program Review Committee to its standing committees starting in AY2012-2013 in order to ensure continuing focus on meaningful program reviews that focus on student learning outcomes assessment. With the newly articulated institutional learning outcomes in place, our next step is to develop a new, more integrative and interdisciplinary curricular model that will guarantee meaningful assessment of these outcomes. Through participation in the 2011 NEEAN Summer Assessment Institute and the 2012 AAC&U Summer Institute on Integrative Learning and the Departments, and supported by participation in the CIC Engaging Evidence Consortium, several members of the task force have drafted a plan for the new General Education curriculum that will be presented to the full faculty for approval and further development in AY2012-2013. The revision of General Education is discussed under Standard Four.

Participation in the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education has provided data regarding student outcomes and best pedagogical practices. It has also provided resources to support the improvement of the student learning experience and of conditions supporting that experience. The College has completed the final
administration of the Wabash National Study. With the help of the Center of Inquiry at Wabash, we will analyze the resulting data, and in conjunction with our own assessment data, strategically integrate conclusions drawn from those data into the planning process, with special attention to improving the student learning experience at Lasell. The faculty will continue to gather and analyze data, from direct and indirect sources, not only in support of ongoing outcomes assessment and continuous improvement, but also to enable the institution to produce a public report definitively demonstrating our students’ progress in achieving those learning outcomes, as we have defined them.

**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

The strategic planning process is flexible, allowing for procedural and substantive changes from year to year. In fall 2010, for instance, as we again began the self-study process for NEASC reaccreditation, the strategic planning process was advanced so that it might be aligned with the self-study process and might add further meaning to the self-study. The planning and evaluation process involves representatives from all College constituencies, and the goals, objectives, and priorities that emerge from that process inform the day-to-day operations of all departments across the College. The individuals involved in the planning process include those who are responsible for the actions that will move the plan forward. Several promotions have established new positions to improve the planning and implementation processes in key areas. These positions include those of the Dean of Student Affairs, who works closely with the Vice President of Student Affairs; the Assistant Vice President for Finance, who works closely with the Vice President of Business and Finance; and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, who works closely with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The culture of assessment among the faculty at Lasell ensures a process of continuous self-evaluation of academic programs and improvement of student learning.
STANDARD THREE: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

DESCRIPTION

Board of Trustees
Lasell College is governed by a Board of Trustees. In accordance with the Bylaws of Lasell College, the primary concerns of the Board are educational policy and overall governance. The Board maintains legal, managerial, and financial stewardship of the College and oversees general administrative policies. In addition to the Board’s twenty-seven voting members, there are eight nonvoting members: five trustees emeriti, the President of the College (ex officio), the Chair of the Board of Overseers (ex officio), and the President of Lasell Alumni, Inc. (ex officio). A comprehensive orientation program is provided for newly elected trustees; all trustees receive the Trustee Handbook, updated at the beginning of each academic year. In keeping with the Bylaws, there are three regular meetings of the Board of Trustees each year: one in the fall (the annual meeting of the Corporation), one in the winter, and one in the spring. In addition, special meetings may be called by the Chairperson. A majority of trustees constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business at Board meetings. (See Appendix F: Bylaws of Lasell College.) Members of the Senior Management Team attend meetings of the Board of Trustees. In addition, members of the faculty and staff are invited to attend Board meetings as guests.

The Board’s committee structure was revised in 2009. There are now two standing committees: the Executive Committee and the Committee on Trustees. In addition, a number of ad hoc committees carry out the routine work of the Board: Academic Affairs, Audit, Finance, Institutional Advancement, Investment, and Student Life. The Board Chair and the College President serve as ex officio members of all committees; many committees also include nonvoting advisory representatives from the College faculty, staff, and Board of Overseers.

In an effort to encourage involvement and enhance its overall effectiveness, the Board of Trustees has recently formalized processes for assessing Board and Board committee processes. To enhance communication, the President of the College meets annually with individual Board members to discuss matters of governance and measure trustee satisfaction; a Board website is evolving to provide yet another avenue for the sharing of information. The Committee on Trustees has assumed a leadership role in the assessment process, utilizing methods such as surveys to obtain data and solicit feedback.

Board of Overseers
The June 2009 amendments to the Bylaws eliminated the position of corporator at Lasell College. Former corporators were invited to become lifetime members of the Board of Overseers; all accepted. Although the 60-member Board of Overseers has neither statutory nor formal role in College governance, it serves a critical role by supporting the institution, the Board of Trustees, and the administration in advancing the educational mission with advice, expertise, and a myriad of resources. It is also a source for new trustee candidates.

Senior Management Team
The day-to-day management of the College is delegated to the President and his Senior Management Team, which includes the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Business and Finance, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the Vice President for Lasell Village, and the Executive Assistant to the President. The Team meets weekly to share information and address business matters (See Appendix G: Lasell College Organization Chart for a more detailed review of the administration). Each year, members of the Senior Management Team identify goals and objectives for the upcoming academic year. At the conclusion of the academic year, members meet individually with the President to review their goals and develop plans for the upcoming year. This process provides an opportunity for assessment of individual as well as divisional performance.

Members of the Senior Management Team also meet regularly with Student Government Association (SGA) members, to share information and discuss mutual concerns. The President of the College interacts frequently
with elected student leaders and meets monthly with the SGA President; the President, the Vice President for
Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Student Affairs often attend regular and special SGA meetings.

Management Council
The President meets four times a year (twice each semester) with the Management Council. This eclectic mix of
forty-two faculty and staff members includes deans and directors but excludes members of the Senior
Management Team; the Council considers a variety of institutional issues in discussions that feature information
sharing, debate, and policy analysis.

President’s Advisory Council
In 2009, the President’s Advisory Council (PAC) was established as a means for the President to solicit counsel
from a variety of business professionals and to enhance the leadership, development, and profile of Lasell
College. The fifteen-member PAC meets annually to discuss topics such as the College’s strategic plan, its
financial model, its enrollment picture, and "big-picture” strategic issues.

Faculty Governance
As reported in Lasell’s 2008 Interim Report to the Commission, the Vice President for Academic Affairs asked
the Lasell faculty to review the existing academic administrative structure in 2005-2006, assessing its strengths
and weaknesses. One goal was that faculty and department chairs feel a strong identity with their departments as
well as with college-wide priorities and initiatives. Another goal was that department chairs act as a single
leadership body with opportunities for direct and more frequent access to the Vice President. This review resulted
in a restructuring that included elimination of the College’s three-school structure. Key changes included the
following:

- Affirmation of the College’s academic priorities via the reassignment of the two school deans as Dean of
  Undergraduate Education and Dean of Advising and First-Year Programs
- Elevation of the Graduate Program through the creation of a Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies
- Focus on the importance of academic departments via the elimination of distinctions among schools.

The Deans’ roles were reconfigured to reflect key priorities:

- The Dean of Undergraduate Education holds primary responsibility for researching and developing new
  academic programs, overseeing and managing academic assessment, and overseeing and managing
  curricular innovation and programming. The Dean of Undergraduate Education has general oversight
  over faculty matters pertaining to the areas of teaching and curriculum.
- The Dean of Advising and First-Year Programs holds primary responsibility for researching, managing,
  and assessing all initiatives and programs related to academic advising, first-year programs, and the
  Academic Achievement Center. The Dean of Advising and First-Year Programs has general oversight
  over academic support programs and issues.
- The Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies has general oversight over the graduate program.
  Priorities for this dean include the exploration of new degrees and concentrations, certificate programs,
  and online course offerings; the establishment and review of academic policies; and program assessment.

The three academic deans meet weekly with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to coordinate planning and
ensure consistent policy implementation across the College.

The faculty has a substantive voice in shaping educational programs, in defining faculty personnel procedures,
and in other policy decisions. It does so primarily through its standing committees, particularly Curriculum,
Academic Standards, Professional Affairs, Professional Development, Promotion, and the Graduate Committee,
as well as through focused ad hoc committees and task forces. The faculty is also represented on institutional
committees such as the college-wide Self-Study Steering Committee, the Academic Review Committee, and the
Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Faculty members chair and staff search committees for faculty positions, and
they serve on search committees for other positions in the College.
Organizational links between faculty and administration are formalized through and maintained primarily by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who is a nonvoting member of the faculty assembly and of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Assembly; these links are supported and strengthened by the three deans and twelve department chairs, as well as by the Faculty Chair.

The faculty's role in the governance of the College is an advisory one; it has no independent decision-making authority other than that over its own governance system. The Vice President for Academic Affairs traditionally endorses faculty recommendations, although he has on rare occasions exercised his discretion to reject them following consultation with the President (this occurred once in the fall of 2003 around the issue of department chair access to the narrative data in student course evaluations). Certain matters, such as the addition or elimination of degree programs, require the approval of the Board of Trustees. Each year, several members of the faculty are invited to attend and make presentations at the meeting of the Board of Trustees; faculty serve on various committees of the Board.

All academic departments develop connections external to the College community, through connected learning and internship partnerships in the community and through advisory boards. The Departments of Education, Justice Studies (Criminal Justice), Athletic Training and Exercise Science, Accounting and Finance, Marketing and Management, and Sport Management must consult external licensing/accreditation guidelines.

**Student Governance**

The Student Government Association (SGA) is the formal vehicle through which full-time matriculated students have input into the College’s operations. The current SGA Board includes seventeen elected members: four officers (President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Vice President for Financial Affairs), four class presidents, one commuter representative, and eight senators. Officer elections and three of the class president elections are held in April for the following academic year; the remaining positions, including that of class president for the first-year class, are filled in September elections, thereby providing an opportunity for first-year students to become involved immediately in governance. From late September until early May, SGA meets weekly; all meetings are open to the larger student body. SGA receives funding from the College; SGA, in turn, funds recognized clubs and organizations through a budgeting process that occurs each semester. SGA is advised by the Director of Student Activities.

**APPRAISAL**

The College Bylaws were amended in June 2009, at which time the role of corporator was eliminated, parameters relating to the election and terms of trustees were revised, and the committee structure of the Board of Trustees was modified. In addition, the Board’s Committee on Trustees has recently developed and implemented a formal written review process for full Board, standing, and ad hoc committee meetings. These actions were intended to improve accountability and enhance institutional efficiency and effectiveness.

In the fall of each year, the Board of Trustees conducts a comprehensive performance review of the President. Performance is measured in terms of predetermined goals and objectives. The Board then provides feedback to the President, highlighting accomplishments and noting opportunities for improvement. This review process has proven to be an effective method of communication and evaluation and will be continued and enhanced in future. Upon completion of his fifth year in office, the Board of Trustees has begun a comprehensive review of President Michael Alexander which will focus on his individual, supervisory, and team performance. The process is being facilitated by an external consultant from Harvard University.

The President reviews annually the performance of each Senior Management Team member. These formal evaluations, which are completed during the summer months, assess performance in relation to predetermined goals and objectives that were mutually agreed upon for that twelve-month period. These performance reviews have provided opportunities for candid feedback and open communication and serve as a basis for determining salary increases; this review process will also be continued and developed.
The Student Government Association General Board has two daylong retreats each year (one per semester), during which the Board reviews the activities of the past semester and plans for the upcoming semester. The Executive Board members meet weekly with the SGA advisor; the advisor also meets weekly with the SGA president and meets individually with the other three officers every other week. The current advisor has worked with the SGA to institute an annual self-evaluation. In fall 2010 and again in fall 2011, the advisor asked the members of the General Board to complete an online survey assessing, for instance, Board meetings, member effectiveness, and SGA advising. In late 2011, the SGA Executive Board reviewed the results of that semester’s survey, and a discussion of the findings were reviewed at the SGA retreat in January 2012. The findings from the survey indicated that: meeting times were the right length of time, after SGA began to create a more concise agenda; some meetings could be more effective; SGA is in the best shape in years, with members having better speaking, and proposal writing, skills; and that SGA wants to reach out more to the student body. With those findings as a foundation, the retreat focused primarily on: evaluating/improving the delivery of Midnight Breakfast; how to build on the Values To Live By; and tangible goals for the spring 2012 semester. Goals that were identified included: enhanced communication about the Values To Live By (a public service advertisement; a commercial; new stickers); expanded hours for the library and dining hall; more monies for each student dedicated to printing on College printers; and formalized plans for each academic major (i.e. degree requirement blueprints). Of those goals, all were successfully accomplished but for the formalized plans for each major (under discussion).

PROJECTION
The College will continue to recruit strong Board members, to ensure that the next generation of leadership will govern the institution effectively and provide stability during a critical period.

In spring 2011, SGA initiated a project entitled Lasell College’s Values to Live By. The proposed ideals for community living were created “For the Students, By the Students,” and the development of Values to Live By continues to be an important SGA project. SGA members are committed to educating their peers about these ideals through programs that highlight the values and bring them to life. Another focus for the next few semesters is the further integration of SGA in the governance system of the College. The SGA President and Vice President for Student Affairs have recently been included in the Board of Trustees’ Committee on Student Life, as one example of an enhanced student voice in the campus community.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
With a new strategic plan in place (Vision 2017), community engagement is crucial as we build on institutional strengths and address areas of weakness. Full commitment on the part of all constituencies will enable the College to achieve its most important objectives and actualize its vision.
STANDARD FOUR: THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM
(Note: graduate programs admissions description, appraisal, and projection is also discussed in Chapter Six: Students)

DESCRIPTION
Vision 2012 and Vision 2017 include ambitious academic goals for the institution, which are discussed in this chapter as well as in the following chapter focusing on faculty. The Vision 2012 goals and short term objectives focused on significant growth in the size of the full time faculty, expansion of graduate programs, new international service-learning programs, and the implementation of capstone experiences in all majors. The new strategic plan is focused more extensively in the academic arena than Vision 2012, including the institution of a new online undergraduate degree completion program, continued growth in the graduate program as well as the full time faculty, ensuring competitive compensation for adjunct faculty, identifying new, signature academic programs, establishing a new undergraduate summer term, achieving comprehensive use of Moodle in all classes at the College, implementing a distinctive approach to general education, and determining the ideal credit structure for our connected learning environment.

Undergraduate Programs and Instruction
In keeping with the College’s mission to “engage students in the practice of their fields of study through collaborative learning that fosters lifelong intellectual exploration and social responsibility,” Lasell College continues to be an innovator in education. Various creative endeavors promote student learning and growth; these include research, speaking, and writing across the curriculum programs, an academic symposium at the conclusion of each term, domestic and international service-learning programs, and many others. In addition, we continue to evaluate current fields of study and develop new majors and minors to reflect market demands and opportunities. Undergraduate degrees are offered in 29 different majors, with 27 available minors. The College currently offers two graduate degrees in Education, and three graduate degrees with several concentrations and certificates in Communication, Management, and Sport Management.

Lasell’s undergraduate degree programs are designed to provide students with the opportunity to develop mastery in a major area of study while offering a substantive introduction to broad areas of human knowledge. Program requirements are based on clearly defined learning goals and outcomes that are appropriate to Lasell’s students and to the degree level. Each course has explicit outcomes, delineated in the course syllabus, that map back to departmental goals. In addition, a variety of assessment tools are utilized to evaluate students' mastery of course competencies.

Upper-level courses are designed to integrate skills established in prerequisite courses. Following a sequence of courses during their academic career, students are introduced to increasingly complex material, so that they may refine and hone their knowledge. In addition, the major-specific courses have a direct and supportive relationship to a central body of learning, so that students can be effective practitioners in their areas of specialization. Students in all majors are engaged in practica, field experiences, and internships in which they are required to demonstrate and apply what they have learned in their coursework.

The commitment to gaining practical experience for students is evidenced by the creation of a new Internship Director position in 2010 to facilitate the development of relationships with outside partners, as well as to maintain consistency in standards and requirements in internship programs across various majors. Up until 2010, departments and programs offered varying levels of support in terms of finding an internship and there were different requirements related to when and how internships could be completed. While some of these variations are appropriate for discipline specific reasons, the internship director has created greater consistency around a core set of best practices.

The College reviews its undergraduate curriculum regularly, developing programs that reflect student interests and needs. There are currently 29 majors, including several associated concentrations of study. Three new majors were developed over the past three years. Fashion Communication and Promotion is an interdisciplinary combination of fashion and communication courses, with many students involved with the production of
Polished, a fashion and trends magazine distributed throughout the Boston area. The College recently expanded its partnership with the local access television station NewTV; students will enroll in a full year course sequence on television production, developing an actual program in the spring of 2013. The Applied Mathematics major was developed based on increased student demand for more enriching and rigorous courses in this area (the Math minor is the largest at the College), as well as increased demand in the schools for elementary and secondary mathematics teachers. The major in Arts Management developed this past spring reflects a booming interest among Lasell students in the fine and performing arts. New concentrations in the Finance and English majors were also approved in the spring of 2012. Some programs of study have been eliminated or modified over the past ten years, in accordance with projected student need. For example, physical education and computer science were eliminated, while the Sports Science major was revised to Exercise Science to reflect industry requirements and accreditation standards more accurately.

The College also continually appraises the minors offered to students. Since 2008, we have introduced new minors in Human Rights, Leadership and Civic Engagement, Creative Writing, and Literature. In addition, due to declining demand, the Information Technology minor was taught out and then removed from the curriculum.

Faculty who choose to work at Lasell do so because of their passion for teaching. They are encouraged to be risk-takers and engage in practices that will both educate energize the intellectual curiosity of our students. Our faculty acknowledged institutional support for this stance in Chronicle of Higher Education Survey two years ago, when Lasell was recognized as a Great College to Work for under the teaching category. The institution’s educational philosophy of connected learning continues to be a prime driver in the undergraduate and graduate education experience. Great strides have been made over the past few years to infuse the curriculum with connected learning, as evidenced by the increasing number of students participating in the two connected learning symposia held during the academic year.

In his report to the Lasell College Board of Trustees in 2007, President Michael Alexander declared, “We have a consistent educational philosophy that we apply across academic departments and programs.” That simple statement was far more accurate then it would have been just three years prior, when with Davis Educational Grant funding we focused on incorporating connected learning throughout the first two years of the student experience. Lasell College faculty now embrace and clearly communicate the principle of connected learning, with its underlying belief in the pedagogical power of involving students in projects that render academic subject matter relevant to understanding and acting effectively within the world beyond the classroom.

The College has developed a commitment to undergraduate research as a vehicle for deepening the intellectual power of connected learning. In 2009, we were awarded a grant from the Davis Educational Foundation to support a new Research Across the Curriculum initiative. This program encourages students to be researchers under the tutelage of a faculty member or to engage in research on their own. Over the past three years, research assistants have worked with a team of faculty on a marketing research project for the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce. This ongoing project has been focusing on aiding small businesses to identify best practices in marketing. Other grants have been awarded on such varied topics as climate change, persuasive argument in everyday speech, recent economic forces in the Hospitality industry, and the influence of military garb on daily wear fashion design.

Intergenerational learning continues to be a central feature of education at Lasell College. Students regularly complete projects at our two onsite day care centers as part of their coursework, as well as work as paid or volunteer aides. Course projects range from English students analyzing the children’s interactions in studies of language acquisition, to science students constructing interactive, environmental awareness projects, to marketing students creating brochures and flyers. Early childhood education students regularly conduct observations or design activities at both centers. Lasell Village residents also volunteer regularly at the Rockwell preschool.

Faculty continue to design projects throughout the curriculum that involve interaction between College students and Lasell Village residents. Undergraduate and graduate students also do internships at the Village. In planning
the Village, we expected that many residents would enroll in College courses. Enrollment numbers have remained lower than anticipated for three primary reasons:

- We underestimated the number and variety of courses that would be offered at the Village for residents only (average of 25 per trimester) in addition to more than 100 lectures and cultural programs each year; this increase in on-site programming at the Village has resulted in a diminished inclination to go to campus.
- We underestimated the number of College students who would be employed at the Village (range of 20-30, depending on trimester) and the importance of this daily on-site intergenerational contact that would significantly impact (decrease) residents’ need to seek intergenerational contact on campus.
- With many different length courses at the Village, most Villagers are reluctant to commit to 14 week courses.

Established in 2001, the RoseMary B. Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies is housed at 60 Seminary Ave in Lasell Village. The Director of the Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies has recently launched the following initiatives in support of expanded intergenerational activity:

- A Fuss Center Faculty Research Affiliate Program. The faculty affiliate receives one course release per semester in order to develop and implement a project related to aging and/or intergenerational relations. As a Faculty Research Affiliate, he or she also designs at least one course during the academic year with an intergenerational component.
- A Fuss Center Faculty Development Program, providing $100-$500 stipends to faculty for new intergenerational curricular projects.
- A new Intergenerational Teaching and Learning Curricular Think Tank involving faculty and Village residents.

The Center Director regularly offers classes (Aging across America, Ethics Across Generations) that incorporate various intergenerational teaching and learning formats. In addition, the Director collaborates with other faculty on projects related to intergenerational teaching and learning (e.g., Engaging Older Adults in College Classes: Three Innovative Intergenerational Formats, paper presented by Joann M. Montepare, Mimi Reddicliffe and Richard Bath at the 2012 annual meeting of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, Arlington, VA). The Center also participates with other Lasell College groups in offering intergenerational programs, including an intergenerational reading and activity series with the Rockwell Child Study Center and intergenerational speaker and discussion events in celebration of Women’s History Month with the Donahue Institute.

The College’s commitment to social responsibility is demonstrated in myriad ways both through service-learning in the classroom and service-learning-based study abroad experiences. The Center for Community Based Learning is the main resource available to faculty and students for engaging in service learning. In 2008, 60 percent of the full time faculty utilized service-learning assignments in a linked credit (one credit linked to a “host” course) or regular course. In the 20011-2012 academic year, the percentage of involvement was 74 percent, with nearly 60 percent of the undergraduate student body participating in some kind of service-learning activity. 65 percent of the full-time faculty utilized Service-Learning in a linked credit or embedded format during the year.

To further the commitment to service-learning (and in fulfillment of a Vision 2012 strategic planning goal), two years ago every academic department implemented a new plan, or refined an existing plan, for requiring a minimum of one service-learning experience in every major. Every major now has a service-learning requirement listed in the Catalog. Examples of Service-Learning projects include students in a leadership class building houses with Habitat for Humanity; students in a business marketing class helping the Allston-Brighton Community Development Corporation expand their marketing, increase area business contributions, and develop a PowerPoint presentation for a 30th anniversary gala; students in a fashion merchandising class holding a fashion
show whose proceeds benefitted a non-profit organization; students in a sociology class interacting with incarcerated inmates and their families at a local prison.

Active citizenship is demonstrated in many other. In the spring of 2011, the Curriculum Committee approved a new minor “Leadership in Civic Engagement” to provide a focused, curricular context for understanding social issues, as well as working with community and other non-profit agencies. Students complete approximately 150 hours of community service, take on a variety of leadership roles as part of their service experience, and reflect on their experiences. This past year, Lasell College was one of two winners (along with MIT) of the Mass College Compact’s Community Service Partnership Award in recognition of our long-time partnership with Second Step. The College was also recognized by the President’s National Community Service Honor Roll with distinction (a level higher than the year prior).

Since the inception of the first service learning study abroad trip, the College has committed through its strategic planning process to developing additional opportunities for students to visit diverse cultures and participate in service learning activities. The inaugural service learning study abroad experience, the Mexico Shoulder-to-Shoulder program, continues to be extremely successful. This annual trip has resulted in an enduring relationship with the Ninos de Vera Cruz organization. Three additional service learning study abroad experiences have been developed in Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Brazil. The trip to Brazil focuses on ecotourism and takes students to the Amazonian Rain Forest. In addition we are launching our fifth service learning study abroad trip to Uganda in May, 2013.

Lasell College’s commitment to offering a diverse and global learning experience for students is evidenced by the addition of the position of Director of International Services in 2009. The director works with students who seek to study abroad and matches them with the best programs. The College maintains a list of approved study abroad programs; it is affiliated with 11 study abroad providers and currently offers a choice of approximately 138 programs in 35 countries. All grades a student receives on an approved study abroad program are reflected in the student’s cumulative GPA.

The number of students who choose to study abroad has continued to grow on a yearly basis. In 2007, fewer than 30 students, all female, studied abroad in four different countries. In the fall of 2010, there were 50 students who chose to study abroad in seven different countries. In the fall of 2011, there were 54 students, with a significant increase in the number of male students to 14. These 54 students studied in eight different countries. In addition, over the past three years, the number of students participating in internships abroad has grown. In order to facilitate study abroad for students, Lasell has instituted a home tuition model that allows students to study abroad and remain as full-time Lasell students paying normal tuition, room, and board. In addition, we continue to develop partnerships with institutions of higher education to further study abroad opportunities for students. We have instituted two partnerships in Jinan, China with Shandong University of Art and Design and Shandong Institute for Commerce and Technology, and this past year with Letterkenney Institute of Technology in County Donegal, Ireland, and Franklin College in Lugano, Switzerland.

The first year seminar program at Lasell College seeks to provide a smooth transition to college life. The program has undergone significant changes since its inception many years ago. The most recent significant change occurred in 2008, with FYS changing from an optional, one-credit, pass-fail course to an academic theme-based, three-credit, graded course required for all entering first-year students (Honors Program students enroll in the first year Honors Colloquium in lieu of FYS). The course has evolved to help students develop skills in speaking, reading, writing, research, technology, and learning strategies required for college level work within a connected learning environment. It encourages students to become active and effective learners. Through FYS, students also work with peer mentors who advocate for their success as they develop a strong bond with the course professor.

Technology continues to be an important component of the teaching experience at Lasell College, which has sustained its commitment to increasing the number of technology-enhanced classrooms. Forty of forty-five classrooms are technology-enhanced, which includes computers, projectors, Internet access, DVD players and Smart Boards. Students are no strangers to this technology and use it in many classes for presentations, video
creation, and web site development. In addition, wireless Internet access is now offered in many locations across campus.

In 2008, the College began to use Moodle, which is an open-sourced, community-based learning management system. Moodle allows instructors to upload course assignments, handouts, and other documents for student use. It also includes an asynchronous discussion tool to supplement in-class interaction. In addition, Moodle is currently used in the graduate program to facilitate both hybrid and online courses. Faculty members have expressed satisfaction with the LMS as it allows students to access materials anytime and from anywhere. As of the fall 2011 semester, 61 percent of undergraduate courses were using Moodle in some form. Of these, 59 percent were using several Moodle resources, including uploading syllabi and other course documents. Twenty-three percent were using the submit assignment tool, 17 percent were using the gradebook, and 14 percent were using the discussion forums. Vision 2017 articulates a goal for 100 percent utilization of Moodle by faculty, as discussed in the Appraisal section.

Graduate Degree Programs and Instruction
Since the graduate program was first launched in spring 2002, the College has been committed to its growth and success. In support of that growth, Vision 2012 called for three degrees beyond the existing MS in Management, and we subsequently added Master of Science degrees in Communication and Sport Management, each with multiple concentrations and certificates, followed by the development and State approval of two M.Ed. degrees. We now offer graduate courses in multiple delivery models to facilitate student learning. The Masters of Science in Management, Communication, and Sport Management are now offered totally online.

Faculty who teach in the graduate program are expected to hold a terminal degree and have extensive professional experience in their disciplines. In most cases, the doctorate is considered to be the terminal degree; however, the College also considers standards set by accrediting agencies or professional practice in some fields. For example, an MBA, JD, or MFA may be considered terminal in some fields. In Sport Management, the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) distinguishes between doctorally-qualified and professionally-qualified faculty. COSMA considers directly related professional and management experience along with “extensive and substantial teaching experience” to be sufficient qualifications along with a master’s degree to qualify individuals to teach in graduate programs.

Lasell’s graduate programs have been developed to provide students with a deep understanding and mastery of their chosen fields. Students are encouraged to consider their own experiences within the context of course assignments and discussions. High-level case analysis is one method by which students’ new and existing knowledge is applied and demonstrated. Our courses are highly interactive and practice-based, and students report frequently that their professional practice has improved as a result of their studies. They also state that they can now apply a name or concept to activities they were already implementing within their professional work.

Additionally, students pursuing the masters in management, communication and sport management are required to complete a capstone project or internship. Students who choose the research project work one-on-one with a faculty mentor on a high-level and rigorous project resulting in a professionally prepared research paper. Internships are designed to provide students a culminating experience in which they establish specific learning goals based on career objectives and work with a site supervisor and faculty mentor to assess progress toward those goals. These capstone experiences are instrumental in assessing that students have acquired the knowledge and developed the skills that have been identified as program goals.

Students pursuing the masters in communication also have two additional options for their capstone: 1) comprehensive exam or 2) design a special study project under the tutelage of a faculty member. The comprehensive exam provides evidence of student knowledge of key concepts, skills, and other important materials related to the communication field. This is a full-day exam requiring analysis of case studies in the major and areas of concentration, with written responses that integrate skills and understandings derived from coursework and other educational experiences. The special study project can be a document, a video, or a multi-
media presentation developed under the guidance of a Lasell College faculty member to apply skills and professional expertise developed in prior coursework.

Students pursuing Initial Licensure in Moderate Disabilities and Elementary Education are required to do a minimum practicum of 300 hours teaching under the supervision of qualified professionals. The practicum is designed to provide students with classroom teaching experience within their chosen fields. The practicum also includes a weekly seminar in which students discuss such issues as planning, teaching, collaboration and moral and ethical aspects of teaching.

Lasell’s strong philosophy of connected learning and its focus on teaching effectiveness result in content and pedagogy that meet the needs of students at all levels of their professional education and practice. In contrast to the undergraduate program, however, the graduate curriculum is now delivered in both hybrid and online formats, taught by full-time and part-time professional faculty. As the programs expanded and enrollments increased, it became clear that expectations for faculty teaching in the graduate program required clarification. Therefore, faculty who teach in the graduate program must now undergo a rigorous training process in order to acquire the pedagogical knowledge and technological skills to teach Lasell graduate students. This training includes a six-week orientation to both the online Learning Management System (LMS) and the unique pedagogical challenges pertaining to the online and hybrid delivery methods. In addition, strict guidelines for faculty teaching in these programs have been developed to ensure the high level of rigor and quality necessary in a graduate program. These guidelines were developed collaboratively with the Graduate Committee and are in the faculty handbook. Faculty earn a certificate that enables them to instruct in both hybrid and online delivery modes.

**Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit**

Lasell’s connected-learning philosophy acknowledges that learning takes place both within and outside the classroom. This approach broadens the definition of credit hour to other academic activities that include but are not limited to laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, individual study, research, recitation, service-learning, and other experiential, project-based learning opportunities. At Lasell College, a credit hour is based on an amount of time, level and value of work in which a student engages in activities leading to intended learning outcomes established and measured by Lasell College faculty as evidence of student achievement. The amount of time and work expected is consistent with the Carnegie Unit definition and is not less than "one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester.”

For traditional semester length courses where the majority of work is done within a classroom setting, students are expected to spend approximately two hours studying or preparing for class for each hour of instruction. This equates to six hours of study time for each three-credit course for a total of nine hours per week, per course. Over the course of a traditional semester at Lasell, students are expected to devote a minimum of 135 hours of work per course (this includes in class meetings).

Lasell College’s Graduate and Professional Studies Program offer 14 and 7 week graduate or undergraduate courses; all 14-week courses are offered in hybrid format. Our 7-week courses are offered in both hybrid and online delivery. In an online class, the student is an active participant each week, and evaluation of a student’s understanding of course content is based on her/his daily involvement rather than a single event such as a midterm or final project/exam. Online students are expected to be actively and creatively engaged in the entire learning process. Indeed one of the great benefits of online courses is the time provided to students to reflect on what they are learning. Typically, the entire week’s work is posted at least three weeks in advance, allowing students to ponder the readings and discussion questions, conduct additional research to support a particular week’s topic, and write and revise responses to class assignments and discussions.

Students in 14-week hybrid courses are expected to spend 10-12 hours per week on their studies. In weeks where hybrid courses meet face to face, these meetings are included within the range of 10-12 hours. Students in seven-week courses are expected to devote a minimum of 19-20 hours a week preparing for and completing class
assignments. In weeks when hybrid classes meet face to face, these meetings are included within the range of 19-20 hours.

Lasell College’s Bachelors and Graduate programs meet or exceed the NEASC requirement of 120 and 30 minimum credits, respectively. All of the College’s Bachelors programs require 120 or more credits for the degree; all of the College’s Master Degree programs require a minimum of 36 credits.

Students are not allowed to self-enroll in the graduate program. Students are authenticated in the course management system through username and password generated by the information technology department and used by the registrar and business office. Photographs are associated with usernames as an additional means of verification. All courses offered for credit in a concentrated time period receive support for instructional needs following the same criteria as traditional courses in terms of contact hours and evaluation. Additionally, as referenced earlier, the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) provides new faculty in the graduate program with a six-week online professional development course. Faculty reflect on pedagogical practice together through online discussion boards, chat, Skype, and web conferencing and invite students to meet face to face when possible. The TLC also assists faculty with course development by providing course templates that include sections for assignments and objectives. Off-campus students have access to support systems such as the library and may access their courses at all times.

In order for currently enrolled students to receive credit for transfer courses, students must be matriculated into a program of study and submit an official transcript to the registrar’s office. Courses in transfer are approved by the Department Chair based on course content and comparability to Lasell College course. Once a course is approved, the Registrar’s Office maintains a list of previously approved and evaluated courses. Transfer credit is awarded only for undergraduate courses with a C or better or graduate courses with a B or better. The residency requirement is 60 credits for the baccalaureate degree and 30 credits for the graduate degree as published in the Catalog. The College has several articulation agreements in place for students wishing to transfer to the College after completion of an associate’s degree. Developmental coursework in Mathematics or English as a second language does not count towards degree requirements.

Students may transfer up to six credits into any master’s degree program. Courses must be graduate level from an accredited institution and students must have earned a B or better in the course. Students may transfer courses into the major; in some cases a course description and/or course syllabus may be required to ensure consistency of course outcomes.

Program requirements are clearly stated for undergraduate and graduate students in both print form and electronically. Requirements for students to remain in good academic standing are published in the Catalog. The PowerCampus system automatically flags students for academic review based on grade point average and progress towards degree requirements. The undergraduate Academic Review Committee (and the graduate dean for graduate students) reviews the records of students placed on academic probation or suspension and sends a letter prior to the subsequent semester outlining the requirements for remaining at or reapplying to the College as well as the standards for re-attaining Good Academic Standing. Options for appeal are also delineated. The course repetition policy is clearly stated in the College catalog. The academic grievance policy is available both in print and electronically and clearly states the procedures for students who wish to grieve a course grade.

Graduation requirements are listed in the Catalog. Students and advisors can check their academic progress toward their degree requirements using the electronic audit capability available in PowerCampus. Updated academic plans are available to students online. Students are held to published degree requirements, and advisors ensure that appropriate electives are included as part of the students’ program. If course substitutions are to be made for graduation requirements, they must be approved by the department chairperson or the Dean of Undergraduate or Graduate Education.
Assessment of Student Learning

Ongoing and systematic assessment is a cornerstone of Lasell’s academic programs, with a focus on actions that both measure and benefit student learning. In 2006, the Dean of Undergraduate Education assumed responsibility for academic assessment, involving faculty in establishing and measuring goals and outcomes for student learning. In 2010, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies began a similar process for graduate programs. While the process continues to evolve, several years of findings and reports from undergraduate assessment suggest that the campus culture incorporates the idea of closing the loop: gathering and assessing student work, using the results to guide program modifications, and beginning the cycle again. As evidenced by the data provided in the E1 forms, the process includes steps at the course, program, and institutional levels, as well as structures for using assessment results to improve student learning. Each level can be examined separately; in practice, however, processes and analyses at the various levels intersect. For example, College participation in the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education is discussed at the institutional level, but the study results affect steps taken in assessment at the course level (early and frequent formative measures) and at the program level (clear articulation of goals and outcomes).

Undergraduate Program Assessment

Much of the shift in College culture over the past five years comes from faculty engagement in program-level assessment. In fall 2006, in an effort to ensure accountability for student learning and growth, Lasell launched an assessment process for undergraduate programs that would be used annually to improve programs, curriculum, and student learning on a regular and continuing basis. As of fall 2012, every department has now implemented specific improvements of both curriculum and instructional methods based on a plethora of data gathered and analyzed through assessment.

The College provides multiple opportunities during the academic year for faculty to focus on assessment. During and beyond those times, faculty in each department have collaboratively completed several steps:

- Identified and articulated program goals and outcomes, which are being incorporated into course syllabi. Beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year, goals and outcomes for each program are published in the Catalog. Many program-based learning outcomes are specific to the career-preparation practices that are to be mastered by the time of graduation.
- Created curriculum maps to show the courses that address the goals and outcomes and to focus on the role of each course in supporting development of knowledge and skills essential to the program.
- Located, modified, or developed rubrics related to at least three outcomes.
- Collected and assessed student work using those rubrics.
- Analyzed the assessment results to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and to implement appropriate program modifications.

Some departments have also developed and analyzed surveys of program graduates, internship supervisors, employers, and other external constituencies to provide indirect evidence for program assessment. For example, a Sport Management survey of its internship supervisors found that interns scored high in ten key areas of career preparedness. Similarly, supervisors of Communication and Social Sciences interns reported that students demonstrated strong professional skills.

We are using our course management system, Moodle, to support our assessment efforts. All assessment materials including student work and rubrics for assessment are uploaded to department files on Moodle. Once the student work is scored against the rubric, the data is compiled into summary reports. The data is graphed and used to demonstrate level of progress against outcomes.

Faculty involvement is documented in annual reports produced by department chairs, detailing the process of course and program assessment, as well as changes made as a result. The full reports, cited in the E1 forms, are published internally and are available to faculty through Moodle, with a summary prepared for presentation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
Three programs are currently accredited by external agencies: Athletic Training, by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE); Education licensure programs, by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); and this summer the Exercise Science program received its initial accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). The Exercise Science program is also endorsed for strength and conditioning education by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA).

The College is currently pursuing ACBSP accreditation for its undergraduate and graduate business programs. The accreditation report will be submitted in January 2013 and the visiting team will come to Lasell in March of 2013. Additionally, the Sport Management program is under review for accreditation by the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA).

Vision 2012 set the goal, which was fulfilled within one year, of developing senior-year capstone experiences in each program. While the particular design varies to meet the needs and expectations of each program, capstones integrate an internship or practicum, research, seminar, and independent work. For example, Athletic Training students focus on designing and conducting graduate-level research; Graphic Design students create electronic portfolios; Exercise Science and Education students complete intensive practicum experiences concurrently with a research-focused capstone course; students in Justice Studies and Social Sciences complete a full-year internship and related seminar. Assessment of the capstones provides a picture of students’ level of achievement at the end of their academic programs.

Institution-level assessment. The culture of assessment extends to the institutional level, with robust efforts in place and specific plans moving forward.

Connected Learning Symposium. This longstanding forum for student projects provides a showcase for semester and year-long work. The symposium currently extends for a full week near the end of each fall and spring semester, with all classes dismissed for one day to facilitate participation by the entire college community. During the last two years, emphasis has shifted from quantity to quality, with faculty encouraged to evaluate student work and select the highest level products for inclusion, using course- and program-level standards.

Curriculum Committee Program Review. All programs have been reviewed on a five-year cycle by the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Assembly, with assessment forming the core of the process. Beginning in fall 2012, the newly created Program Review Committee will take over and improve that function. The report, prepared by program faculty, describes direct and indirect measures of student learning; provides specific data related to learning outcomes; discusses curricular revisions that have been implemented or are planned as a result of assessment data; and outlines program strengths supported by assessment data.

Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education. Lasell is a member of the 2008 cohort of this large-scale study of student experiences. New freshmen completed surveys in fall 2008 and spring 2009 that explored their college expectations, impressions of campus life, and academic experiences; the results represented a detailed quantitative report on curricular and co-curricular life for this group. In addition, staff from the Wabash Study visited Lasell to meet with groups of students, faculty, staff, and administrators, adding qualitative information. This cohort of students completed the same set of survey instruments in their senior year, 2011-2012. We expect to receive the preliminary data report in late Fall, 2012 and the full report in Spring, 2013.

Institution-wide assessment of written communication. Across departments, goals and outcomes for student learning involve written communication, with particular focus on genres, skills, and standards appropriate to each program. In spring 2011, all departments assessed this critical outcome using a common rubric based on the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) VALUE rubric for written communication. During AY 2010-2011, faculty on the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee (WAC) reviewed and slightly modified the rubric, soliciting college-wide input for the version ultimately adopted; departments identified written assignments that would be collected through Moodle for assessment. A full day in May 2011 was devoted to the assessment of writing, beginning with department-based norming exercises led by members of the WAC.
committee. Faculty then assessed the writing samples collected during the year. The results of this process are discussed below in the Appraisal section.

**Graduate Program Assessment**

Graduate academic programs at Lasell conduct assessment on multiple levels. Every five years, the Graduate Committee conducts a review of program effectiveness and connection to College goals. As referenced in the E1 forms, each department conducts an ongoing assessment process in order to monitor and improve programs, curriculum, and student learning on a regular and continuing basis. Finally, the office of Graduate and Professional Studies conducts surveys and focus groups each year with students and faculty.

**Graduate Program Committee Five Year Program Review**

The principal purpose of the Graduate Program Committee review is to engage in a thoughtful, forward-thinking dialogue on the present and future state of the program, resulting in constructive feedback. This review includes such matters as:

- the relationship between the program and the overall mission and direction of the College
- the relationship between the program and other programs at the College
- existing and projected program goals in relation to existing and projected resources
- the implications of the reported results of program assessment for the future of the program

The process engages the faculty in collaborative assessment, reflection, and planning. The Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and the Department Chair work with the department faculty to address the specific areas of Program Focus and Direction, Curriculum Structure and Change, Assessment of Student Education, and Comparative Program Analysis. The Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and the Department Chair develop a written assessment of the program of study based on these specific areas; the report includes recommendations for specific action steps to address any issues identified and for sustaining projected program growth. This report is then submitted to the Graduate Committee for feedback. The completed report is then submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This report forms the basis for strategic planning at the program level.

The Master of Science in Management degree was initiated in 2003 with concentrations in Elder Care Management and Elder Care Marketing. This program added new concentrations in 2005. In summer 2011, a program review was launched for the Master of Science in Management Degree. This program review was completed and submitted to the Graduate Committee in April of 2012. Programs in Communication, Sport Management and Education will be reviewed at five years: fall 2013 for Communication; fall 2015 for Sport Management; spring 2016 for Education.

Beginning in March, 2010, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies met regularly with the Chairs of Business/Marketing, Communication, Sport Management, and Education; these meetings focused on developing a Graduate Program Assessment Process. In considering the current and future trends in the corporate and non-profit arenas, the group established the following five goals as critical to students’ success in their chosen careers.

- Professional Communication
- Leadership
- Information Literacy
- Global Awareness
- Lifelong Learning

Once these graduate program goals were decided upon, the team then focused on developing a process and timeline for assessment. The long-term goal was to develop and implement an annual assessment process for graduate programs that would be consistent and reliable, with an effective evaluative component resulting in
stronger programs of study, curriculum and student learning. The outcomes assessment process is discussed further under Appraisal.

In addition to this program assessment process, the office of Graduate and Professional Studies engages in the following yearly assessments:

- **Student Satisfaction Survey.** This survey was introduced in December 2009 and is conducted annually each December for students admitted in the fall semester. The majority of our students enter in the fall, and this survey is designed to assess their experience and levels of satisfaction with course content, delivery, and scheduling of courses; student supports, including the Registrar and Student Accounts; and advising. We sent out the survey again in the fall of 2011; the data was analyzed and the report written and distributed in spring 2012. The survey will again be distributed in December of 2012.

- **Student Focus Groups.** Beginning in spring 2010, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies conducted focus groups with new and continuing students to obtain their feedback on programs of study, faculty, and student supports. Focus groups are conducted on different days to capture as many students as possible. A second round of focus groups was held in spring 2011 and spring 2012.

These efforts have resulted in some critical changes to graduate study at Lasell, outlined in other sections of this report. To summarize, we have initiated the following as a direct response to students’ comments and feedback:

- Online orientation
- Webinars on career help
- Online tutoring
- One stop new student “to-do” list
- Online registration and payment for new students
- Moodle Orientation
- Designated liaison to graduate students in administrative offices
- Extended operating hours for the bookstore, Graduate Admissions, the Registrar, and Student Accounts

### Institutional Support for Assessment

The College fully supports assessment efforts through its allocation of resources. The Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), directed by a faculty member, collaborates with departments on implementing appropriate technological tools for collecting, assessing, and analyzing student work and other artifacts. Following a successful pilot by the Justice Studies Department, the TLC worked with external technology consultants to develop an assessment module in Moodle, the College’s learning management system. The Moodle assessment module, used in both undergraduate and graduate programs, links learning outcomes to courses, assignments, and rubrics, so assignments uploaded during the semester can be easily sampled and assessed. After assessment is completed, the system generates Excel graphs that are reviewed and analyzed to identify appropriate curricular and/or pedagogical actions. In AY 2010-2011, five departments (38 percent) used the module to collect and assess artifacts specific to department goals and all departments used the module in the college-wide assessment of written communication. In 2011-2012, nine departments (69 percent of the College’s 13 departments) used the module to collect and assess artifacts specific to department goals, and all departments used the module in the college-wide assessment of written communication.

From the beginning of its assessment efforts, the College has designated an individual to coordinate academic program assessment and connect department chairs, College resource people, and external organizations in this effort. That the Dean of Undergraduate Education initiated this role indicates the importance it carries. In AY2011-2012, the operational responsibility for undergraduate program assessment shifted to the Director of the Teaching and Learning Center, a move that reflects the College’s faculty-driven approach. Shifting operational responsibility for assessment to the Center further embeds assessment in faculty responsibilities and focus, since all of the Center’s professional development initiatives incorporate, both implicitly and explicitly, feedback from student learning outcomes.
Time for department-based assessment is built into the academic calendar in three major ways: a time block of at least three hours is included in the September and January faculty development days; six hours are added through extended common hours during the year; and a full day of assessment activities is provided after commencement in May. Because many departments rely on long-term adjunct faculty, these faculty members receive a stipend for participating in assessment sessions. The College also provides food at many of these designated assessment meetings.

Finally, the College builds capacity for assessment and analysis by regularly sending faculty and administrators to conferences such as those of the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U), the New England Educational Assessment Network (NEEAN), the New England Faculty Development Consortium (NEFDC), and NEASC. In AY2011-2012, the College applied for, was accepted to, and sent a faculty team (with the AVPAA) to participate in AAC&U’s Summer Institute on Integrative Learning and the Departments at the University of Vermont, and also applied and was accepted to the 2012 – 2013 College of Independent Colleges (CIC) Engaging Evidence Colloquium.

APPRAISAL

Undergraduate Programs

Academic Rigor
The College has been addressing the perception of a lack of academic rigor at the institution, addressed as a weakness in the Vision 2012 strategic planning process. Actions in response have included workshops involving critical conversations among faculty about pedagogy, the organization of a self-study group of faculty interested in infusing critical reading skills into their teaching, and the facilitation of two book study groups based on best practices. We have also instituted undergraduate research across all programs, supported by the Davis Educational Grant, redesigned the first year seminar as a more academic experience, and have continued to develop the Speaking across the Curriculum Program. The Connected Learning Symposia now involve a more selective process for inclusion. A priority for the Internship Program Director has been to ensure deep and rigorous reflective components in all internships. We have developed consistent, academically demanding capstones in all programs. In AY2011-2012, the Technology for Learning Center introduced a professional development series for adjunct faculty, who teach a substantial number of the first-year course sections. The TLC also facilitates workshops for faculty teaching in the first-year seminar program and is collaborating with the Dean of Undergraduate Education to coordinate an in-depth review of syllabi across departments to ensure clear and consistent presentation of course goals, assessment methods and criteria, expectations, and policies. At the department level, every department is developing competencies that are consistent with student learning outcomes and that require critical inquiry in the subject matter.

General Education
General Education, or the core curriculum, is at the heart of a Lasell undergraduate education. The core curriculum program has been developed to ensure that students gain the skills and the breadth of knowledge necessary to be responsible, competent, and contributing members of a diverse and increasingly technological society, both within and beyond their chosen professions. Currently, all Lasell students must complete 30-35 credits in the General Education Core. This requirement has been revised since 2008 when students were required to complete 28-35 credits. The General Education Core now consists of the First Year Seminar for 3 credits, Foundational Competencies in writing and mathematics that comprise 6-9 credits, and the Areas of Inquiry, which represent 21-23 credits.

In preparation for the program review of General Education in 2011, an ad hoc committee was formed in spring 2010 to review the core curriculum and offer recommendations. During the course of this review, several items were identified that required further investigation. There was a good deal of anecdotal evidence (if not more formal assessment evidence) that students regarded the existing General Education requirements as a “check list” to be gotten out of the way so that they could focus on what they see as the more important and relevant major requirements. Many faculty members advocated for a revised approach to General Education that would take a
more integrated approach to General Education that would be more consistent with our Connected Learning philosophy of education, one that would make clearer to students the connections between General Education requirements and effective achievement of learning outcomes in the disciplines. The Program Review recommended that the faculty reconsider and revise the General Education curriculum along these lines. In terms of assessment, it was noted that there is little formal data on the core and its effectiveness with most of the data being anecdotal. Another recommendation of the Program Review, therefore, was that the faculty design a formal assessment plan for General Education, based on newly articulated institutional learning outcomes (though it was also noted that the current implicit outcomes are consistent with those of other institutions of higher education). Vision 2017 identifies a new and distinctive approach to general education as a priority.

The current draft of the new curriculum begins by organizing the learning outcomes into three core clusters – Core Intellectual Skills, Core Areas of Inquiry, and Core Integrative Learning. The curriculum is then conceived in three tiers, introducing students to the skills and ways of thinking encompassed in the first two clusters during their first two years as a foundation to move onto the third cluster (Integrative Learning) in their third and fourth years. The opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes will be delivered through a series of 2-credit course modules and 4-credit team-taught interdisciplinary, theme-based courses spiraling through the first three years, as well as through the sequence of required courses in the majors, and culminating in the major capstone courses in the senior year. This new curriculum will provide the faculty with many opportunities to assess student learning through common or similar assignments at all levels of development. The faculty is also considering the use of electronic portfolios to facilitate the presentation of, reflection on, and assessment of, evidence of student learning (see Appendix H: Draft General Education Plan Summer 2012). The revised General Education curriculum will map the 14 institutional learning outcomes (described in Standard Two) more purposefully to help ensure more consistent depth of exposure to all outcomes for all students and to ensure that we can assess the outcomes more effectively and reliably.

Graduate Programs

Academic Supports
As the College has moved into the online environment, there have been challenges with supporting students in their academic work. We have developed an online orientation with links to the library, but students need additional help with conducting research and with their writing in general. In addition, student use of Career Services has been steadily increasing and we need to make more services available (e.g., resume writing, interview skills) to our online students. Over the past two years several improvements were made to enhance the graduate student experience:

- A self-paced Moodle Orientation was developed in the summer of 2010. All new students are automatically enrolled in this course and are encouraged to complete it prior to starting classes. The course remains open year round, so that students can update their understanding of and facility with Moodle as they move through the program.
- Our online and hybrid courses were expanded to seven weeks (from six) to meet the academic needs of our students, most of whom balance the competing needs of work, family, and school. Student feedback indicated a need for more time to reflect on course concepts and build connections to their professional lives.
- The Graduate Student Union was formed and offers yearly gatherings for graduate students, including a “Come Meet Your Advisor” night.
- The College hired an Associate Director of Graduate Student Services. One of her first initiatives was to develop a welcome page on the website, where new students find links to the Moodle Orientation and information on how to activate their MyLasell passwords, obtain an IDs and parking permits, log into SelfService, and order textbooks.
- We have developed a fully online orientation that is available to graduate students through the Graduate Tab on MyLasell. This orientation includes welcome messages from the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and all Graduate Department Chairs, a library overview with links to tutorials, an overview of the importance of the advising relationship, and a link to our Moodle orientation.
• We offered a webinar hosted by the Graduate Student Union and Career Services using Adobe Connect. The workshop presented the services available to students through Career Services, including help with resume writing, conducting a job search, and developing good interview skills. Nineteen students attended, four of these online. The webinar was also archived and posted on the Graduate Tab of MyLasell. Student response was enthusiastic and we plan to offer this again in spring, 2013.

• We contracted with Smarthinking, an online tutoring service, to support graduate student writing. This service is also available to undergraduate students. Smarthinking offers both synchronous and asynchronous tutoring in writing, as well as other subjects.

Assessment of Student Learning

Undergraduate Program Assessment
For over six years, College faculty have been deeply engaged in the assessment of student learning and the use of results to improve undergraduate academic programs, with a similar effort recently initiated for graduate programs. Annual reports are posted to Moodle, and focused conversations about assessment and pedagogy are commonplace during college-wide faculty meetings and in smaller groups: department meetings, workshops in the Teaching and Learning Center, and course development sessions in the Technology for Learning Center, among many other venues. With active support from the administration, the College has built a foundation for ongoing assessment of student learning and experiences.

Because goals, outcomes, and measures are developed by departments, they incorporate knowledge and skills essential to each field and provide direct input to faculty as they review course and program requirements. Departments incorporate a variety of measures, both direct and indirect, to assess student learning within their courses and programs:

• Direct measures include the student work samples collected by all departments, covering courses at all levels and courses taught by varied faculty, both full- and part-time. Most programs also collect and assess project-based samples, such as student-designed garments in fashion, lesson plans developed by education students, analysis of data sets completed by mathematics and science students, and business plans created by students in marketing and management.

• Indirect measures, such as student surveys and focus groups, are widely used. Many departments include input from external constituents, such as surveys of alumni, internship supervisor evaluations (e.g., in Communication and Social Sciences), and feedback on student projects provided by external advisory board members (e.g., in Communication and Education). Student focus groups and exit surveys include questions dealing with the degree of career preparation students receive, the level of support they receive as they complete projects or assignments, and the relation of their academic program to the work they do at internships and practica (and for alumni, in relation to their current employment).

Summary of Department Actions Based on Assessment Results: 2008 – 2012
The College uses the evidence and information provided by assessment to improve student learning. Ongoing assessment findings have led most departments to make curricular changes ranging from course additions and deletions, to substantially redesigned courses, to revisions in course sequencing and prerequisites. These changes are documented in the minutes of the Curriculum Committee and in department chairs’ annual assessment reports: (See Appendices I-K: Assessment Reports 08-09, 09-10, 11-12), and these reports have generated the data in the E1 forms.

• As a result of curriculum-mapping, all departments evaluated their capstone experiences and either developed a new one or revised the existing ones. For instance, the Humanities Department added a new course (HUM 419) to encourage the type of close reading necessary for truly exceptional work in the senior research seminar (HUM 420); the Humanities capstone experience is, thus, now a two-course sequence.

• Athletic Training faculty restructured two required first year courses – Introduction to Allied Health and Sport Studies (AHLT 101) and Medical Pathology (AHLT 201) to increase exposure to Anatomy and
The faculty also introduced discipline-specific research skills earlier in the curriculum, including in first year courses.

- The Communication Department added a new course in Communication Research Methods at the 300 level to help students learn, in depth, the process of conducting and writing communication research.
- The Education Department revised its approach to teaching lesson planning skills, developing a consistent vocabulary among department faculty, better aligning expectations for final products, and infusing lesson planning throughout the curriculum, beginning with restructuring ED 110, the introductory course in the major, to place more emphasis at that level on improving students’ skills in writing lesson plans.
- The Fashion Department developed rubrics for writing and presentation skills; the distribution of these rubrics to students, as well as the use of the rubrics by outside evaluators, has clarified expectations and improved quality of work.
- The Justice Studies Department added emphasis on ethics to its curriculum, with a particular focus on the introductory and capstone courses. The Justice Studies Department also revised its lower-level writing intensive course to support improvement in students’ writing skills. One faculty member has taken a leading role in overhauling writing instruction in this key course for majors, rethinking how she integrates writing and content.
- The Management/Marketing and Accounting/Finance Departments added a unit on ethics and a case-study assignment to BUSS 101: Contemporary issues in Business, an ethical decision making case study to BUSS 440, the capstone course, and ethical issues and cases in other courses, in order to support the development of student competencies in achieving both departments’ learning outcome in ethical decision-making. Also, the library staff created an APA workshop linked to BUSS 101 and HEM 101 for majors in Marketing/Management and Accounting/Finance to improve student learning of APA style.
- The Management/Marketing Department implemented a new requirement of at least three formal graded presentations in BUSS 101, BUSS 220, BUSS 336 and HEM101, using PowerPoint and formal dress; in the fall of 2010, students in each section of these courses presented to the department’s Advisory Board to give them a real experience of a professional presentation. In addition, the department required all sections of BUSS 101 to participate in the Symposium and have presentations open to outside assessors. The department also required at least one formal graded presentation in BUSS 220 using PowerPoint.
- The Mathematics and Science Department introduced a course called Modern Mathematics (MATH 109) as an alternative to Intermediate Algebra (MATH 104) for those students who will not be going on to Precalculus or Calculus for their majors. The department believes that offering Modern Mathematics will bring more homogeneity to MATH 104 and MATH 109 classes, thus making teaching and learning more synergistic and productive.
- The Social Sciences Department expanded the use of rubrics, especially applying them to first drafts of the mock grant project during senior year to support growth and development in the writing project. In 2010 - 2011, the Social Sciences Department invited the Director of the first-year writing program to meet with the faculty to discuss how they can better prepare students for writing. The department would like to focus on the early writing experiences the students have as they enter the major as a starting point for skill development, but also plan to develop ideas to help students grow as writers as they progress through the major. From the focus group results, the department also began to institute additional writing assignments (such as an earlier literature review) for additional practice points.
- The newly created Capstone and Seminar courses in Exercise Science emphasize skills in disciplinary research and professional development.

Institutional-Level Assessment

With all faculty members and departments engaged in the assessment of student learning in their programs, the College is now turning to institutional-level assessment:

- First, the College’s central academic philosophy, connected learning, operates at the course, program, and institutional levels but is not directly assessed at any of those levels. In 2009-2010, department chairs were asked to comment in their annual assessment reports on the integration of connected learning in their programs. Most identified specific projects or assignments that exemplified connected learning:

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Communication/Graphic Design students played classic video games and critiqued their design, Justice Studies students developed a protocol for on-campus victims of abuse, and Education students participated in a series of field experiences related to specific courses. In addition, departments consistently report high levels of an attribute that can be described as professional preparedness: preparation to perform the work required in a particular field. This indirect measure suggests the effectiveness of connected learning, with students engaged in the work of the field throughout their academic programs. Indirect evidence of the effectiveness of connected learning also comes from the Social Sciences Department in reporting on a required research methods course that historically has included both learning about the research process and applying that knowledge by conducting an experiment. When the instructor, seeking more class time for content, eliminated the application step, her students rated the class negatively and commented that it was “boring,” in a distinct departure from previous evaluations. The Communication Department finds indirect evidence in consistent reports from internship supervisors on the students’ strengths in writing and presentation. This indirect evidence is suggestive, but programs need to develop and implement additional direct and indirect measures.

- Second, the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Assembly, which conducts regular reviews of all undergraduate programs, completed an analysis of its review process and guidelines in May 2011. A substantial revision of the process will go into effect in 2012-2013 with creation of a new Program Review Committee, requiring that each program be reviewed every five years, and that the reports consistently include data such as program enrollment and graduation rates, and that reports incorporate a greater focus on the processes and measures of student learning assessment. The revised process also includes increased transparency and communication between the Curriculum Committee and department chairs, through meetings that are part of the review process and a website that gathers completed reports. Outcomes of this revised process should include more consistency in reporting and more structured dissemination of findings and recommendations.

- Third, Faculty, staff, and administrators have reviewed the Wabash Study data, identifying academic issues of rigor, communication, and student engagement in learning. Direct outcomes of the College’s participation in the study include the creation of the Teaching and Learning Center, which offers a variety of faculty development programs focused on best practices in improving student learning. Findings from the study results are also reflected in the year-long orientation program for new full-time faculty coordinated by the academic deans, in the six-week online orientation course for new graduate faculty facilitated by the Director of the Technology for Learning Center, and in the year-long orientation and faculty development program for adjunct faculty facilitated by the Director of the Teaching and Learning Center.

- Fourth, for the second year, Lasell departments assessed students’ level of competence with written communication.

Based on the results of the first assessment in 2010-2011, the following actions were implemented in 2011-2012:

- Writing was generally assessed in the senior capstone course using research papers of 10 or more pages written by individual students. However, some samples were drawn from 200 and 300 level courses, some were 1-3 pages long, and some were group products. This variation may be appropriate, but departments revisited their choices.

- As a result of their analysis, several departments acknowledged the need to articulate the expectations for the senior paper across their curriculum, introducing requisite skills as early as the first year. These changes were implemented in fall 2011. For example:
  - Sophomore Education students now locate, summarize, and properly cite research articles, a prerequisite skill for their senior capstone papers;
  - Social Sciences students now use both writing and speaking assignments to develop skills in presenting multiple viewpoints and supporting arguments with appropriate evidence.

- Use of evidence and sources is an area that needs further development. Representative actions include the following:
  - Justice Studies seniors will be required to use the *Writer’s Manual for Criminal Justice* in their capstone.
  - Marketing and Management will require students to attend workshops on APA format.
• Writing tutors in the Academic Achievement Center already collaborate with some departments, becoming familiar with prompts and disciplinary expectations in order to support students. Other departments (Justice Studies, for example) plan to identify specific tutors who will support their majors.

The faculty assessed writing skills across all departments again in 2011-2012, using the same common rubric. As departments prepared to assess their writing samples, faculty reviewed the rubric and recalibrated their scoring where needed to insure inter-rater consistency.

At this writing (August 30, 2012), department chairs have received detailed Excel reports of their second assessment of written communication. The results show that seven of the nine departments with results from both 2010-2011 and 2011-2012\(^1\) showed an increase in average scores year-to-year. The other two departments showed small decreases (from 2.35 to 2.21 and from 2.29 to 2.28). While this trend represents only two years’ worth of data, it is moving in the desired direction (See Appendix L: Writing Assessment 2011-2012).

In considering possible reasons for the improved scores, two major factors are likely at work.

• First, departments took several specific actions as a result of the assessment and analysis undertaken in spring and summer 2011. Several of these may have influenced the spring 2012 scores, while others may affect scores in the coming years.
  ➢ Actions that may have influenced spring 2012 scores included revising the assignment that was assessed to clarify expectations; shifting the assessment standard from writing that would be expected of a professional in the field to that expected of a Lasell graduate; providing more and more specific feedback; and introducing a two-semester capstone that allowed students greater opportunities to refine their writing.
  ➢ Actions with a longer-term influence included assessing writing in 100 and 200 level courses to identify areas where support is needed; introducing expectations for effective writing and research earlier in students’ coursework; and engaging department faculty in articulating where and how writing is taught and evaluated.

• Second, the greatly increased focus on writing in all departments and across the College may have led faculty to emphasize written communication in their teaching, whether or not students in their courses were directly assessed using the WAC rubric. Departments’ analysis of the spring 2011 assessment may have resulted in a more pervasive understanding of and focus on the standards for writing, with faculty incorporating these into their own standards and feedback to students.

At the same time that overall average scores were generally moving upward, two departments showed small decreases (from 2.29 to 2.28 and from 2.35 to 2.21) year to year. Although the first change is quite small, the department identified several factors that could be at work: a larger class size in 2012; students who exceeded the guidelines for paper length; students’ uncertainty about research writing; and a lack of consistent focus on research writing across courses. The second department assessed its writing samples in fall 2011, during its capstone course. In the previous academic year, assessment occurred in spring. It may be that the difference in semesters led to a variation in scores, with students having slightly less time to develop their skills. The department report also pointed to a change in assignment guidelines, with the spring 2011 papers expected to be more formal and research-oriented.

In response to the results, some actions to support continuing improvement of students’ writing skills have been identified in the 2012 departmental reports, including the following:
  • Establish a benchmark for each component measured on the rubric.
  • Introduce elements of the project that are assessed early in students’ coursework:
    o Completing smaller research-based writing projects;
    o Locating and synthesizing relevant research articles;

\(^1\) As of July 26, 2012, 3 departments did not have comparable results. One of these assessed writing, but used a different instrument; the others had no information in Moodle for 2011-2012.
Requiring appropriate citation format on all papers;
• Developing a checklist and timeline for submitting relevant components;
• Expand the capstone from one to two semesters to provide more time to refine written products;
• Pilot a discipline-specific course focused on writing;
• Require students to attend APA/MLA workshops offered at the college.

Because several of these actions are suggested by multiple departments, conversations with chairs will focus on providing support through the Teaching and Learning Center, the Library, and other College centers. Full discussion of the 2011-2012 results and future action plans will take place within and across departments in August and September, 2012. The faculty has already agreed to assess upper-level writing skills for a third time in 2012-2013.

Graduate Program Assessment
Assessment at the graduate level is in its initial stages. Faculty are following a process similar to that used successfully at the undergraduate level. As evidenced in the E1 forms, they are developing goals, outcomes, and rubrics, analyzing results, and implementing appropriate changes. Our short term goal was for each department to focus on Goal 1: Professional Communication, and to develop learning outcomes, rubrics for assessment, and a plan for collecting and analyzing data. Over the 2010 spring semester, Chairs worked with their faculty in developing outcomes and components for this goal. While the broad goal of Professional Communication remained constant across all disciplines, each degree program developed components that were specific to the professional growth of its students. Marketing/Management and Sport Management focused on students’ ability to develop a clear and well-organized paper using appropriate grammar conventions, related terminology, and appropriately cited sources; Communication focused on writing for a variety of media and audiences; and Education identified a licensure-related expectation for thorough, well-documented, and critically reflective lesson plans.

In fall 2010, Chairs developed rubrics for evaluating the outcomes for Goal 1, mapped the outcomes to courses, and created the plan for gathering data. Data was analyzed and evaluated in January, 2011, and an assessment report with action steps was developed by the Chairs of three graduate programs - Communication, Sport Management, and Management. Education was not included in this first round because no courses were delivered in fall 2010. From these three reports, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies developed a summary report with action steps based on the data collected.

1. Develop a closer relationship between the Academic Achievement Center and the Graduate Program. This should include extended evening hours for graduate students and the development of an online tutoring program. This may include partnering with an outside agency such as “Smarthinking.”
2. Develop workshops for graduate students on both writing skills and APA formatting. Many students have expressed an interest in having a refresher course in writing research and other types of papers. This could be developed in conjunction with the library or professors on the English faculty.
3. Develop a writing guide that students can access on Moodle. This guide could give them the basics of proper writing and direct them to various websites such as the OWL writing center which is an invaluable resource for students who want to improve their writing skills.
4. Explore technology that can be added to Moodle that would allow students to present online.
5. Continue to survey students in the programs and invite them to participate in focus groups to hear their experiences in the program and their own assessment of their progress within the area of professional communication. This can eventually be expanded to include all Graduate program goals.

In fall of 2010, Graduate and Professional Studies submitted a Substantive Change Report to NEASC. The Visiting Team released its substantive Change Report in spring 2011; in the report, the Team cited our assessment process as a concern and suggested an assessment program more directed to the graduate level. As a result, and over the 2011-2012 academic year, the Chairs of Management/Marketing, Education, Sport Management, and Communication met with the Dean of Graduate and Professional studies to reconceptualize program goals and outcomes. The result of these meetings was a set of goals that attended to the unique nature of the different
graduate programs and were also informed by themes of leadership, global awareness, communication, and critical reflection. Listed below are the Graduate goals by program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Assessment Goals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Communication: Interdisciplinary Approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Skills for Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural and Global Knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Research Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Professional Practice: Effective Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Variability and Diversity: Accommodating all learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inquiry and Research: Critical Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inquiry and Research: Practice-focused research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management/Marketing</td>
<td>Organizational Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managerial Self-Development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diversity and Global Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Management</td>
<td>Professional Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural Knowledge and Competency</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inquiry &amp; Research: Practice-focused Research</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
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</tbody>
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Thus far, each department has developed outcomes for each goal and has begun the work of developing competencies and rubrics that are mapped to outcomes. In the fall of 2012, each program will choose one goal and begin to collect data and assess student progress against the first outcome of that goal.

Currently there is no process in place for assessing the effects of alternative delivery methods on meeting student learning outcomes. Individually, through focus groups and current course evaluations, students do report satisfaction with course delivery. We have many courses that are offered in both hybrid and fully online delivery, so there is ample opportunity for direct assessment. Our program assessment, to date, does indicate that students are achieving the competencies defined by graduate programs; however, we have not yet combined these and evaluated whether delivery model impacts learning outcomes.

Part of the process for achieving this level of assessment is a review of our course evaluation process. Current evaluations are based on face to face delivery and do not reflect the unique nature of online or hybrid delivery. Together with the Chairs and the Director of Online Learning and Academic Technology, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies is researching best practices at other institutions. From this research, we will develop a course evaluation sensitive to online and hybrid delivery; this instrument will be submitted to the Graduate Committee for approval; the Committee will then bring the instrument and its recommendation to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Assembly for approval. Our goal is to test the new evaluation at the end of the fall semester and, after review, launch it in spring, 2013.

In addition, regular program assessment has been conducted on the graduate level since fall of 2010 although this has not been parsed based on course delivery model. In the fall of 2012, program assessment will explore student progress against goals, objectives, and competencies in general and more specifically and where achievable, by delivery model. Ideally, this will be best achieved by examining the same course taught in the fall both online and in hybrid model. Management is most likely to have such courses in one semester. Over the entire year, it is possible for both Management and Communication to conduct such assessment. Sport Management is taught fully online, so does not lend itself to this type of assessment. The Master’s in Education also does not have sufficient numbers yet to justify multiple delivery models for single courses.
Undergraduate Programs and Instruction

In the fall of 2011, Lasell College conducted its second strategic planning process to review the progress made toward the goals developed in 2007. As a result of this meeting, a new mission statement was crafted that more accurately reflects the purpose of the College’s existence: “Lasell College engages students in the practice of their fields of study through collaborative learning that fosters lifelong intellectual exploration and social responsibility.” While this new mission statement does not differ drastically from the previous, it does imply a new set of goals to which we will aspire over the next six years.

Steps taken to fulfill Vision 2017 goals include strengthening of internship programs, movement toward 100 percent use of Moodle in undergraduate and graduate courses, and a focus on connecting students with study abroad opportunities. Although Lasell is not limited to the projections listed, these items are what we believe will continue to help improve the student experience and enhance the image of Lasell College in the future. Internship opportunities for students are a strength of the College with all students being required to complete at least one internship. We have demonstrated its commitment to these programs with the hiring of a new Director of Internship Programs. Over the next six years, we project that there will be additional coordination of internships with the Office of Career Services. We also anticipate greater collaboration between the College and various partnering organizations to develop more robust internship opportunities for students. We expect to expand the summer internship program launched in the summer of 2012, which includes an online course and permits students to complete internships over the summer when they have more time, while also receiving appropriate supervision and support from the College.

Another strength of the College is the commitment to innovative course design and delivery. One area that has been targeted for growth is the use of Moodle by undergraduate faculty. While some undergraduate faculty currently utilize Moodle to deliver course materials, students have expressed the desire for more use of Moodle by faculty, resulting in an initiative to increase faculty use of Moodle to 100 percent by 2017. This initiative will include increased training for faculty to ensure that they are proficient with the technology. We also expect to launch a new online undergraduate degree completion program in summer 2013.

Currently, Fashion is considered to be the College’s signature program and attracts the highest number of students. The programs within the Fashion Department - Fashion Design and Production, Fashion Retail and Merchandising, and Fashion Communication and Production - are clearly great strengths of the College. Recognizing the importance of signature programs to the health and growth of the institution, Lasell will identify two additional programs as signature programs. These new signature programs may be existing programs that are revised to attract a greater number of students or entirely new programs for the College. The first of these is expected to be identified during the fall 2012 term.

As the College has a commitment to continuous improvement, the faculty continues to review and examine the curricular credit structure. The new Strategic Plan has set the goal of defining the credit/curricular structure that is optimal for delivering on our educational philosophy of connected learning. Department chairs have begun to engage faculty in thoughtful and creative deliberation on this issue. The goal of current discussions is to identify the components of an ideal curricular platform for a challenging education that embodies the principles of connected learning. Any new curricular structure will support the involvement of students in the practice of their field of study so that they are immersed in connections between what they are learning and events, issues, and problems occurring beyond the walls of the classroom.

Undergraduate Program Assessment

Appraisal of the College’s current academic program assessment efforts suggests several actions for the coming years.

- *Raise levels of academic rigor in coursework, beginning with first-year courses.* Responses from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education raised this concern, also found in student comments on course
evaluations and the annual First Impressions and Student Satisfaction Surveys. Academic rigor was also listed as a weakness in the fall 2011 Strategic Plan. The College has implemented a number of initiatives to address this concern, including programming in the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), extended and required professional development for new full-time and part-time faculty, and additional support for instructors of First Year Seminars. These initiatives will continue, with plans to expand faculty development programming in the TLC and the Technology for Learning Center, explore ways in which the College’s credit structure can better integrate connected learning, and revise the general education/core curriculum to reflect interdisciplinary perspectives. The implementation of a revised General Education curriculum that is more integrative and interdisciplinary will also contribute to increased academic rigor for Lasell undergraduates.

- **Expand institution-wide assessment efforts.** Currently, the faculty assesses written communication across the College using a common rubric. Future college-wide efforts will focus on the other across-the-curriculum initiatives: speaking/presentation, research, and technology. As these efforts are implemented, specific steps to close the loop are needed. For example, the initial assessment of written communication suggested such steps as better articulation of competencies addressed in the first-year writing program (ENG 101 and 102), department-specific support in the Academic Achievement Center, and additional instruction in citing and formatting documents according to APA, MLA, or other guidelines.

- **Greater understanding of graduates’ job placements.** Current information is incomplete and relies on graduates’ self-reporting. More complete data could provide insight into common career paths and graduate education, perhaps suggesting program modifications to improve marketability of program completers, as well as developing area networks to support academic programming.

**Graduate Program Assessment**

In fall 2010, the College held a strategic planning retreat for faculty, staff, students, and administrators involved with the graduate programs. The priorities established during the retreat, as well as ongoing planning and assessment within and across departments, provided information for a NEASC substantive change report and site visit in spring 2011. The following actions incorporate feedback from the NEASC visiting team, discussions at the strategic planning retreat, and ongoing meetings among graduate faculty.

- **Continue work on Graduate Program Goals.** We need to continue our efforts to assess graduate students’ performance and progress against program goals effectively. Our work must reflect the skills and knowledge necessary for graduate students to be successful in their chosen careers and our goals must be tied to course level learning outcomes, which should be clearly communicated through course syllabi.

- **Develop plans for full assessment of goals and outcomes.** At this point, based on our reformulated Graduate Program Goals, each program will begin to collect data in the fall. Programs should articulate their timetables for assessing additional goals, similar to the process followed at the undergraduate level. Although some technological needs exist (for instance, recording presentations made by off-campus students), assessment data are essential to continued program growth and viability.

- **Establish that learning outcomes are constant across delivery methods.** The ability to establish that course delivery modality does not adversely impact student learning outcomes is critical, especially as we move more forcefully into the online market.

- **Take actions that close the loop, based on program and course assessment.** Although assessment is still in its beginning stages, actions are already possible. Initial assessment of written communication, for example, suggests several needs.
  - Expand academic support for online graduate students to include weekends, winter break, and summer.
  - Offer online tutorials and workshops on writing skills and APA formatting, with related guides that students can access through Moodle.
  - Provide examples of high-level written products, also accessible through Moodle.

**Graduate and Online Program Development**

The College has identified the launch of four new graduate degree programs and a bachelor’s degree completion program with accompanying enrollments of five hundred and one hundred respectively as goals for Vision 2017. We are considering the following:
• **Professional Masters in Business Administration.** We are projecting a fall 2013 launch. We will develop and submit our proposal for this new Master’s to the state in the fall of 2012. The program proposal suggests incorporating four existing courses from our current Masters in Management and developing nine new courses (three of which will be electives). We will begin to develop the nine new courses in late fall 2012 and throughout the spring and summer of 2013.

• **Master of Science in Hospitality and Event Management.** In the summer of 2012, we began to explore this degree program. We already have a growing undergraduate degree program in hospitality and there is interest among our undergraduate students to continue their education. We feel this is a strong contender for implementation and our projected launch date is fall of 2013.

• **Masters in Health Care Management.** We are currently researching the viability of this degree. We project making a decision on this degree by the end of fall 2012. If we do decide to pursue, we project a fall 2014 launch.

• **Master of Science in Athletic Training.** Currently we have three possible graduate degrees under consideration: Rehabilitative Services; Entry Level Athletic Training; Strength & Conditioning. We are continuing to discuss their viability and will decide by mid-fall 2012 the order of priority. We feel we could launch a Master’s in this discipline by spring of 2015.

• **Master of Science in Criminal Justice.** We are just at the discussion phase for a Master’s in Criminal Justice. We have some questions about specific area of focus within this field and specific populations that would be attracted to such a graduate degree. Conversations with the Chair of Justice Studies will continue in the fall of 2012.

• **Other Master of Science Degrees.** We are also exploring fashion and psychology as potential degree programs. We plan to continue conversations in AY13 and come to a decision on their viability by the end of the spring semester, 2013.

In addition to these graduate degrees, we are developing bachelor’s degree completion programs in the following areas:

• **Bachelor’s of Business Administration.** This degree is projected to launch in summer of 2013. In September of 2012, the program will be submitted to our Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for approval. The majority of the program consists of courses already developed and offered at Lasell. Two new courses will be developed to support this program: an Introductory Seminar and a course in Managing Effective Teams. Full-time and part-time business faculty will begin course development in the fall of 2012. In addition, representatives from IT, the Registrar, Student Accounts, Financial Aid, and Admissions, along with the Deans of Undergraduate Education and Graduate and Professional Studies have been meeting weekly to develop systems to meet the needs of an adult undergraduate (online) population, as well as enhance existing systems to support all online students.

• **Bachelor’s of Interdisciplinary Studies.** This degree is projected to launch in fall of 2013. In the fall of 2012, the program of study will be submitted to the curriculum committee and faculty will be identified by the Chairs of Humanities, Math/Science, and Social Science to begin migrating courses to meet the needs of an adult online population.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Lasell has established a culture of assessment, with all faculty involved in establishing goals and outcomes for student learning in all academic major programs, analyzing assessment results, and modifying course content and design based on those data. These efforts have full support from the College administration, which provides time and technology resources to collect and report results efficiently. At the undergraduate level, college faculty launched a similar assessment process for across-the-curriculum skills, beginning with written communication in spring 2011. Consistent with the focus on thoughtful use of data, a new faculty committee has been established to focus specifically on five-year program reviews using a revised process that places assessment at its core. At the graduate level, program assessment will follow similar steps. Lasell continues to close the loop with assessment, with substantive changes to academic programs already in place and additional changes in process. These changes grow from assessment findings and will rely on continuing analysis to maintain programs’ quality, integrity, and effectiveness.
STANDARD FIVE: FACULTY

DESCRIPTION

Faculty Rank and Degrees Earned
Of the 79 full-time faculty employed at the start of academic year 2012-2013, 62 percent (n=49) had doctoral degrees, compared to 43 percent in 2002. 14 percent (n=11) held professionally recognized terminal degrees (MBA, MFA, or JD). In addition, four percent (n=3) are currently enrolled in doctoral programs. Lasell has made 74 full-time faculty hires since the start of fall 2002. Over 80 percent of these individuals either had their doctoral degrees at the time they were hired or, with College support, completed them soon after. Currently, nine percent (n=7) hold the rank of full professor, 40 percent (n=32) are associate professors, and 50 percent (n=40) are assistant professors. Lasell’s adjunct faculty population averages approximately 100 per semester. Adjunct faculty are ranked as lecturers or senior lecturers; the title of senior lecturer may be assigned to a part-time faculty member in recognition of distinguished teaching service to the College, its students, and its faculty over a period of at least five years. The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) assigns this title upon the recommendation of the department chair.

When a new faculty position opens, the Human Resources Department, in collaboration with the faculty committee called to complete the search, follows a standard procedure. All new faculty positions are posted on HigherEdJobs.com, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Lasell College’s external website, and discipline-specific employment bulletins. Candidates for faculty positions are also recruited through discipline-specific networking, postings at local graduate schools, or personal referrals. All applicants are required to send CVs to the Human Resources Department; all CVs are then forwarded to the chair of the faculty search committee. Search committees are chaired by a full-time faculty member (excluding department chairs) and include four to five other faculty members, including a Center Director. Preliminary interviews are conducted by telephone; finalists are asked to visit the college for personal interviews. After interviewing the finalists, the committee makes a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and to the President. Together, the President and the VPAA decide whether to hire the recommended candidate.

The College is deeply committed to diversity in its faculty and pursues diversity through deliberate recruitment and by maintaining the principle that the finalist pool for any search should be diverse. As a consequence, 17 (46 percent) of the 39[40] new faculty hires over the past five years have been nonwhite or international; those 17 hires include five African Americans, three Latino, and four Asian faculty members, as well as five new faculty members from the Middle East or Eastern Europe.

Salary and Contract Security
Lasell College continues to adjust salaries to maintain a salary range commensurate with the market average. The average base salary is $81,700 for a full professor, $71,000 for an associate professor, and $59,500 for an assistant professor. Faculty overload pay per credit was at the starting rate for adjunct salary each year; effective this year, it is now paid at the top rate (third level), which is currently $1000 per credit. AY 2011-2012 average faculty salary by rank (full, associate, assistant) was in the midrange of those colleges and universities with which the College compares itself regionally. Nationally, Lasell was in the 60th percentile for full professor salary, the 75th percentile for associate professor, and the 74th percentile for assistant professor during AY 2011-2012. All faculty members, both full-time and adjunct, are provided with a written letter of agreement detailing the terms of the appointment.

Adjunct faculty members are contracted for one semester at a time, and they may teach up to nine credits per semester. Adjunct performance is regularly monitored by the chair of the respective department through classroom observations, individual meetings, and review of student course evaluations. Lasell has been making incremental increases in adjunct faculty salary since 2002; the starting rate has increased from $600/credit in 2002 to $900/credit in 2012. The College provides adjunct faculty members with office space, computer and telephone access, and a campus mailbox located in or near the department with which they are affiliated. Lasell College has developed a part-time faculty handbook, available through the College’s Intranet. Although for many years, we have provided an orientation for adjunct faculty just before the start of the fall semester, the academic
administration has become aware of the need for additional support and training for part-time faculty; to meet this need, the Teaching and Learning Center has developed a workshop series that offers both online and live components (additional description of these workshops is provided in the Teaching and Learning Center section).

Full-time faculty contract periods increase over time. New full-time faculty members sign a one-year contract. Upon completion of the first semester, a second one-year contract is granted following a successful review. As stated in the Lasell College Full-Time Faculty Handbook, contract security increases after two years. After completing a second teaching year at the College, a full-time faculty member will begin to enter into multiyear contracts: two consecutive three-year contracts, followed by five-year contracts. At the end of every contract period, full-time faculty members write an extensive self-assessment and submit it to department chairs (additional description of this process is provided in the Faculty Assessment section). The Vice President for Academic Affairs considers the self-assessment and the direct supervisor evaluation as the faculty member prepares to move to the next contractual level.

Full-time faculty members are eligible to apply for promotion after completing six full years at their current rank. The promotion process involves the creation of a dossier that the candidate submits to the department chair, who then forwards it with a recommendation to the Promotions Committee, the VPAA, and the candidate (if a department chair is applying for promotion, the dossier is submitted directly to the VPAA). The Promotions Committee examines the dossier and then forwards it with a recommendation to the VPAA. The candidate receives the Committee’s recommendation as well; the VPAA then reviews the dossier and the recommendation, in consultation with the academic deans. The VPAA and the President make a joint recommendation to the Board of Trustees; the Board votes on all faculty promotions at its annual end-of-year meeting. If the Board approves, the faculty member’s new rank takes effect the following September.

Faculty Workload, Instruction, Institutional Involvement, and Professional Development

Full-time faculty have three main areas of responsibility: teaching excellence, institutional involvement, and scholarship/professional development. The full-time faculty workload comprises activities in these three areas. With respect to teaching, full-time faculty are required to teach 12 credit hours each semester, hold one office hour for every three credits taught, and advise an average of 25 students each academic year. Department chairs and program directors have varying administrative course releases. Department chairs’ special responsibilities include but are not limited to the hiring of adjunct faculty, the scheduling of courses, curriculum and program reviews, course scheduling at new student orientation, and faculty assessment reports (including the observation and evaluation of full-time faculty). Chairs of departments that include graduate programs are responsible for overseeing both the undergraduate and the graduate programs.

As stated in the handbook, institutional involvement may include but is not limited to service on committees, planning and/or participation in curriculum-related or extracurricular student activities outside typical class hours, representation of the College to the larger regional/national/international community, or service to the Lasell Village community. With respect to committee involvement, full-time faculty are encouraged after their first year to serve on a committee involved directly or indirectly with faculty governance. In 2011-2012, roughly 51 percent (n=37) of full-time faculty worked in some capacity on faculty governance committees.

Faculty Handbook

Lasell College maintains two faculty handbooks, one for full-time faculty and one for part-time faculty; the handbooks are easily accessible through the College’s Intranet. The Handbook articulates guidelines for recruitment, appointment, evaluation, and promotion of the faculty in a well-organized format. The handbooks also delineate all expectations and academic processes; content directly reflects the College’s mission statement, particularly in the area of teaching excellence. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly by both the VPAA and the Professional Affairs Committee (PAC); open discussion is promoted, and there are avenues for fair and equitable redress of grievances.
Faculty Governance and Committee Work

Through the Faculty Assembly, the full-time faculty governs itself and creates and revises academic policies and procedures. The Faculty Assembly meets three to four times per semester, with roughly 90 percent of full-time faculty in attendance at each meeting. The College has long had five standing committees: Academic Standards, Curriculum Committee, Graduate Committee, Professional Affairs, and Professional Development; in AY2011-2012, the faculty voted to add a Program Review Committee. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Assembly comprises the chair, the vice chair, the immediate past chair, the secretary, and the treasurer of the Faculty Assembly, as well as the chairs of the five standing committees. Section 2.3 in the faculty handbook offers a description of each committee.

The chairperson of Academic Standards is responsible for forming the ad hoc Academic Grievance Committee, which reviews student academic grievances according to the procedures described in the Lasell student handbook. The Academic Grievance Committee consists of two faculty members from the Academic Standards Committee, two student representatives appointed by Student Government, and the chair of the Academic Standards Committee. Two members of Academic Standards also serve on the Academic Review Committee. This committee is chaired by the Dean of Advising and First Year Programs and includes the Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Registrar, the Director of the Academic Achievement Center, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and two faculty members from the Academic Standards Committee. The committee meets at the end of each semester to review the progress of students who may not be fulfilling the requirements to maintain good academic standing; at each meeting, it makes decisions on probation and suspension.

The Academic Grievance Committee on the graduate level is chaired by the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies. The Dean review students’ academic progress at the end of each semester and in consultation with Department Chairs, the Registrar and the Associate Director of Graduate Students Services, makes decision on probation and suspension.

The Nominating Committee nominates a slate of faculty officers to serve for one year and nominates committee members for two-year terms; it also nominates members to fill committee vacancies, nominates candidates for newly formed committees as the need arises, and maintains records of election procedures. The Promotions Committee reviews the dossiers of candidates for promotion in rank and submits a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for each candidate. At the Committee’s initial meeting each spring, the VPAA charges the committee by clarifying and reviewing its goals and procedures.

Full-time faculty members also serve as elected representatives in several areas. Faculty serve as nonvoting members on each of the standing committees of the Board of Trustees: Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Institutional Advancement. In addition, one full-time faculty member is elected as the faculty athletic representative (FAR). The FAR serves as the College’s designated institutional representative to the NCAA and acts as a liaison between the faculty and the Director of Athletics. Two full-time faculty members serve on the Student Success Committee, which works to increase student cohort retention rates and improve the quality of student life at Lasell. The Student Success Committee is chaired by the Registrar and includes the Dean of Advising and First-Year Programs, the Dean of Student Affairs, the Director of Student Activities, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, the Director of Athletics, and two full-time faculty members.

Academic Advising

The Dean of Advising and First-Year Programs coordinates advising for the College. Each faculty member is assigned students to advise each year; when possible, advisees are majors in the faculty member’s discipline. As stated in the handbook, an effective advisor may work with students to plan an educational program consistent with their majors, monitor and evaluate advisees’ educational progress, develop/formulate educational and career goals, understand/communicate the college requirements for good academic standing, advise during preregistration and registration periods, and guide an advisee toward appropriate supports and resources when necessary. Advisors are expected to have contact with advisees at least twice each semester. As discussed further
under Appraisal and Projection, the College has invested in a new professional advising model for all first year students.

Graduate students are advised by several full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff members. One full-time faculty member and one adjunct faculty member advise 35 graduate students each. In addition, certain department chairs advise undergraduate as well as graduate students. The Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and the Associate Director of Graduate Student Services also advise. The College has recently entered into an agreement with Greenwood and Hall for the advising of graduate students whom they recruit and bring to Lasell for online degree programs.

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity
Scholarship and professional development represent one of the three main areas of obligation for Lasell College’s full-time faculty. Evidence of involvement as a professional practitioner in one’s academic field, of active participation in organizations or agencies, and/or of scholarship is expected for satisfactory performance in this area. Lasell faculty are deeply involved in scholarship and professional development activities. Faculty spotlights showcase the work of several faculty members each semester, and these are well attended by the Lasell community. These presentations demonstrate a wide range of faculty professional involvement. This increased level of scholarly activity has enhanced Lasell College’s ability to recruit and add active scholars to the faculty.

Through the VPAA, funds are available to full-time faculty to offset travel costs for research presentation; these funds also support faculty in their continuing education and/or certification activities. Lasell faculty pursuing terminal degrees may also be eligible for grants from the Weber Fund, designated for faculty pursuing doctoral degrees. The College also has a three-year rotating professorship: the Joan Weiler Arnow Professorship was established by Robert and Joan Weiler Arnow ’49 to provide support for a scholar-teacher whose commitment to teaching and personal interest in students enhances student learning and makes a significant contribution to the Lasell community.

Annually, the College grants up to three sabbatical leaves for full-time faculty. In order to be awarded a sabbatical leave, a faculty member must have completed his/her sixth year of full-time service to the College when the sabbatical leave begins. Faculty are eligible for a sabbatical every seven years. Faculty may apply for either a one-semester or a full-year sabbatical; a sabbatical leave provides a faculty member with the opportunity to focus on an area of professional development in a way that is consistent with the goals and needs of the institution.

In addition to support for research projects and travel to conferences, the College has instituted an array of pedagogical innovations through internally or externally funded grant programs, including a series of three-year Davis Educational Foundation Grants. The first such grant focused on technology across the curriculum, the second on infusing first- and second-year curricula with project-focused learning, and the third (completed in May 2012) on research across the curriculum. Each of these grant awards emphasized faculty leadership and development, and the College sustained the grant-funded activities through the regular operating budget after the grant period expired. For instance, the second Davis Grant funded a faculty connected learning organizer who oversaw funding for pedagogical mini-grants and planned the Connected Learning Symposium. The College has maintained this position and now funds it internally. Lasell’s commitment to its faculty has resulted in an increased quality of connected learning pedagogy as Lasell College continues to develop its teacher/scholar faculty model.

The faculty has developed several Across the Curriculum initiatives, including Writing, Speaking, and Research Across the Curriculum, in addition to promoting the connected learning philosophy that extends throughout the curriculum. In each program of study, at least one lower-level (100/200-level) and one upper-level (300/400-level) course is designated as writing intensive; these courses are identified in the course catalog. Along the same lines, academic departments designate courses as speaking intensive; however, these designations are not yet included in the catalog.
The Research Across the Curriculum (RAC) initiative completed its third year of a three-year grant funded by the Davis Educational Foundation (funded in spring 2009). This grant was designed to integrate undergraduate research through the curriculum and deepen our connected learning educational approach. This faculty development grant was driven by Lasell’s commitment to faculty leadership powering curricular planning, generating innovation, and promoting sustainable change. Faculty are awarded grants for developing new research projects within an existing curriculum, for redefining a curriculum to infuse it with research, and for supervising/mentoring undergraduate research scholars.

Full-time and adjunct faculty members from many departments have been using a variety of formats to engage undergraduate students actively in the research process. Faculty have supervised one- or two-credit lab courses, developed research-focused honors components, and embedded research projects in courses. Students have participated in all aspects of the research process, including the review of current and past literature, the application for IRB approval, data collection, analysis of results, presentation of results at regional conferences, and the submission of research findings for publication. For example, faculty members in the Department of Social Sciences have supervised students on several projects ranging from an analysis of students’ attributions toward victims of domestic violence to an investigation of the effects of social persuasion on energy use in dormitories. In addition to involving students in research projects in academic courses, faculty members in the Department of Athletic Training and Exercise Science have mentored one undergraduate student through the development of a clinical case study that has been presented at the Eastern Athletic Trainers’ Association annual meeting in Boston and submitted for consideration by the Journal of Athletic Training. These examples illustrate the range of ways in which College faculty members apply the connected learning philosophy in the context of student research.

Lasell College also continues to support its connected learning philosophy through internally funded faculty grants. Faculty who teach at both the undergraduate and graduate levels are awarded grants for developing new connected learning projects within an existing curriculum or for a major revision of an existing course to infuse connected learning throughout its curriculum. The committee that determines funding for the RAC grants consists of full-time faculty, the Dean of Undergraduate Education, and the VPAA. Connected learning granting decisions are made by the Connected Learning Organizer (a full-time faculty member), in consultation with the VPAA. Lasell’s connected learning philosophy, actualized through faculty-driven initiatives, has evolved dramatically during the past ten years. The connected learning symposium was initially a yearly event, coordinated by up to three faculty members. After several years, a fall symposium was created to complement the spring symposium; one faculty member was selected as Faculty Symposium Coordinator. Most courses soon had connected learning projects and/or presentations build into their syllabi and course curricula. The symposium has now expanded into a weekend event each semester, culminating with one day dedicated entirely to connected learning projects, poster sessions, and presentations. Exit surveys were instituted to assess each symposium’s effectiveness, and these results helped to improve subsequent symposia.

Institutional review policies for the protection of human subjects are established and clearly communicated. In grant application materials for both RAC and Connected Learning grants, faculty are reminded that approval by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) is required before any data are collected. Additional information about the CPHS can be accessed by all faculty through Moodle (Lasell’s course management system). The voting members of the CPHS committee comprise full-time faculty, one representative from the Barn (the Lasell College daycare center), the Dean of Lasell Village (the Lasell College senior citizen housing community), and one community representative.

Professional Development

In addition to supporting faculty in pursuit of their disciplinary scholarly interests and projects, Lasell also supports the professional development of its faculty by funding attendance at regional and national conferences on assessment and pedagogy. Most notably, over the last five years, the College has regularly sent groups of faculty to conferences and workshops offered by the New England Faculty Development Consortium (NEFDC), the New England Educational Assessment Network (NEEAN), and the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U). Faculty have presented at several NEEAN events, and faculty teams of between 3 and 10 members
attended NEEAN’s Summer Institute each of the five years from 2007 through 2011. In the summer of 2012, a team of five Lasell faculty and 1 administrator attended the AAC&U Summer Institute on Integrative Learning and the Departments, and two faculty members, as well as the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, are participating as a team in the Council of Independent Colleges’ (CIC) 2012-2013 Engaging Evidence Consortium.

Lasell full-time faculty are required to attend faculty development workshops; adjunct faculty are invited and are provided a small stipend for attending. These faculty development workshops are held three times during the academic year: in September (prior to the start of the fall semester), in January (prior to the start of the spring semester), and in May (just after the conclusion of the spring semester). The purpose and emphasis of these workshops vary, but several common themes predominate, the primary being curriculum assessment.

Teaching and Learning Center (TLC)
The TLC was launched in September 2010 to address findings in reports from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (referenced under Standard Four), as described further under Appraisal below. The TLC’s mission is to engage faculty in conversations and practices that support student learning and hold learners to high standards. The center director is a full-time faculty member; this duty accounts for 25 percent of her faculty workload. In its work, the TLC builds on two major considerations at the College in both undergraduate and graduate programs. The first is an emphasis on teaching that engages students in the work of their career field and cultivates the habits of mind that distinguish a profession. The second is an organic approach to assessment, under which faculty identify outcomes appropriate to their disciplines, measure student and program success, and integrate results into courses and curricula. With a growing faculty and expanding academic programs, the Center fulfills a need for faculty support through professional development, support for chairs in undergraduate and graduate curriculum development and modification, and department support in the integration of across-the-curriculum skills in department courses.

Lasell College’s Teaching and Learning Center engages faculty in identifying and implementing teaching strategies that support student learning in a connected learning environment. It fosters a campus-wide climate that sustains Lasell’s focus on excellent teaching through shared inquiry, assessment, and reflection across departments and across the curriculum. For undergraduate and graduate programs, the TLC provides professional development and teaching resources, supports full-time and part-time faculty in integrating diverse methods (such as technology and discussion) and teaching styles (in response to different learning styles) in their teaching, and encourages ongoing inquiry into teaching effectiveness.

The TLC is responsible for the administration of the College’s learning management system, Moodle, and supports full-time and part-time faculty use of Moodle through a diverse set of professional development opportunities that involve one-on-one training, workshops, summer and winter camps, and written or videotaped training materials. The TLC also supports the development of online and hybrid courses offered by Graduate and Professional Studies through its online faculty certification process.

As described in greater detail in Standard Four, the College provides additional support and resources for faculty professional development through the Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies, the Holway Childcare Centers, the Donahue Center for Values in Public Life, and the Center for Community-based Learning.

Faculty Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness
As stated in the faculty handbook, all full-time faculty members must complete a self-assessment at the end of each academic year. This report focuses on the three areas featured in faculty workload: teaching excellence, institutional and administrative involvement, and scholarship/professional development. In addition, a planning statement is included. In this statement, the faculty member details areas of projected improvement, future plans, and goals. With regard to teaching excellence, the VPAA will read the faculty member’s self-assessment, in addition to department chair/peer classroom evaluations and student evaluations, when assessing a faculty member’s overall performance in this area. The VPAA will also review the faculty member’s self-assessment in
evaluating institutional and administrative involvement, as well as scholarship and professional development activities.

**Faculty Training for Online Teaching**

In spring 2009, the College’s Graduate Program Committee adopted a set of expectations for faculty teaching in the graduate program. Professional development in support of these expectations focuses on effective practices in two areas: teaching at the graduate level and use of an online teaching and course management system.

Direct support for online teaching using Moodle is provided through the RoseMary B. Fuss Teaching and Learning Center. All graduate courses are taught in either online or hybrid format; the College expects graduate faculty to participate in related professional development before teaching graduate courses and to continue their professional development while they teach. To support this, we have developed a six-week online orientation course. This course exposes faculty to the Moodle course management system and provides experience with essential elements of online teaching, including discussion boards, group projects, techniques of identifying and uploading adjunct teaching materials to the online platform, and live chats. All faculty who wish to teach in the graduate programs are required to take this course.

Faculty are compensated $2000 for online or hybrid course development, which begins within the orientation course. After completing the course, faculty work individually with an instructional technologist who assists faculty members in building their courses within the Moodle platform.

In addition, the TLC offers technology camps during the summer and winter breaks; these camps further expose faculty to technological tools and online pedagogical innovations. The TLC also sends out weekly Moodle Tips that are designed to assist faculty in improving their online teaching.

**APPRAISAL**

According to the College’s mission statement, “Lasell College engages students in the practice of their fields of study through collaborative learning that fosters lifelong intellectual exploration and social responsibility.” Institutional support for faculty in the areas of teaching, advising, scholarship, and professional development promotes faculty creativity and autonomy, as faculty members engage all students in accordance with this mission.

**Full-Time Faculty Growth**

Lasell College’s 2007 strategic plan proposed that by 2012, full-time faculty would teach 67 percent of undergraduate courses. Follow-up strategic planning meetings included an additional goal: full-time faculty will teach 50 percent of graduate courses. Based on undergraduate enrollment increases, the College anticipated that achievement of these goals would require between 90 and 100 full-time faculty members. Although the College has not achieved this goal, the current numbers reflect a marked increase. At the start of the 2012-2013 academic year, the College employed 79 full-time faculty members (three of whom are one-year visiting faculty), over double the 37 full-time faculty members at Lasell College in 2002. Although the College reported a count of 41 full-time faculty members in the 2002 NEASC self-study, three of the faculty included in that count were academic deans, and one was an instructional technologist. These positions are no longer included in the full-time faculty figure. Full-time or adjunct faculty teach 100 percent of the courses at Lasell; the College does not utilize graduate assistants to teach classes or lab sections.

The biggest obstacle to the achievement of our full-time course coverage goal is the continued growth of the student body, which reached its highest level of 1,600 undergraduate students in 2010-2011. Although undergraduate enrollment, at 1,507, was down slightly in 2011-2012, the graduate enrollment reached a new high (208 students in fall 2011); the current academic year will see a significant increase in the student body as the incoming class is the largest in the history of the College. As this denominator grows, it is more difficult to increase the percentage of credit coverage by full-time faculty. In 2011-2012, full-time faculty had just over 55 percent credit coverage at the undergraduate level, and it was just under 40 percent at the graduate level. The undergraduate student body at Lasell is expected to plateau at approximately 1,800. As the full-time faculty
continues to grow toward a target level of 90 to 100 members, the level of credit coverage should reach the undergraduate and graduate goals within the next few years.

**Faculty Workload and Compensation**

Lasell College considers it a top priority to provide financial and instructional support for faculty members, in order to facilitate their engagement in the mission goal of providing student-focused education that prepares students to enter their chosen fields and become lifelong learners. Lasell College periodically reviews and improves its policies in order to support faculty teaching, advising, institutional involvement, and overall responsibilities more fully. Recent increases in student enrollment and in full-time and part-time faculty to support that enrollment have led to increased institutional support for faculty development and training programs.

The current faculty workload and credit structure need to be reevaluated, given increased engagement on the part of current faculty in pedagogical initiatives and scholarly activities. There is a strong feeling among the faculty that the 4/4 faculty workload is heavy, especially given the increase in academic initiatives over the past several years. The current responsibilities and workload of department chairs, especially those with both undergraduate and graduate programs and those who oversee programs with external accreditation agencies, have been reevaluated, and starting in AY2012-2013, all department chairs will receive stipends of $2000 in addition to their course releases, which are commensurate with department size and the kinds of variable responsibilities just mentioned.

Although no model is currently in place to allow for release time (i.e., course release) for faculty conducting research, all full-time faculty are allowed one weekly professional day. The allowance for an undergraduate research assistant, through Davis Educational Foundation funding, has allowed some faculty to pursue additional research in their fields. The effort to increase financial support for faculty who want to stay current in their field is also reflected in the fall 2011 inclusion of professional membership fees as a line item in all departmental budgets. This move will help to offset out-of-pocket costs for faculty.

The College’s advising model is constantly being evaluated. One professional advisor was hired at the start of academic year 2010-2011 to advise first-year undeclared and international students. In addition to the positive impact on first-year students, the presence of the professional advisor permitted a decrease in the average advising load for full-time faculty. In academic year 2009-2010, the year prior to the professional advisor’s hire, the average advising load for full-time faculty stood at 24 for those with upperclass advisees and 19 for those advising freshmen. In academic year 2010-2011, with the professional advisor’s hire, the average advising load for full-time faculty decreased to 23 for those with upperclass advisees and 15 for those advising freshmen, despite the fact that undergraduate enrollment peaked at 1600 students during that year. In academic year 2011-2012, the average advising load for full-time faculty stood at 22 for those with upperclass advisees and 16 for those advising freshmen. The College has hired three additional professional advisors for first-year students to begin in AY2012-2013, which will have a positive trickledown effect, further and more consistently reducing advising loads and allowing faculty to devote more time to their teaching, as well as to advising and mentoring students in their majors.

Average full-time faculty salary by rank (full, associate, and assistant professor levels) is in the 75th percentile among Category IIB (Baccalaureate-emphasis) colleges and universities; however, Lasell’s salaries fall in the mid-range of New England colleges and universities against which the College compares itself. Despite increases during the past decade, adjunct faculty salary per credit is below the midpoint salary level of Lasell’s peers.

**Teaching Effectiveness**

In 2011, and for the third year in a row, Lasell College was recognized as a Great College to Work For by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*: In 2010, Lasell was recognized in the categories of professional/career-development programs, teaching environment, and supervisor or department-chair relationship. Lasell has also been ranked a Great School at a Great Price (ranked ninth) and a Best Regional College (ranked twenty-fifth in the North category) by *US News and World Report*. In addition, Lasell annually recognizes innovative accomplishments of faculty and staff members with awards for excellence in educational leadership.
Lasell College has learned a great deal about itself and its students through the Wabash Study of Liberal Arts Education, “a large-scale, longitudinal study to investigate critical factors that affect the outcomes of liberal arts education.” As discussed in Standard Four, the College’s primary response to the preliminary Wabash Study findings (we are awaiting the results of the Spring, 2012 administration) was the creation of the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), which has promoted several on-campus workshops and structured activities related to best practices in teaching and the enhancement of academic rigor. The TLC approaches pedagogy in a very broad sense, exploring principles and strategies that research shows to be effective and focusing on areas such as clarity of communication, syllabus design, student-faculty interaction, establishment of high expectations, infusion of rigor in a course, and meaningful (early, frequent, and substantive) student evaluation. The TLC also uses the lens of instructional technology to approach many of the same issues, recognizing that Lasell students are digital natives and that technology offers a wealth of opportunities to move learning into life.

Lasell College initiated online student course evaluations in spring 2009, at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Course evaluations were previously completed in paper format during class time; average response rate using this method fluctuated between 77 and 85 percent. The switch to an online format was undertaken in order to save class time and to remain consistent with Lasell’s commitment to environmental responsibility. In the transition to the online format, the course evaluations were revised to reduce redundancy in questions, decrease the number of questions, and encourage comment through open-ended items. Response rate at the undergraduate level was 37 percent during the first semester of the new system (spring 2009). In fall 2009, the course evaluations were promoted on MyLasell as well as through campus flyers, cafeteria napkin holders, TV message boards, and the Moodle login page. Faculty could also view the percent of students who had completed the evaluation and were urged to use that information to encourage greater response rates in their classes. Additionally, in fall 2009, with the institution of an early-grade incentive, 54 percent of students completed online course evaluations. In spring 2010, 72 percent of undergraduates completed at least one course evaluation; in fall 2010, response was at 65 percent, and has remained at 66 to 67 percent since then. A new social media promotional strategy is being employed this term in order to elevate response rate at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (the latter have remained extremely low – ranging between 10 and 20 percent).

Before the formal student learning outcomes assessment initiative began in 2006, departments consistently reviewed curricula to maintain alignment with the mission goal of integrating challenging coursework with practical experience. Continuing that practice today under a new assessment structure, faculty regularly evaluate curricula at department meetings throughout the academic year, ensuring the most current application of methods and contemporary content for their discipline. Programs are formally reviewed every five years; a review report is presented to the Curriculum Committee, which consists of seven faculty members from various disciplines. This review process permits a crosscheck of philosophies, consistency of pedagogical practice across the College, and a shared understanding of what and how students are learning.

In an effort to orient new faculty to Lasell and to make an immediate impact on their teaching effectiveness, Lasell College implemented a new full-time faculty orientation program (NFO) in 2007. Prior to the development of this program, new faculty participated in a single orientation session at the conclusion of the first day of faculty meetings in September. The program is discussion-based and led by the three academic deans. Most meetings include guest presenters to familiarize new faculty with residence life, athletics, various College initiatives (e.g., Writing Across the Curriculum), and resources like the Center for Community-Based Learning. Since its development in 2007, the NFO program has been modified to include weekly discussions/informational meetings, a 9/9-credit load for the year, and additional guidance surrounding the self-evaluation process.

Faculty Development

As part of its efforts to improve undergraduate student learning and support retention initiatives, Lasell initiated a series of professional development workshops for adjunct faculty in fall 2011, under the direction of the Teaching and Learning Center. We recognized that although we relied on adjunct instructors to staff many courses, we offered few organized opportunities for those adjuncts to become acquainted with expectations at the College, such as the provision of early, frequent, and constructive feedback to students; the design of structured connected
learning experiences; the effective organization of classroom time; and the use of Moodle in course design. The series is offered in both the fall and spring semesters. Each series begins with the opening faculty meeting in September and January and concludes in the final week of the semester, with workshops provided in both face-to-face and online formats. Workshops are facilitated by experienced full-time and adjunct faculty members. All adjunct faculty hired after fall 2011 must complete the workshop series during their first academic year in order to be rehired, and they receive a stipend of $500 and a certification of completion. Returning adjunct faculty hired before fall 2011 are invited to participate in any or all of the workshops, and they receive a stipend of $100 per session.

To summarize, the College provides numerous opportunities for faculty development and professional training that include the following offerings:

- Faculty workshops in September, January, and May: these workshops provide an opportunity for faculty development in relevant pedagogical areas and for departmental assessment.
- Internally funded grant programs as described in the Faculty Handbook (e.g., Weber Fund; Packard Grants)
- Operating budget support for conference travel
- Davis Educational Foundation Grant Programs, including Technology Across the Curriculum, project-focused learning, and Research Across the Curriculum; Lasell College has continued to support these programs internally when the grant funding period has elapsed.
- Teaching and Learning Center, providing support for Lasell’s commitment to learning and teaching; this center also supports faculty wishing to use technology to achieve curricular objectives, to enhance pedagogy, and to engage a diverse population of students.
- New Faculty Orientation: programming has been developed for new full-time and adjunct faculty; full-time faculty members are granted a three-credit course release each semester of the first year at Lasell, so that they may participate in the program and get acclimated to teaching at Lasell.
- Adjunct Faculty Orientation: programming has been developed for semester-long workshops that are required for new adjunct faculty and are encouraged for continuing adjunct faculty; adjunct faculty participating in the workshop series receive stipends.

**PROJECTION**

Lasell College finalized its new strategic plan in October 2011. *Vision 2017* includes an analysis of the College’s strengths and weaknesses, as well as measureable objectives to enhance the profile of the College. Innovation and creativity in teaching were recognized as strengths of the College, while heavy reliance on adjunct faculty to teach course sections and comparatively low adjunct salaries were noted as weaknesses. Of the twenty-one objectives generated through the planning process, several related directly to faculty and academics:

- Institution of a professional advising system for all first-year students. Since fall 2010, Lasell has employed one professional advisor who was advising 98 percent of the undeclared undergraduate student population. The College has hired three additional professional advisors for 2012-2013, with a full professional advising system projected to be in place within the next few years. The implementation of a professional advising system for first-year students re-focuses full-time faculty members’ advising on upperclass students.
- Lasell College has articulated as a goal that 100 percent of courses will use the Moodle course management system for attendance, assignments, and grades. Ideally, this goal will be met by fall 2013.
- Lasell remains committed to the goal that 67 percent of undergraduate courses and 50 percent of graduate courses will be taught by full-time faculty. Continued additions to the full-time faculty will allow Lasell to meet its goal of full-time course coverage by fall 2017.
- Comparative analyses indicate that adjunct faculty salaries at Lasell are below the midpoint salary level in the College’s peer group. Following the strategic planning session, the College initiated research to determine competitive compensation and is working to develop a plan for incremental increases in
adjunct salaries until they reach the midpoint salary level. The College has increased adjunct salaries by $25 a credit beginning in AY2012-2013.

INSTUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
The Vice President for Academic Affairs evaluates the sufficiency of faculty appointments and allocation of time to core functions (e.g., advising, institutional teaching/learning initiatives, professional development) via institutional data and through conversations with the faculty, the Academic Council, and other members of the Senior Management Team. Annual full-time faculty self-evaluations draw on information from student course evaluations and are based on achievements in the areas of teaching, institutional involvement, and scholarship/professional development. Program self-evaluations draw on departmental goals, evidence of student learning through outcomes assessment, and evidence of emerging needs within each program/department to support curricular changes.

Lasell College has internalized the findings of the Wabash Study, resulting in the creation of several additional avenues to support teaching and learning (i.e., the Teaching and Learning Center), faculty professional development, and departmental assessment. Budgetary support for faculty professional development activities is regularly reviewed within Academic Affairs and includes conference travel funds, as well as funding to support the pursuit of advanced degrees.

The Lasell College faculty governs itself through elected officers and standing committee memberships. These committees make recommendations regarding academic policies, curricular changes and program reviews, professional development activity and sabbaticals, promotions and professional affairs, and graduate programming. Faculty voice is also represented on Board of Trustees subcommittees, the Student Success Committee, and through an institutional representative to the NCAA.
STANDARD SIX: STUDENTS

DESCRIPTION

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Undergraduate Admissions
In its 2007 strategic plan, the College reaffirmed its long-held core values of student focus, innovative education, and social responsibility. Guided by those core values and maintaining consistency with the mission of the College, the Department of Admission seeks to enroll a student body that is broadly representative of the population the institution wishes to serve, as referenced in Vision 2012.

In that effort, the admission staff travels throughout the Northeast Corridor, visiting over seven hundred high schools, representing the College at college fairs and college nights, and working with junior and community colleges to advise prospective transfer candidates. The College hosts three major on-campus events for prospective students and their families, providing the opportunity for students to meet with faculty, coaches, financial aid officers, student life members, and others from across the College. In addition, over 1,800 students visit Lasell throughout the year, touring the campus with currently enrolled students and meeting with an admissions representative for an information session.

The Office of Web and Electronic Communication is housed with the Admission Department to ensure consistency of marketing messages to prospective students. The two departments collaborate on email campaigns to prospective students and e-newsletters to parents and students, as well as regularly updating the College website.

Applications for admission are received on a rolling basis. While all applications are read individually, grade point averages are recalculated using only academic coursework, to provide a consistent standard of review. Applicants are expected to complete a college preparatory program satisfying the following Carnegie Units (as noted in the College Catalog):

- Four units of English
- Three units of mathematics, including algebra 1, algebra 2, and geometry (four units recommended)
- Two units of laboratory science (three units recommended)
- Two units of social science (three units recommended)
- Two units of foreign language recommended

At least two professional staff read each file and forward recommendations to the Dean of Admissions.

Retention and Graduation
All first-year students are required to take a three-credit first-year seminar, a theme-based course designed to engage students in a specific area of interest while supporting a smooth transition into the Lasell College community and our connected learning philosophy. In addition, all new students are assigned first-year academic advisors who work with them on academic issues and provide guidance and support as they transition to college life at Lasell. First-year students are required to meet with their advisors to discuss academic progress and opportunities for continuing success. As students go on to their second year of study, each student is assigned an
advisor who specializes or teaches in the student’s chosen field of study. Students receive midterm progress reports each semester to help them monitor and understand their academic standing.

At the conclusion of each semester, the Academic Review Committee, composed of faculty and administrators, reviews all student records in accordance with the academic standards published in the College Catalog (p. 53). Students are informed in writing if they have failed to achieve the College’s minimum requirements for good academic standing. Students earning academic honors are also notified in writing.

The Student Success Committee, in conjunction with the Offices of Institutional Research and the Registrar, monitors retention and graduation rates. The Committee also conducts a First Impressions Survey in the third week of freshman year and a Student Satisfaction Survey each November; it also reviews all exit interviews of departing students. These data are used to identify areas at the College that call for focused improvement.

**Student Services**

Emanating from the mission of the College, the mission of the Division of Student Affairs has a dual focus: to provide services to the campus community that ensure a rich student life program; and to create a climate that enhances students’ learning, personal growth, and development. The professionals in Student Affairs ground their activities in a developmental model that recognizes the dynamic and multifaceted nature of human development, emphasizes the interactive nature of learning, acknowledges the many communities in which students hold membership, and promotes personal integrity and social responsibility as core values. The members of the Student Affairs departments embrace the philosophy of connected learning and work to incorporate experiential learning opportunities into the student life program.

The Division of Student Affairs comprises Athletics, Career Services, the Center for Spiritual Life, Counseling, Health Services, International Services, Residential Life, and Student Activities and Orientation. The Office of the Vice President is responsible for the annual production of the *Student Handbook and Academic Planner*, which provides information about pertinent academic and nonacademic policies and procedures (including students’ rights under FERPA), academic support services, various aspects of student life services as well as services provided across the College, the academic calendar, the academic grievance process, and the College’s conduct system. The narrative sections appear in the hard-copy version of the Student Handbook as well as on the College’s website and Intranet site. The College’s conduct system is administered through the Office of the Vice President, with primary oversight provided by the Dean of Student Affairs and the Conduct Coordinator.

The full-time staff members in Student Affairs now number thirty-three; they are supplemented by part-time staff members (especially in the coaching ranks of the Athletics Department). Three new functional units in the Student Affairs Division are the Center for Spiritual Life, established in 2007, the Office of International Services, established in 2009, and the Disability Services Office, to be constituted in the fall of 2012. An expanding undergraduate and graduate student body and our strong commitment to a consistent level of professional services for students have motivated the addition of new full-time (12- and 10-month) positions in Student Affairs. An Administrative Assistant to support the Counseling Center, Health Services, and the Center for Spiritual Life was added in 2007; in 2008, the positions of Dean of Student Affairs, Coordinator for Student Organizations in Student Activities, and Health Educator/Clinical Counselor in the Counseling Center were added. In addition, a Sports Information Director and an Athletic Administrator/Head Coach for Field Hockey and Women’s Lacrosse were added in the Athletics Department in 2008, bringing to five the number of teams whose head coaches are full-time professionals in the Athletics Department. 2010 saw the addition of a Career Counselor/Coordinator for Employer Relations in Career Services, and in the fall of 2012 the individual who has served as the Director of Residential Life for seven years will move into the position of Director of Disability Services/Conduct Coordinator. There are now five full-time, post-master’s Area Coordinators in the Office of Residential Life, serving as live-in professionals; there are also fifty undergraduate Resident Assistants when the residences are fully staffed. The leadership in the Division continues to provide constancy and a foundation of experience, with four of the eleven senior staff members in their positions for seventeen or more years, and with another four senior staff members having served at least four years at the College.
The various Student Affairs offices are clustered primarily in two buildings. The Edwards Student Center houses the Office of the Vice President and Dean, the Office of Residential Life, the Office of Career Services, the Office of the Director of Disability Services/Conduct Coordinator, and the Health Services (additional services located in Edwards include the dining hall, the post office, the radio station, and a fitness center). The Arnow Campus Center houses the Office of Student Activities and Orientation and the Office of International Services (also located in Arnow are a café, the bookstore, offices for student organizations such as the Student Government Association and the Campus Activities Board, a meditation room, a conference room, and twenty-two residential beds on the top level). The Athletics office is located in the Athletic Center, the Counseling Center and the Center for Spiritual Life are in Case House, and the Area Coordinators (Residential Life) have decentralized offices in the residential areas, in addition to spending office time in the Edwards Student Center.

**Athletics.** Lasell College is a Division III member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA); the College also holds membership in the Eastern College Athletic Conference, the Great Northeast Athletic Conference, the North Atlantic Conference (for field hockey), and the Northeast Collegiate Volleyball Association. The College offers seventeen intercollegiate sports: men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s cross country, men’s and women’s volleyball, field hockey, men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s indoor track and field, men’s and women’s outdoor track and field, men’s and women’s lacrosse, baseball, and softball. Student-athletes receive no privileges in admission, financial aid, advising, grading, or living accommodations. In fall 2012, approximately 340 undergraduates are being tracked as intercollegiate athletes; in AY 2011-12, 276 students participated in intercollegiate sports, representing close to 20 percent of the student body.

Opportunities for recreation and fitness are many for the members of the Lasell College community. The Athletic Center is home to the basketball/volleyball courts, locker rooms, a fitness track, and an aerobic/dance studio. Fitness rooms are located in the Edwards Student Center and in one of the residential buildings, McClelland Hall (opened in the fall of 2009); these facilities are staffed approximately eighty hours a week. Taylor Field is used for soccer and softball, and Grellier Field (artificial turf) is used for field hockey and lacrosse. Baseball is played at a field at nearby Brandeis University. Students are permitted to use the pool at Lasell Village on specified nights. The College’s boathouse is utilized by the club crew team under the supervision of the Office of Student Activities; similarly, that Office oversees the Rugby Club and the Cheerleading Club. A variety of step-aerobic, cardio-kick boxing, and muscle conditioning classes are offered each semester, as is an ever-expanding intramural program that includes dodgeball, basketball, and beach volleyball.

Space is at a premium in the Athletic Center, which supplies office areas, locker rooms, officials’ rooms, and team meeting rooms. Recently expanded hours for open gym time are helpful, but the demands of scheduling for the practice and competition needs of the various intercollegiate teams leave little open time for leisure and recreational use of the Center’s facilities. Plans for a new Athletic Center are proceeding and are addressed in the College’s master plan.

**Career Services.** The Office of Career Services is dedicated to assisting students in the exploration of career and major options, as well as supporting students who are seeking full- or part-time employment. In June 2009, as outlined in the 2008 strategic plan, a consulting team from the Eastern Association of Colleges and Employers (EACE) completed a two-day site visit and evaluation. As a result of their findings and recommendations, the College created a new, full-time position of Career Counselor/Coordinator of Employer Relations; the Office worked with a student in the Graphic Arts program to design a logo and rolled out an array of materials with a consistent, defining look. The Office expanded its presence on the web, reevaluated its workshop delivery, and devised many new ways to reach out to the student population.

The three professional staff members work with students in a variety of settings, beginning with presentations in the first-year seminar (FYS) classes (in fall 2010, 25 FYS workshops involved approximately 400 first-year students). Through workshops, classroom sessions, and individual counseling, students have the opportunity to clarify career goals, take career interest assessments, develop successful job search strategies, apply to graduate schools, and hone skills in resume writing and interviewing. During AY 2010-2011, 1,437 students participated...
in workshops conducted by the Career Services staff and the undergraduate Career Assistants (trained through a program inaugurated in AY 2008-2009). During 2010-2011, the staff delivered programming in new ways and reached out to various specific cohorts in the campus community; new programming included weekly drop-in workshops and special workshops for graduate students and commuter students. With the creation of the Director of Internships position, collaborative efforts with Academic Affairs have been expanded; in AY 2011-2012, one of the career counselors served as a designated liaison with the Academic Advising Center, assisting in the delivery of programs for new students in the Undeclared major. Career Services maintains extensive listings of employment opportunities and is using College Central to enhance the network of offerings to Lasell students. The Office intends to build on its use of social media to connect with current students and alumni.

Center for Spiritual Life, Counseling Center, and Health Services. The Counseling Center, the Center for Spiritual Life, and the Office of Health Services are closely aligned, collaborating in service delivery, and benefiting from the direct support of an administrative assistant through a new position established in 2007.

Since its creation in 2007, the Center for Spiritual Life has clearly established itself as an integral part of our community. The mission of the Center is to provide educational and support activities to all students seeking assistance and information pertaining to their spiritual and religious lives. The Center seeks to foster students’ development as they reflect on personal and community values, grow in understanding of various faith traditions, participate in an exchange of ideas with other students, and receive counsel and support when needed. Programming sponsored by the Center has included speakers, discussion groups, workshops in residential communities, and religious holiday events. The Director of the Center is an ordained minister who provides extensive pastoral counseling; he also has a doctoral degree and serves as an adjunct faculty member, generally teaching one course per semester.

Four counselors, one of whom is part-time, and a full-time social work intern (the position turns over yearly) staff the Counseling Center. In addition, the Counseling Center has contracted since 2004-2005 with a psychiatric consultant for a few hours each week, for client evaluations and case supervision. The Center provides short-term individual counseling, educational programs (including FYS workshops, annual alcohol screening programs, parent orientation sessions, and training sessions for resident assistants), and referral services. Since 2008, there has been a health educator (who is also a clinical counselor) on staff. This staff member oversees the delivery of the AlcoholEdu program and trains and supervises the Peer Health Educators (PHE) Program, which was initiated in spring 2009 with five PHEs and grew to include 18 PHEs in fall 2011. The health educator also helps to coordinate campus-wide health education programs. Staff members work closely with faculty, staff, and family members when appropriate; the Director of the Counseling Center attends LEAPS and Student Conduct Committee meetings regularly.

The demand for services and the complexity of many presenting cases have put a strain on the staff, requiring some changes in the way the Center operates. In fall 2009, the Counseling Center inaugurated a new management software system for scheduling and for collecting and tracking client information and Center activities. In AY 2009-2010, 172 students were seen for a total of 1409 sessions, averaging 8.1 counseling sessions per client; in 2010-2011, 194 students were seen, but the average number of sessions fell to 7.2 as a result of the adoption of a short-term counseling model and an increase in off-campus referrals for extended care. In 2011-12, 178 students were seen for a total of 1606 sessions, bringing the sessions per client up to 9; this is reflective of the severity of many of the presenting issues, and the fact that there were 14 psychiatric hospitalizations - and these students required more care.

Health Services is staffed by one part-time and two full-time nurse practitioners; a physician is on campus for six hours each week. The clinical philosophy of Lasell’s Health Services is that physical, emotional, social, sexual, and nutritional behaviors factor into the maintenance of good health. In addition to treating illnesses and injuries, the staff members perform routine exams and facilitate various medical tests. Health education is available in the areas of nutrition, eating disorders, birth control, alcohol and drug use/abuse, and sexuality. The annual Health Fair is coordinated by the Health Services staff, as is the oversight of the College’s compliance with state regulations regarding immunizations. In AY 2010-2011, the Health Services staff members had 2367 patient
contacts, down from 3391 patient contacts in 2009-2010 (which showed elevated numbers because of the H1N1 flu epidemic); in AY2011-12, there were 2396 patient contacts.

International Services. The Office of International Services was established in AY 2009-2010, with a dual focus: coordination and implementation of the College’s growing study abroad program, and support for our international undergraduate and graduate student populations. The Director, while reporting to the Vice President of Student Affairs, maintains a close working relationship with the Vice President for Academic Affairs, especially regarding study abroad programs. Key accomplishments of the office include a streamlined study abroad application packet, creation of a new application that includes a minimum GPA requirement, organization of Study Abroad Fairs, creation and delivery of pre-departure orientation programs and welcome back dinners, establishment of productive working relationships with program partners, international site visits, establishment of a group of Global Ambassadors (students with study abroad experience who assist in the facilitation of programs), creation of a web presence for the Office, creation and implementation of an international student orientation program, and creation of an international student handbook. In addition, the Director of International Services collaborates with faculty colleagues who lead international service trips to implement risk management strategies and better prepare trip leaders.

One concern is that the College community’s growing demands on the Director are beginning to limit her direct service time with international students and with those students who are looking to study abroad. During the last three semesters, about 50 students have studied abroad (although more than 60 went through the application process). Concurrently, the number of international students is steadily growing and may grow more quickly if anticipated partnerships with institutions outside of the States materialize. These partnerships will result in a greater number of Lasell students traveling abroad and in an increase in the number of international students studying at Lasell. In the near future, we will explore the possible hire each year of a graduate assistant to help meet the needs of the Office and support its functions.

Office of Residential Life. Residential Life is responsible for the coordination of all facets of the housing operation for undergraduate students (approximately 80 percent of the student body), and for the staffing and delivery of educational and support services to the students who reside in College housing. Staffing the Office are a Director, the Coordinator of Housing Operations, five live-in Area Coordinators, and forty-seven undergraduate Resident Assistants. At the time of this writing, there are 25 buildings in which students reside, and they are currently configured to house a maximum of 1275 students; in the fall of 2012, a new building is adding 102 beds to the inventory. For a number of years, one or more of the older buildings have been taken offline during the summer for renovations that have involved, for instance, an upgrade of the heating systems, interior refurbishment, or the purchase of new furniture.

There are four types of housing at Lasell: traditional residence halls with single, double, and triple rooms, a shared bathroom, and long hallways; residences with quads comprising two double rooms connected by a shared bathroom; suites designed for four, five, or six occupants and comprising two or four bedrooms, a shared common area, and one or two bathrooms; and converted homes that tend to be smaller and offer single, double, triple, and quad rooms with shared bathrooms. The Office of Residential Life considers expressed preferences as it assigns rooms to incoming students; returning students select their rooms and roommates during the annual online room selection process in late March or early April. Housing options include all-female, coeducational, service-learning, and quiet-study residences. Over 50 percent of the beds on campus are located in buildings designated as dry; no alcoholic beverages or empty alcohol containers are permitted, regardless of the age of the residents.

During AY 2009-2010, a new software package (Adirondack Solutions) was implemented fully, enabling staff to auto-assign new students, communicate more efficiently with resident students (both with individuals and with entire communities), conduct electronic censuses that permit more timely and accurate student responses, automate the signing of housing agreements and the collection of roommate preferences, deliver damage billing online, and utilize an online room selection process for returning students. The adoption of Adirondack Solutions has not been without its missteps, but the software has ultimately helped the Office to operate more efficiently and respond more promptly to student requests and concerns. A supplemental package to Adirondack Solutions was
implemented in fall 2011; this supplemental software package, the Conduct Coordinator, is designed to better manage the College’s conduct system.

The Resident Assistants (RAs) design and facilitate programming that creates a sense of community; they provide social opportunities for and enhance the learning experience beyond the classroom for their residents. In AY 2010-2011, RAs delivered 197 programs, with a total attendance of 2014 students. Of these programs, 71 were educational, 23 involved community service activities, and 103 were community development programs. Eight of the programs were offered in collaboration with the Center for Community-Based Learning; six were facilitated by staff from Health and Counseling; three were delivered by the Director of the Office of International Services; three were offered by the Office of Career Services; and five involved the Director of the Center for Spiritual Life. Six faculty members presented programs, as did the College President and the Vice President for Student Affairs. In AY2011-12, 203 programs were delivered by the Resident Assistant staff, with a total attendance of 2035 students. Of particular note were the 88 educational programs, including the participation of 8 faculty members (delivering 12 programs) and 10 staff members (delivering 22 programs, two of which were facilitated by the College President).

The staff members who live in the residential buildings play an important role in maintaining a safe and secure campus. In addition to the Campus Police officers, who are present 24 hours a day and 365 days per year, one of the Area Coordinators is on duty each evening of the week and throughout the weekend. In addition, RAs representing all of the residential areas are on duty each night between Wednesday and Saturday. On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, Lasell students must register their guests at the Campus Police office; guests must have a guest pass on their person at all times. Additional staff members serve as door checkers on weekend nights in some of the larger residential buildings.

During the last few years, the Office of Public Safety has installed a number of cameras in the residential buildings in an effort to prevent vandalism and mischief and also to assist Campus Police and Residential Life in identifying perpetrators of crimes. In AY 2009-2010, the average per capita damage charge (the charge to each resident for damages in public, shared spaces when no individual was identified as responsible for the damage) was $28.31, the lowest per capita damage figure in five years. In AY 2010-2011, the average per capita damage charge fell to $10.67; it is believed that this continued decline in charges can be attributed to the use of cameras, along with greater vigilance on the part of Residential Life staff members and the Campus Police.

Student Activities and Orientation. The Office of Student Activities and Orientation provides support to all registered student organizations and to social, cultural, and educational programs for the entire Lasell community. The Office is responsible for devising and implementing a four-year integrated leadership program; creating and delivering orientation programs for all incoming undergraduate students; assisting student organizations through advising and program planning; advising the Student Government Association and the Campus Activities Board; advising the four Class Committees; and planning and delivering large-scale campus events such as Family, Friends, and Alumni Weekend, Spirit Week (with SGA), Spring Fest (with CAB), the Awards Banquet, Torchlight Parade, Senior Soiree, Senior Week, and Class Week. This last event was initiated in spring 2011 and is designed to expand the focus on class identity, identified by the Student Success Committee as important to a positive student experience. Central to all of these endeavors is the intentional, developmental education of those students who play an active role in the creation and facilitation of the various events, including the students who are hired and supervised by the Office.

Campus-wide programming takes many forms. In a typical week during the academic year, activities are scheduled for two to five nights and may take the form of movies, comedian shows, musical performances, and guest speakers. During the first two weeks of the fall 2011 semester, the Office ran 47 programs, attracting 2664 attendees (2568 students and 96 staff/faculty). The Office sells discounted tickets to theater productions and professional sporting events and also sponsors trips to New York City. At the beginning of each semester, Student Activities organizes an Activities Fair to promote clubs and organizations, as well as various College services and offices. At the conclusion of AY 2011-2012, 44 clubs and organizations were registered with the Office of Student Activities. These organizations ranged from the College Radio Station, to the Rugby Club, to
the Dance Team, to the *1851 Chronicle* (the student newspaper). In AY 2011-2012, the Office offered 270 programs/activities, attracting 13,182 participants (12,625 students and 557 faculty/staff).

The Office collaborates with the Office of Undergraduate Admission to sponsor the Leadership Scholars program. Each year, a group of first-year students is selected to participate in this program, which is overseen by the Director of Student Activities and Orientation. There is a four-year curriculum developed for this group of students, culminating in a yearlong relationship with an assigned mentor drawn from the administration and staff. In addition to that program, the Office sponsors a variety of noncredit leadership experiences: the Exploring Leadership course, the Emerging Leaders course, the Advanced Leadership Series, and workshops specifically designed for club and organization officers.

Four different orientation programs are designed and implemented by the Office: Laser Link Orientation, a series of two-day, residential sessions for incoming first-year students occurring in June and run concurrently with a parents/family orientation program; Laser Transfer Transitions, a one-day program for incoming transfer students and first-year students occurring in August; Lasell Laser Welcome Weekend, a four-day program for all new students occurring prior to the start of the fall semester; and Laser Winter Orientation, a one-day program for all new students beginning their Lasell careers in January. Each program is designed to facilitate students’ transition to the Lasell community by preparing them to begin their collegiate academic experience through academic advising and registration, and welcoming them into the Lasell College community. Undergraduate Orientation Leaders play an important role in the delivery of these programs. All of these programs are evaluated each year, and the participants’ feedback is reflected in the following year’s planning, which is overseen by the members of an Orientation Committee composed of representatives from across the campus community.

**GRADUATE STUDENTS**

*Graduate Admissions*

*Graduate Programs Admissions*

Lasell’s graduate programs attract domestic and international students who are primarily working professionals or recent bachelor’s degree recipients. A number of the students in the program are Lasell alumni, some of whom continue directly from their undergraduate experience. The results of the 2011 Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey indicate that 67 percent of enrolled students identified themselves as working professionals and 29 percent reported enrolling immediately following the completion of their bachelor’s programs. Lasell’s graduate community is diverse in age, work experience, and ethnicity.

A 5th Year Option was created to encourage undergraduate Lasell students who carry a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to continue directly on and earn their master’s degree. The 5th Year Option allows those qualified to waive six credits of graduate coursework contingent upon their undergraduate achievement. Students participate in two blended semesters in their Senior year.

The Office of Graduate Admission reviews on a continual basis the tools most effective for outreach and marketing of graduate programs. Information Sessions are held on campus every six weeks for local prospective students and information webinars are available during the week for those who cannot visit the campus. Staff represent the College regularly at graduate school fairs, trade conferences, and networking events.

To promote the 5th Year Option, the Office of Graduate Admission has participated in advisor training workshops and held information sessions for undergraduate Lasell students. Graduate Admission staff meet individually with interested students. Since 2009, 42 students have officially completed the 5th Year Declaration of Interest form. This past year, an intern working with the Office of Graduate Admission designed and launched a campaign to further promote the 5th Year Option.

In collaboration with the Office of Graduate Admission, the Office of Web and Electronic Marketing develops, manages, and tracks web forms, Google Adword campaigns, landing pages, online ad campaigns, and email campaigns to prospective students. The Office of Web and Electronic Marketing also monitors the traffic to the
College’s web site and regularly works with a number of departments to update content on the site to ensure accuracy of information. Advertising efforts include radio, online, print, and lead generation with higher education publishers such as GradSchools.com

Lasell’s graduate programs offer six start sessions per year: September, October, January, March, May and July. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. To apply to the program, students complete an online application for admission available on the College website. Admission requirements are stated on the website, in printed marketing materials, and in the Catalog.

Candidates for admission must meet specific requirements and demonstrate through academic background and/or work experience the ability to succeed in graduate studies. Admission requirements include a completed application, official transcripts of all college-level coursework, two letters of recommendation and a one page personal statement indicating future goals. Applicants to Lasell’s MEd programs must, in addition, submit passing MTEL scores on the Reading and Writing subtests of Communication and Literacy. International candidates for admission must also submit a minimum TOEFL score of 79 (ibt) or comparable IELTS score along with a Declaration of Finance.

Applications are read individually by a member of the graduate admission staff who recommends a decision to the Director of Graduate Admission. The Director reviews the file and renders the decision. If an application warrants, the Director of Graduate Admission may consult the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and/or the Department Chair to discuss the admission decision.

At the end of the spring, 2012 semester, our graduate student population was 236. Our experience has been that although our graduate degree programs are attractive to new college graduates, the primary target audience for these programs continues to be working professionals who wish to advance their careers.

Because courses are offered year round, program admission is conducted on a rolling basis; students are able to enter the program in fall, spring, or summer. The Lasell College Office of Graduate Admission selects those students who demonstrate through their academic background and/or professional work experience the ability to succeed in graduate studies. Factors in evaluating applications for admission include the applicant’s scholastic record, professional experience, references, and personal statement of self-evaluation and professional goals.

General requirements for graduate admission. Candidates for admission must meet specific requirements and demonstrate through academic background and/or work experience the ability to succeed in graduate studies. Applicants to the Lasell College graduate program must submit the following:

- A completed application
- Official transcripts of all college-level course work and evidence of an acceptable cumulative grade point average in a completed baccalaureate program
- Two letters of recommendation from either academic or professional sources
- A one-page personal statement indicating future goals
- A minimum TOEFL score of 79 (ibt) or comparable IELTS score along with a Declaration of Finance (for international students only)
- Passing scores on both subtests (reading and writing) of the MTEL Communication & Literacy Test (for the Master of Education initial licensure programs)
- Copies of current teaching licenses (for the Master of Education professional licensure programs)
- All requirements completed for the Fifth-Year Option program (for current Lasell undergraduate students)

Additional program requirements for the Master of Education (by the completion of nine graduate credits):
- all degree-seeking students must submit evidence of completion of a course in child development (or equivalent);
• initial licensure students must provide passing scores on the MTEL General Curriculum test; to enter the practicum, initial licensure students must provide passing scores on all required MTEL tests (the College provides MTEL workshops and one-on-one preparation sessions).

A member of the graduate admission staff reads each application individually and recommends a decision to the Director of Graduate Admission. The Director reviews the file and renders the decision. If an application warrants, the Director of Graduate Admission may consult the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and/or the Department Chair to discuss the admission decision.

At the end of the spring, 2012 semester, our graduate student population was 236. The experience of the College has been that although its graduate degree programs are attractive to new college graduates, the primary target audience for these programs continues to be working professionals who wish to advance their careers.

**Student Services**

Because 78 percent of Lasell’s graduate students currently pursue their degree work on a part-time basis, few graduate students participate in the social and psycho-educational programming offered on campus or avail themselves of the direct service opportunities in the Student Affairs areas. The exception to this is the Office of Career Services, with the number of contacts with graduate students increasing from just 4 contacts in AY 2004-2005 to 79 in 2011-2012, representing 11 percent of total contacts during that timeframe (see further discussion in Appraisal). With the Graduate Student Union, in spring 2012, Career Services co-sponsored their first workshop using Adobe Connect technology; the workshop attracted 18 graduate students, both on campus and on-line, and a recording of the workshop is now available on the Graduate and Professional Studies website.

In fall 2009, a group of graduate students approached the then Interim Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies with a request to form a Graduate Student Union (GSU). Since fall 2009, the GSU has hosted an Advising Night when graduate students meet their advisors to discuss academic and professional goals, brought in speakers on career development, hosted a service day in collaboration with Newton Serves, and hosted a President’s Reception for graduate students. The current GSU is replicating many of these events, and graduate student participation is increasing as the GSU becomes more integral to Lasell graduate students’ lives and experiences.

Graduate student advising was implemented in fall 2009; eleven faculty, staff, and senior staff members currently advise graduate students. In spring 2010, Graduate and Professional Studies (GPS) held a graduate advisor meeting and identified several issues important to graduate student advising. Chief among these was a need for ongoing dialogue and community building among advisors. Graduate advisor meetings are now held twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring.

In fall 2010, the College hired an Associate Director of Graduate Student Services. The Associate Director works with several offices across campus to provide support services to graduate students. She assists with logistics related to course staffing, course scheduling, and assistance to students in course selection. She assists with the delivery of those services as she develops, establishes, and promotes graduate internship opportunities; assists with the design and management of all student orientation programming; oversees communication and logistics for graduate commencement activities; develops special programming or workshops for graduate students; and assists with the design and implementation of program assessment. Among her first initiatives was the development of a Student Orientation Landing Page on the Lasell website, providing new graduate students with detailed instructions on how to obtain IDs, register, and obtain parking permits, with links to all necessary offices (http://www.lasell.edu/Admissions/Graduate-Admission/New-Graduate-Student-To-Do-List.html).

During summer 2010, a Moodle platform orientation was developed for graduate students (http://moodle.lasell.edu/course/view.php?id=3205). This self-paced, asynchronous online orientation is designed to provide all the knowledge students need in order to be successful online. In addition, students are required to connect with their advisors as part of the Moodle orientation. As a result, advisors have seen a higher volume of student contact.
All new graduate students participate in an orientation session that welcomes them into the program. During this meeting, students register, obtain their IDs, purchase their books, and are introduced to department chairs and the library facilities. The design of this orientation continues to develop as incoming student needs are assessed. The January 2011 orientation, for example, included a presentation on time management and reading strategies that was well received by the students. With the growth of online programs, the need for a fully online orientation has become more acute. Online orientation is now available to all graduate students and features the following:

- Welcome videos from the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and department chairs in Education, Sport Management, Business/Marketing, and Communication
- Library tutorials on the library’s databases, on conducting a search, on the identification of appropriate academic sources, and on the use of APA format
- A tutorial on the importance of the advising relationship
- Links to Career Services and the Academic Achievement Center

In Enrollment Management, there are now three dedicated graduate admission positions; the Director of Graduate Admission, an Assistant Director, and an Admission Counselor. The Counselor position was added in 2007 to address the growing needs of graduate student recruitment and orientation. The Assistant Director position was approved in Summer 2011 and was filled this year. In addition, the Registrar’s Office, Student Accounts, and the Office of Student Financial Planning each have a designated staff member to serve as a graduate student liaison.

A stated goal for FY 2011 that emerged from the Graduate Program strategic planning event in August (see Standard Four and Appendix M: Graduate Strategic Planning Report) was the improved functionality of the online administrative system for graduate students in the areas of payments, registration, student IDs, and reports. The CIO has formed a working group that meets weekly to address these issues. A Senior Project Manager was recently hired to resolve the internal barriers to students’ full access of the online administrative systems. The group meets weekly and has made progress in revamping and/or developing processes that will provide smooth access for students. Recent improvements have created a more seamless process by which new students will access their IDs and Lasell email. The addition of more email groups within the graduate population allows emails to target students in specific programs and concentrations. Billing and registration procedures have become more accessible for graduate students through Self-Service (the College’s web interface). A new computer has been added to the Graduate Student Lounge, and the existing computer has been upgraded. In addition, student emails have been moved to Microsoft Live, allowing students to store and share documents.

APPRAISAL

Undergraduate Admissions

Since Lasell’s 2002 self-study report, undergraduate enrollment has increased more than 60 percent. The institutional goal to grow enrollment and invest in building community has been very successful. The goal of increased enrollment included the additional goals of a stronger academic profile, increased diversity, and a continued focus on gender balance, as the College had become a coeducational institution only in 1998.

In support of a stronger academic profile, an Honors Program was established in 2000. In 2003, 22 percent of first-time freshmen fell in both the top and bottom tiers of the College’s academic rating scale. By 2011, the percentage of new students in the top tier held consistently at over 40 percent, with students in the third tier holding at under five percent for five consecutive years. Another program providing opportunity and challenge is the Leadership Program developed by the Student Affairs department. This program provides ongoing seminars and workshops for students identified through the admission process.

As part of the goal of increased diversity and larger enrollments, the College added two admissions staff members -- one to focus on transfer recruitment and a second to provide international outreach. Since these positions were added, we have experienced a 30 percent increase in transfer enrollment and a modest growth in international students. In conjunction with increased international outreach, an Office of International Student Services was
created to support international students. Another program designed to assist both international students and students whose first language is not English is an ESL transition program.

The College’s commitment to diversity has also resulted in steady growth in the percentage of minority students enrolled at Lasell. The Vision 2012 Plan called for 18 percent minority enrollment by 2012. In fall 2011, we exceeded that goal, reaching 20.7 percent minority enrollment. The strategic plan established a goal of 35 percent men by 2012, which was also exceeded in 2011, when males represented 36 percent of the student body.

Graduate Admissions

Graduate Program Enrollments

In the Fall of 2007, the College strategic planning process developed Vision 2012, which called for a graduate student headcount of 300 by Fall 2012. The graduate headcount in the Fall of 2007 was 82. In order to achieve this goal, the College committed to investing additional resources for graduate admissions and services. Over the last three years, we have added staff positions and resources to enhance the efficiency of recruiting and also to improve the infrastructure and online functionality of administrative systems. The new positions include a full-time Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, an Associate Director of Graduate Student Services, an Assistant Director of Graduate Admission, and an Application and Data Processor position. We are also in the process of implementing a new CRM system that will complement the recently added document imaging system. The integration of these systems will allow for better infrastructure for reports and data analysis and also provide a more integrated approach to the recruitment process. The new systems and a collaborative effort among the offices of the Registrar, Graduate Admission, and Institutional Research will ensure better data that can be used in a multitude of measures.

Graduate student enrollment in Fall of 2010 reached a headcount of 168. At the Board of Trustees meeting in January of 2011, the College voted to accelerate the enrollment growth of online students by partnering with a third party. Lasell’s partnership with Greenwood and Hall launched in July of 2011. The total of enrolled credits in the 2011-12 academic year grew 39 percent over the prior year.

Retention and Graduation

Although the College has improved retention during the ten years since its 2002 reaccreditation, it continues to struggle to reach its goal of consistent cohort retention above 70 percent. Retention has fallen as low as 62 percent and risen as high as 73 percent during the last five years. In 2005, a Student Success Committee was charged with identifying areas that might improve the quality of the undergraduate experience. This committee, consisting of faculty, administrators, and staff, engaged the greater community in their efforts, reviewing research and developing action plans. Retention began to climb but was stymied by the recent recession. The College has increased the amount of institutional aid available to students and is reexamining its financial aid model, in order to reduce the number of students leaving the College because of limited financial resources. Our 2011 cohort retention is 72 percent.

In 2007, the College created Lasell’s Early Action Partnerships for Student Success (LEAPS), to provide an enhanced academic warning system and support the advising program. The LEAPS Committee is composed of faculty and staff; it seeks input from across the community to identify a student who may be at risk academically and facilitates advisor-instructor collaboration to guide the student in a more positive direction. We developed a new program this fall to provide additional structured academic support for students who may require more services in order to be successful. The Office of Institutional Research, the Dean of Advising and First-Year Programs, and the Department of Admission have identified applicants for admission who would benefit from such a program. A Learning Specialist was hired in the summer of 2012 to oversee and facilitate this support program beginning in the fall of 2012.

As first-year cohort retention has fluctuated, so too has our graduation rate. The Fall 2006 cohort which brought us our lowest retention rate of 62 percent, also had our lowest six year graduation rate of 44.1 percent. While the
2007 cohort has a six-year graduation rate of over 51 percent, our data indicates that the 2008 cohort will hover around 50 percent.

Student Services

Undergraduate Programs
There are numerous office or program specific assessment activities in place that are designed to measure the effectiveness of the efforts put forth by the functional units in the Student Affairs division, and to measure the level of student satisfaction associated with those efforts. The College recognizes the need for additional assessment of co-curricular student engagement tied to learning outcomes assessment in Academic Affairs; this kind of assessment will be facilitated by the communication across the College of the newly articulated institutional student learning outcomes (See Standards Two and Four).

On an institutional level, many of the functional units in Student Affairs (including Residential Life, Health Services, the Counseling Center, Student Activities) are evaluated annually by the College’s Satisfaction Survey and the First Impressions survey. Additionally, the professional staff members maintain memberships in, and are active in, their professional organizations and work diligently to keep abreast of changes in professional standards, and make changes as necessary to reflect current “best practices.” Three members of the Student Affairs staff (including the Dean of Student Affairs) sit on the institutional Student Success Committee, and their participation helps to ensure that the initiatives of the Student Affairs units are integrated into, and dovetail with, efforts from the other divisions of the College.

According to the mission statement, student focus is a value of primary importance that should guide every College decision. The College has long solicited feedback from its students regarding experiences within and beyond the classroom. The broad-based Satisfaction Survey, conducted by the Vice President of Enrollment Management, has been a consistent source of feedback on the student life areas of the College for close to twenty years; during the last several years, the First Impressions survey has also become a source of information regarding student perceptions of the quality of life on campus. Macro-level, qualitative information on student satisfaction is obtained in a number of other ways - through staff participation in the ongoing Student Success Committee (the Dean of Student Affairs, the Director of Athletics, and the Director of Student Activities and Orientation currently sit on that Committee), through biweekly meetings between the Vice President of Student Affairs and the SGA Vice President of Student Affairs, and via meetings between the Vice President and the entire General Board of SGA. The Vice President meets weekly with her eight senior managers and uses those meetings to give and receive feedback about areas that need attention and fine-tuning; the Vice President also meets regularly with the manager of the Food Services operation to share student feedback and consult on initiatives designed to improve the overall dining experience. During the last five years, the Vice President has worked in concert with the President and her senior managers to formulate concrete goals for each academic year that are reflective of and responsive to the feedback derived from the student body, and to the long-term vision established and annually refined through the College’s strategic planning process.

Many of the offices in Student Affairs assess the effectiveness of their efforts and/or the level of student satisfaction in order to best respond to student needs. The use of online evaluative instruments by some of the offices has helped to improve the rate of student responses to these means of assessment, with much use of the electronic surveymonkey.com tool. In FY 2008, Health Services used an online survey tool for the first time. Since 2008, those students responding to the survey have consistently rated the services favorably. Of the 56 students who returned the Health Services survey in 2010-2011, 86 percent endorsed the most satisfied item on a 5-point Likert scale; this rating reflects a consistent endorsement level over the years. The Counseling Center services have also received consistently high ratings from those clients who have completed the Center’s evaluations; online surveys have been completed for the last five years. On average, 79.4 percent of the respondents to the Counseling Center survey between spring 2007 and spring 2011 indicated that they would recommend the Center to another student, 94 percent indicated that their counseling experience had been a positive one, and 64 percent indicated that counseling helped them to stay in school or improve their academic focus. In the most recent survey administration in the late spring of 2012: 97.4 percent of the respondents indicated that their counseling experience was a positive one; 66.6 percent indicated that counseling helped them...
to stay in school or improve their academic focus; and 73.8 percent strongly endorsed the item regarding whether or not they would recommend the Counseling Center to a friend. Since AY 2007-2008, the College has administered the AlcoholEdu program to incoming first-year students through the Counseling Center. This program has become the centerpiece of our alcohol education efforts, providing data that informs the design and implementation of other programmatic efforts aimed at educating Lasell students about alcohol use and abuse.

As a result of deliberations at the strategic planning retreat in fall 2009, the Health Services and Counseling Center began in January 2010 to offer extended evening hours on Mondays, closing at 6:30 p.m. rather than at 4:30 p.m. During the three semesters in which the extended hours have been available, usage has been spotty: Counseling staff members easily fill those hours with client sessions; however, students have not been utilizing evening hours at the Health Services in great numbers. In AY 2010-2011, a total of 40 students availed themselves of the extended hours offered on 25 Monday evenings; in AY 2011-12, that number dropped to 33 students using the evening hours. On the Health Services satisfaction survey, 50 percent of the respondents indicated that they were aware of the evening hours, and 25 percent of the respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the clinical hours. It has been suggested that Monday might not be the best day for extended evening hours. Another concern has been the limited space in the shared Health/Counseling suite of offices. The two part-time staff members, and the part-time physician and consulting psychiatrist have been arranging their hours around times when offices were available for them to see clients and patients, and the waiting area is routinely overcrowded. The senior administration is aware of and responsive to these concerns; discussions about expanding the suite have taken place, and the expansion is listed among desired facilities projects.

Effective AY 2012-13, an interim action has been implemented by taking one of the smaller residential buildings off-line and relocating the Counseling Center and the Center for Spiritual Life, to that space. While not an ideal resolution to the space issues (this move will likely make the close collaboration between these offices and Health Services more of a challenge; additionally, the administrative assistant supporting these three functional units will remain in the Health Services office), it will provide the necessary office space for all staff members and for students waiting to be seen.

The Office of Career Services conducts an annual survey of baccalaureate graduates, and compiles data regarding employment (and whether the employment is directly related to the academic major of the respondent), and graduate education. For the classes graduating between 2003 and 2011, the overall placement rates (employment and/or graduate education) have ranged from 89 percent to 100 percent. The class of 2011 had a 63 percent response rate to the survey (between 2006 and 2010, the response rate averaged 52 percent). Among respondents, 78 percent were employed full-time (between 2006 and 2010, the employment rate averaged 77 percent), 16 percent were pursuing graduate studies (between 2006 and 2010, the education rate averaged 23 percent; the Classes of 2010 and 2011 both reflected dramatic decreases in the numbers of students pursuing graduate coursework, which may have been reflective of the economic climate in the US), and six percent reported that they were seeking employment (slightly higher than previous averages).

In Athletics, at the end of the playing season, each student-athlete completes a written evaluation of the coaching, the athletic training, the athletic programming, and the overall athletic experience. The Athletic Director meets individually with each senior athlete to complete an exit interview at the end of his or her eligibility. Similarly, each coach is required to complete a year-end summary form, as is each athletic trainer. The results of these evaluations are shared with staff and are compared year-to-year to determine trends and/or to note improvements. The College also tracks the academic performance of the intercollegiate athletes and strives to realize academic excellence in the athlete cohort. As noted in the following chart, the numbers of intercollegiate athletes have been fairly consistent in the last years, and the average semester GPA for the athlete cohort has hovered just above 3.0. Those intercollegiate athletes who have been academically ineligible (IE) to participate in athletic competition represent a small percentage of the total cohort (ranging from a low of 4.7 percent in the fall of 2011 to a high of 9.1 percent in the fall of 2009).

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The quality of the residential life experience is the focus of continual assessment. In order for the full-time Area Coordinators to establish a more consistent, professional presence in the residential areas, it was decided in 2007-2008 that the Coordinators would maintain regular office hours in the residence buildings, rather than holding them exclusively in the Student Affairs office suite in the Student Center. In the five years during which this approach has been implemented, the Residential Life staff members have been able to establish stronger connections with students living in the residence halls, and staff have enhanced their hands-on presence in the buildings. During the last few years, the Residential Life staff has used the feedback from the First Impressions survey (administered to all first-year students in the first-year seminar) to fine-tune the environment in the larger, predominantly first-year buildings. In the most recent administration of that survey (in the fall of 2011), the percentage of respondents indicating satisfaction with their residential experience was higher than in most previous years, and the RA staff was often cited as a particular strength. The marked decline in damages billed to students is another indicator of the enhanced quality of the residential experience. The Resident Assistants are formally evaluated at the midpoint of each year, generally with feedback solicited from the resident students.

The Office of Student Activities conducts assessments of numerous programs throughout the year, and the information obtained from the assessments is used to change and enhance the offerings facilitated by that Office. All of the orientation programs are evaluated each year. During 2009-2011, the following results were obtained:

- Among first-year students who attended the summer orientation, 96.3 percent on average were pleased with their decision to attend the orientation, 98.7 percent believed that attending the orientation would ease their transition into the Lasell community, and 93.1 percent would recommend the orientation to another student.
- Among attendees of the parents’ orientation program, 97 percent on average were pleased with their decision to attend the program, and 99 percent would recommend the program to other parents.
- Among attendees of the transfer student orientation, 89.4 percent on average rated Lasell College as excellent or good before attending the orientation, 94.3 percent rated Lasell College as excellent or good after attending the orientation, and 96.1 percent of the attendees would recommend the program to other students.

Similar results were recorded for the fall and winter orientation programs.

Among students participating in the Emerging Leaders and the Exploring Leadership programs during 2009-2011, 87.9 percent on average believed that the programs helped them to develop as better leaders, and 89.7 percent would recommend the programs to other students. Office of Student Activities evaluations include the following:

**Student Activities Programming**
- 2007-2011 Family, Friends, and Alumni Weekend evaluations
- 2010-2012 Activities Fair evaluations
- 2010-2012 Student Worker evaluations
- 2011 Relay for Life evaluation
- 2011 & 2012 “The Sophomore Connection” evaluations – Staff Version
- 2011 & 2012 “The Sophomore Connection” evaluations – Student Version
Orientation
- 2008-2012 Laser Link Orientation Evaluations
- 2008-2012 Orientation Leader evaluations
- 2009-2012 Lasell Laser Welcome Weekend/NLB evaluations
- 2009-2012 Lasell Winter Orientation evaluations
- 2009-2012 Laser Transfer Transitions evaluations
- 2011 Lasell Laser Welcome Weekend Resource Fair evaluation
- 2011 & 2012 Laser Link Orientation evaluations - Faculty/Staff version
- 2012 Laser Link Orientation 2.0 evaluation

Leadership Programs
- 2009-2011 Emerging Leaders Program Evaluations
- 2010-2011 FYS: Exploring Leadership, Fall Evaluations
- 2010-2012 Advanced Leadership Seminars evaluations
- 2011-2012 Exploring Leadership, Spring Evaluations
- 2011 & 2012 Leadership Retreat Evaluations
- 2011 & 2012 Senior Leadership Scholars Evaluations
- 2011 & 2012 Sophomore Leadership Scholars Evaluations
- 2011 & 2012 Student Organization Series evaluations

Clubs and Organizations
- 2008 Commuter Survey
- 2009-2012 CAB General Board evaluations
- 2009-2012 Campus Activities Board (CAB) Executive Board evaluations
- 2010-2012 Student Government Association (SGA) evaluations

Graduate Programs
Historically there has been little tracking of graduate students in terms of retention and graduation rates. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of our students complete their education in approximately 2.5 years. With the hire of the new Institutional Researcher, we are developing systems to track graduate students. Retention and graduation rates are critical to our marketing efforts and to developing effective student supports. Historical data on enrollments by program and concentration are also vital to program review and planning.

As graduate programs have matured at Lasell, student supports around writing have come under consideration. There has not been a formal process within graduate programs to identify students at risk in a timely fashion. There is an academic review process, but the focus on supporting students before they come up for academic review has been weak. Long range plans call for a process to be in place by the end of AY13.

Over the summer of 2011, academic writing support for students came under serious discussion as student need outpaced available support, especially online. As a result, and in concert with the Academic Achievement Center, we researched viable options for graduate students, including hiring additional personnel within the AAC, outsourcing academic support to organizations expert in this field (e.g. Smart Thinking), expanding the hours for the AAC to include summer months and evening/Saturday offerings. After much research and discussion, the College decided to partner with Smarthinking to provide academic tutoring support in a wide range of areas (e.g. writing, math, economics) to both graduate and undergraduate students, beginning this past summer.

Career Services is another area where outreach to graduate students has been growing, as evidenced above. Career Services has offered seminars in career planning, and alumni have participated in sharing their expertise with students. A recently developed webinar included:

- An overview of supports from Career Services
• An exercise designed to show students how to sell themselves in 3 minutes
• An opportunity for students to network and hear from alumni

More needs to be done in the area of career services support for graduate students. A review of the individual contacts with graduate students suggests a 300 percent increase in those numbers from AY2006-07 to AY2011-12; however, those numbers are deceptive, since the cohorts are ultimately very small (from 25 contacts in AY2006-07 to 79 contacts in AY2011-12). With changes in the Career Services staff and an identified need for more consistent and accurate record-keeping, it is difficult to determine the viability of the numbers noted above. That being said, the Career Services staff is instituting a new process of documenting numbers of student clients and contact hours through the College Central Network, to be rolled-out in AY2012-13. Another factor that may be contributing to the relatively low number of graduate student contacts, is that the graduate population is not an on-ground cohort, and they are more likely to access Career Services information via the webpage and College Central, or through email inquiries (which have never been formally accounted for).

Looking ahead, the upcoming launch of the new Career Services website will include a page dedicated to the specific career needs of graduate students. Both the content of the co-sponsored workshop and the website were specifically devised to reflect the results of a recent capstone project, in which a student surveyed the career needs of current and former graduate students.

PROJECTION

Undergraduate Admissions

As part of the ongoing strategic planning at the College, the Department of Enrollment Management is working to increase the undergraduate enrollment to a stable population of about 1,800 students. We will continue our commitment to ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic diversity, while working to maintain our academic profile. Lasell recognizes that this growth must be supported by both recruitment and retention efforts, and the faculty and staff continue to identify ways to fulfill these commitments.

Lasell has experienced tremendous growth in the number of students visiting its campus, and until recently, was unable to provide as welcoming a space for guests as it now offers. The Department of Admission has recently moved to a larger facility that allows the staff to encourage more campus visits. The Department of Admission is working now to implement a paperless admissions office. Embracing a document imaging system will allow Admissions to move closer to the campus sustainability goals and will provide the opportunity for potential area recruitment outside Lasell’s primary region. With the changing demographics in the College’s region, the Department of Admission has identified potential recruitment opportunities in other areas. The ability to review applications online will permit area representatives to be more engaged in the recruitment and review of applicants. The College has begun to develop a mobile platform for its website and anticipates that it will be launched in 2012. Over 25,000 people visited www.lasell.edu from mobile devices last year, and trends indicate that this figure will rise sharply over the next three years. The new site will not only provide access to a growing number of users, but also will enhance their experience on our site.

In fall 2011, the College partnered with Greenwood & Hall to recruit applicants from the west coast. This multiyear partnership will allow Lasell to expand its markets and further pursue student diversity; it will serve as a prototype for future expanded recruitment. In its most recent strategic plan, the College determined to explore an online bachelor degree completion program. A cross-departmental team has begun research into curriculum and delivery.

The Student Success Committee has begun the process of developing a comprehensive retention plan, in an effort to identify programs already in place as well as other areas that would improve the student experience. As Lasell strives to improve its retention rate, one of the areas identified for growth is professional advising. As explained in Standard V, we have committed to expanding the number of professional advisors for first-year students, as well as to develop a program supporting students identified in the admission process who will benefit from additional structured academic support.
Graduate and Online Undergraduate Programs
Based upon dramatic improvements and investments over the last few years, it is anticipated that the Vision 2012 graduate enrollment goal of 300 students will be met and possibly exceeded in this academic year.

The College has identified the launch of four new graduate degree programs and a bachelor’s degree completion program with accompanying enrollments of five hundred and one hundred, respectively, as goals for Vision 2017 (as described further in Standard Four).

Undergraduate Student Services
The full-time undergraduate student body is likely to continue to be made up of predominantly traditional students between the ages of 17 and 22; most students will continue to live in on-campus housing. As the reputation of the College grows, it is anticipated that we will attract more students from outside the New England area, including an increasing population from outside the United States; this will help to keep our residential occupancy rate at or close to 95 percent. The types of services currently provided for the undergraduate student body, such as academic support services and student life functions, will continue to be a primary focus.

With our commitment to improvement in overall retention at a level consistently better than 75 percent, staff will need to look for further ways to engage students, both in and beyond the classroom. As articulated in the College’s latest strategic plan, with the hiring of professional academic advisers, all first-year students (and some sophomores) will now be advised through a professional advising model. Supplementing this level of direct service, the College is committed to providing 24-hour online support for students. It is anticipated that the leadership programs will continue to grow, as will the programming focus on Class Committees, with the goal of establishing early affiliation with the College. Intercollegiate athletics have played a key role in the growth of the student body, and Lasell will be looking to add additional intercollegiate teams in the upcoming years; the addition of a new athletic center will be a key support in the expansion of these offerings.

Emphasis will continue to be placed on the international dimension of the undergraduate experience; this dimension includes semester-long study abroad opportunities, short-term international service trips, and partnerships negotiated with institutions outside of the United States. The Office of International Services may need to hire new staff, in response to this focus.

In AY 2011-2012, the Student Government Association introduced their Lasell Values to Live By (described further in Standard Eleven), supported and assisted in their efforts by the members of the Student Affairs division. In fall 2011, the College’s stated values were amended to include specific mention of “mutual respect and kindness,” making a clearer statement about the importance of civility on the Lasell campus and in the Lasell community. The next few years will see continued collaboration with the Student Government Association, in the launch of their Values to Live By and the infusion of those values throughout the fabric of the Lasell experience.
Graduate Student Services

As the number of graduate students grows, we expect to see increasing demands on the Office of Career Services. Already carving out an identified presence in the online world, Career Services will continue to expand those offerings and actively seek ways to support and educate Lasell students pursuing graduate degrees entirely online.

The Associate Director of Graduate Student Services engaged in a research project over the summer of 2012 exploring best practices in supporting online students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. She will develop a report outlining these practices and assessing current student supports at Lasell against best practices in the field for presentation this fall. We do anticipate that more formalized data collection to support planning on the graduate level will be accomplished after the NEASC visit in fall, 2012.

Over the next 1-3 years, we will:

- Develop an ongoing system for collecting data on graduate student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates that will inform planning;
- Create a suite of student services that reflect best practices and enhance both the on campus and online student experience at Lasell;
- Foster more outreach to online students through Career Services and the Academic Achievement Center;
- Develop and deliver webinars that reflect online and on campus student needs and interests and that support their academic and career needs.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The goals that are established annually for each unit in Student Affairs are determined through a collaborative process between the directors of each unit and the Vice President of Student Affairs, and are then thoroughly vetted by the College’s president. As with the construction of the annual budget, the annual goals for the units are designed to be consistent with, and expand upon, the College’s immediate and long-term strategic plan.

Through the work of the Student Success Committee, the College regularly and systematically evaluates the student experience at Lasell. In addition to reviewing student persistence overall, data is segmented by ethnicity, athlete, resident/commuter, program of study, EFC, etc. As noted above, this information is combined with the results of survey data and used to inform areas for improvement. Information has been shared across the College in faculty meetings, departmental meetings, senior staff meetings, and Board of Trustees meetings.
STANDARD SEVEN: LIBRARY AND OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

DESCRIPTION

Resources and Access
The Jesse S. Brennan Library at Lasell College upholds the following statement of mission:

The mission of the Brennan Library shall reflect and support the mission of Lasell College. Brennan Library shall provide the services, resources, and access to resources to support and serve the curricular and information needs of its students, faculty, and staff and insofar as possible, to share these resources with the broader community.

The Brennan Library contains a collection of over 64,151 items and shares resources with forty-two libraries, including six academic libraries, as a member of the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) and the Massachusetts Library System, which replaced the Metrowest Regional Library System on July 1, 2010. MLN provides the Library’s patrons (Lasell students, faculty, staff, and the residents of Lasell Village) with access to more than six million items and many databases. Material requested from one of the forty-two libraries is usually delivered within forty-eight hours of a request. Also available is the Massachusetts Virtual Catalog, a state-sponsored shared catalog that connects over fifty online catalogs, allowing users to request items that are unavailable at the MLN libraries. Lasell is also a member of the Online Computer Library Center, Inc. (OCLC) network, which represents 72,000 libraries worldwide and gives patrons access to more than one billion items, through Interlibrary Loan (ILL).

As a member of the Minuteman Library Network, the Library is open to the public; patrons with a valid MLN Library card may borrow materials from Brennan Library’s circulating collection and return items that belong to other MLN libraries. The public is also allowed to use the Library’s computers to access the Internet, the Library’s electronic resources, and the online card catalog. There is a posted policy for guest use of Brennan Library computers, and a guest management system created by the College Information Technology Department allows patrons who show a valid ID to obtain a user name and password.

Facilities
The Library also houses the Winslow Archives, which are located on the second floor of the library and contain manuscripts, yearbooks, scrapbooks, photos, and other memorabilia dating back to the founding of the College in 1851. The materials are housed in two rooms: a storage room and an expansion room that was built in fall 2005. A part-time archivist spends six hours per week during the academic year on administration and maintenance of the archives and continues to collect donated materials from alumni and from the greater community. The materials in the archives have been used by students conducting research on various aspects of the history of the College, by relatives of alumni to research family and College history, and by independent scholars.

Library facilities include the Hayes Literacy Lab, a seventeen-seat computer lab with an instructor workstation that is used for teaching information literacy classes and other technology workshops. In addition, the Library houses various offices, including the office of the President. In fall 2010, following the closing of a ground-floor student computer lab, twenty-five computers were added on the first and second floors of the Library. Throughout the Library there are now fifty-nine Dell PCs and ten Macintosh computers, along with three printers, one combination printer/copier, and two scanners. The College spent $58,000 on Library renovation in fall 2010, replacing older furniture with modern, comfortable tables and chairs. Four second-floor study rooms are equipped with Mac Mini computers and wall-mounted plasma screen monitors, which are popular for group study.

At the request of the Student Government Association, the Library increased its hours during academic year 2010-2011. The Library is now open 92.5 hours per week, an increase from 87 during the previous year, and well above the 82 hours per week in 2002. In addition, Library hours increase to 103.5 per week during the weeks before fall and spring final exams. The extended hours during final exams also reflect a response to student requests and have been in place since spring 2009.
Collections
The Library holds more than eighty electronic databases that include 31,190 full-text journals covering subjects from the liberal arts to the sciences and business. The databases are linked to the Library webpage and are organized alphabetically and by subject. As the Library develops its collection in the areas in which College faculty teach, and as both faculty and students initiate research, faculty are encouraged to recommend books and other materials, including online materials, for the Library. As formats have changed, many faculty members have requested large purchases, such as encyclopedias, that formerly would have been in print format; several journals have also been requested in electronic format. The Library currently holds twenty-six e-Books and three e-Journals linked to the Library webpage; these were purchased to support specific academic programs. Over three thousand additional e-Books are available through the Library’s network consortium.

Recent purchases in electronic format that fulfill faculty requests include the MLA International Bibliography, Education Research Complete (which supports the new Master in Education program, started in fall 2010), and Berg Fashion Library. The e-Journal Sports Health: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach and the recently purchased SBRNet (Sports Business Research Journal) support the Master of Science in Sport Management, a 100 percent online program. The Kyo Yamawaki Endowment helps to fund materials in the early education area.

In November 2009, the Library worked with its largest online database vendor to implement a way to differentiate by user type for five databases: Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, SocINDEX, Communication and Mass Media Complete, and SportDISCUS. In July 2010, two more were added: Education Research Complete and MLA International Bibliography. On the Library’s webpage, users can indicate undergraduate or graduate students and faculty status when accessing these resources. The statistics reveal the number of hits for sessions, searches, full-text articles, and abstracts.

Staffing
Library staffing includes three full-time librarians with master’s degrees in library science, one of whom has a second master’s degree in education; one full-time academic year librarian with a master’s degree in library science and a J.D.; one part-time staff member with a bachelor’s degree and an M.A.T.; and two part-time staff members with bachelor’s degrees.

Access
The Library and its information resources are available to the Lasell community and the general public when the Library is open. The library card number is printed on the back of the Lasell College ID (Torch card); a student, faculty, or staff member can access the Library website when not on campus and search for articles and books or request materials from other libraries. In addition, borrowers may use any library in the network with their Torch card, providing additional options for graduate and undergraduate students located in other communities.

Information and Technological Literacy
In order to provide instruction to students in library information literacy, the reference librarians conduct instructional sessions in the information literacy computer lab for students taking first-year seminar (FYS 103/HON102), English 101, and English 102. There were 129 sessions taught in AY2012-13. This instruction during students’ first year, which is mandatory for the writing classes, is followed by instruction for students in intermediate- and upper-level classes that is geared to specific research projects; library support continues through the culminating capstone project during students’ final year. The instructional sessions are designed in consultation with the Association of College and Research Libraries standards. The outcome of the first-year instructional sessions and the level of information literacy instruction use in upper-level courses are measured yearly and are reported in the information literacy assessment report. Students demonstrate their ability to use information resources through the outcome measures administered during or after the instructional session.

The first-year seminar 2010-2011 report documents that first-year seminar students’ average score was 18.6 out of a possible 20 for evaluating website authority, objectivity, accuracy, coverage, and citation. Results for English
101 indicate that 95 percent of students understood the concept of keyword searching and 65 percent of students were able to search the catalog and identify an author and title of a book.

In 2010-11, the English 102 worksheet was phased out and replaced with a rubric that analyzed the works cited pages. Scoring, which ranged from 1-4, was calculated and placed on an Excel spreadsheet (attached). The average score was 2.82. Lasell students are required to complete a major research paper during English 102, following their instructional session. Most academic departments require library-based research projects in a number of their courses.

The reference desk is another forum in which the librarians instruct students in research techniques and procedures. Individualized meetings provide opportunities for more extended and personalized sessions; students are increasingly engaging in in-depth research. The information literacy assessment report documents the use of reference desk sessions by students according to their year. Neither the size of the College nor library staffing permits librarians to act as research liaisons for specific departments. Due to the small size of the College, however, the librarians have strong collegial relationships with faculty, who do not hesitate to ask them for help in designing student research projects, locating materials for teaching, and pursuing their own scholarly work.

The Library website serves as the gateway to the online catalog and the eighty electronic databases. In addition, the website provides a portal for research questions, a journal locator that includes the form for interlibrary loan requests, and citation guides. The citation guides were recently updated to conform to new MLA and APA guidelines. The librarians offer sessions in APA citation that are attended by many classes.

In July and August 2011, eight online tutorials were created in order to familiarize graduate students with the research process. Four of the tutorials were developed in-house by the Head of Reference and Instruction and describe the Library’s webpage, online article databases, scholarly journals, and interlibrary loan procedures. The other four tutorials contain links to tutorials created by EBSCO and the American Psychological Association.

There has also been a significant demand for graduate student reference sessions, which are conducted in person, by telephone, or via email communication. In 2010, between forty and fifty individual reference sessions were requested, and three of the full-time graduate faculty either requested a class session or required that their students make appointments to review their research project with a reference librarian. A reference librarian also attends the three graduate school orientations held each year.

Instructional and Information Technology
RoseMary B. Fuss Teaching and Learning Center (TLC)
Located on the ground floor of the Brennan Library, the Center trains faculty to use technology to engage a diverse population of students in the learning process and to facilitate student-centered learning activities in order to meet course objectives. Providing a welcoming atmosphere, the TLC accommodates and supports faculty by offering various opportunities for growth: individual appointments, small workshops, online tutorials, and weeklong faculty camps.

The TLC also supports the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS), the development of online graduate courses, professional development opportunities for online educators, program and core assessment projects, the Technology Across the Curriculum initiative, and Connected Learning Symposium projects. Lasell’s current learning management system, Moodle, replaced the Blackboard a la carte online learning management system and the homegrown course web pages in fall 2008. All graduate faculty use Moodle to manage their online and hybrid courses. Moodle course web pages are available for all undergraduate courses. At the end of each semester, course evaluations and reports are administered through Moodle. Moodle technical support is provided by eThink Education, an outside vendor that specializes in personalizing this open course management system for colleges and universities and integrating the system with the College’s administrative software system, PowerCAMPUS.

The TLC offers professional development for graduate faculty, supports and monitors the development of online and hybrid courses, and provides documentation and training to support the use of Moodle and multimedia.
learning and teaching tools. The TLC also supports the College’s assessment program and works closely with the Dean of Undergraduate Education in the development of online assessment modules, assists with the online implementation of assessment goals and outcomes provided by department chairs, and trains faculty to produce and preserve artifacts.

Recognizing that computer literacy is a critical part of the core curriculum, we have developed a process that is designed to train students in a just-in-time manner to keep pace with the rapid changes in technology; under this initiative, the TLC implements training when it can be applied to an authentic learning experience. Workshops are presented at the initiation of the professor and are linked directly to classroom assignments; in some cases, entire courses have been developed and presented as prerequisites for subsequent courses or for entry into the professional field. Departments are encouraged to assess the implementation of core requisites for developing technology-literate graduates. The TLC monitors and reports on this assessment process to the Dean of Undergraduate Education.

APPRAISAL

Facilities
In January 2008, new carpeting was installed; several stacks of shelving were relocated, following a student’s proposal, in order to bring more light into the Library’s front area. In spring 2010, the print periodical stacks were consolidated so that materials from the Curriculum Library could be moved to that location; this adjustment added an office and storage space for the Information Technology Department. The lounge area that had been used by graduate students was reevaluated and is now a lounge for both commuters and graduate students.

Collections
The Library has been placing a higher priority on increased spending in the budget category of electronic resources. Spending in this area has increased 23 percent between FY 2010 and FY 2013. Consequently, the spending for print journals has decreased over the past few years, down 15 percent between FY 2009 and anticipated FY 2012 spending. Books continue to be an important part of the Brennan Library collection, and circulation activity statistics show that checking out of items by Lasell students increased by 20 percent between 2009 and 2010; checking out by Lasell faculty during that period increased by 28 percent. Between FY 2010 and FY 2013, spending in this category is expected to increase by six percent. Appendix N: Library Resources Evaluation assesses the library and its resources, including the support these resources give to the academic programs. The growth of the collection, expenditures per subject category, and circulation by subject areas are part of the evaluation.

Access
In fall 2010, the Brennan Library website (http://library.lasell.edu) was redesigned and linked to the College home page, making it more easily accessible. The website provides 24/7 online access to nearly all of the electronic resources in the Library’s collection and to the online catalog, and received 143,082 “hits” in FY12. The website also includes APA and MLA citation guides, as well as interlibrary loan and reserve book forms.

Information and Technological Literacy
While information literacy instruction is mandatory for first-year students through their English classes and faculty are strongly encouraged to bring their other classes to the library literacy lab, there are some students who will receive only one year of formal instruction. At the Library’s reference desk, students can receive one-on-one instruction, and many students take advantage of this option. The desk is staffed forty-five hours per week with a professional librarian. The Library’s reference email address is linked to the library web page so that students, especially distance learners, can contact librarians with questions.
Facilities
In July 2010, the space planning firm Rickes Associates presented a proposal for a potential redesign of the Brennan building in order to create an Information Commons/Academic Support Center. This would realign resources and services for more effective use by students and faculty. While some of these services are currently housed in the Brennan building, others, such as academic advising, would be moved from another building. The College does hope to renovate the library in the future, in accordance with the Master Plan design for the area surrounding it. The renovation would include locating all books in compressed shelving on the bottom floor and establishing the main floor as an information commons and academic support center. New study spaces would be constructed on the top floor.

Staffing
The growth of the graduate school and the corresponding increased demand by students for research assistance has justified the need to add a full-time, academic year professional librarian. From September 2011 – February 2012, there were 40 individual graduate student reference sessions, which is on track to match or increase the statistics for 2010-11. The librarian would provide outreach to graduate students (both on-campus and distance learners) and graduate school faculty. The librarian would also attend all graduate school orientations, work scheduled hours on the reference desk, attend graduate school committee meetings, and participate in collection development relevant to the graduate school and its programs.

Information and Technological Literacy
This past summer, the Head of Reference and Instruction created eight online tutorials which were placed on the graduate student landing page on the College intranet. The tutorials cover topics including how to navigate the Brennan Library website, accessing the Library’s online article databases and e-Books, basic searching concepts, how to locate an article, and a guide to APA style.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Evaluation of Library resources and services is conducted annually through the use of the following: Brennan Library Annual Reports, Library Annual Budget Reports, Reference and Instruction Annual Reports, and Information Literacy Assessment Reports. The latter includes an annual English 101 “Getting to Know You” worksheet aimed at first year students, which is updated every year based on the previous year’s responses. All worksheets are analyzed and become part of the Information Literacy Assessment Report. Reference desk queries are tracked using a form which becomes part of the Assessment Report.

In addition to supporting the institution’s overall departmental assessment efforts, the TLC supports the implementation and assessment of technology - across-the-curriculum efforts by helping departments develop goals and outcomes designed to prepare students to become computer literate.

Other annual data compiled by the Brennan Library and used for evaluation includes: Minuteman Library Network annual statistics, and usage statistics (searches, sessions, retrievals) provided by various database vendors.
STANDARD EIGHT: PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

DESCRIPTION

Lasell College has one campus spanning fifty acres within the neighborhoods of Newton, Massachusetts, located eight miles west of downtown Boston at the intersection of Route 128 and the Massachusetts Turnpike. The College's campus comprises fifty-seven buildings in the heart of an affluent residential neighborhood and is in walking distance to public transportation. College-owned physical resources include 575,000 square feet of building space, of which student residence halls represent 337,000 square feet. Adjacent to Lasell College is Lasell Village, a thirteen-acre senior housing community that shares classroom facilities and facilities management expertise with the College.

The College’s architecture ranges in style from the original clapboard houses or “white ladies” built in the nineteenth century, to modern, mostly twentieth-century, brick buildings. Construction in the past decade is consistent in size and scale with neighborhood architecture. To support a decade of growth in a primarily residential student body, we embarked on the construction of five residential halls, the Donahue Center for Creative and Applied Arts, and the Arnow Campus Center. Each new building project has given the College an opportunity to establish gateways into the campus, create strong pedestrian circulation, landscape green spaces, and relocate parking. To foster greater college community involvement, social space has been created for students, including new student lounges in residence halls, added general-use spaces, and a café in the Campus Center; on-campus parking has been reduced and moved to underground parking areas. Additional outdoor gathering spaces are planned in the new Arnow Quad.

Lasell’s connected learning philosophy is manifested in the building and maintenance of the on-site connected learning facilities: Lasell Village and Holway Child Study Centers (The Barn and Holway Child Study Center – Rockwell). Lasell Village is an educational, continuing-care retirement community located on thirteen acres of land at the southwest end of the campus. Lasell Village is a 501(3) organization with a separate board of trustees. The College has five management agreements with the Village whereby the College provides services to the Village - Management, Education, IT, Facilities and Public Safety. A unique feature of the Lasell Village facility is the inclusion of classrooms that are used by Lasell College and the RoseMary B. Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies. The buildings on the southwest side of the main campus and the site of the Center for Research create a clear physical link between the Village and the campus. The Holway Child Study Center facilities serve as on-site laboratory schools for the Early Childhood Education Program.

The Plant Operations Department is situated in the Business and Finance Division, and the Director of Plant Operations oversees the Departments of Plant Operations and Public Safety for both Lasell College and Lasell Village. The Department of Plant Operations is responsible for the management and operation of all grounds and facilities at the College. The Plant Operations Department staff are on call 24 hours per day, 365 days a year, and provide both routine and emergency maintenance and repair services, disaster recovery support, minor renovations, event setups, and moving services for Lasell College’s fifty-five buildings. Plant Operations leads Lasell’s continuing efforts toward environmental sustainability and works with other departments throughout the College to maintain green awareness.

The management of facilities at Lasell College is divided into two areas. The Director of Construction Projects, who is part-time, coordinates the planning, design and construction or major buildings or projects on campus. The Director reports to the Vice President for Business and Finance. The Director of Plant Operations and Sustainability oversees minor annual capital projects, facilities planning, and budgeting. The Director of Plant Operations and Sustainability champions the College’s sustainability initiatives, partnering with College and Village students, faculty, staff, and residents to design and implement sustainable operations and learning opportunities; the Assistant Director also oversees the day-to-day operations of facilities. There are thirteen full-time employees within the Department of Plant Operations, and the department outsources medium-to-large construction projects, trash/recycling removal, landscaping, and other projects and tasks. The two Directors have begun to collaborate on major construction projects to facilitate our sustainability efforts.
The Department of Public Safety is responsible for ensuring the safety and security of the Lasell community through crime prevention and community policing activities. The department consists of the Director of Public Safety, a lieutenant, three sergeants, ten officers, and an office manager. A dispatcher and officers are on duty 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. All uniformed members of the Campus Police have the authority to apprehend and arrest any individual involved in illegal acts on the campus and in areas immediately adjacent to the campus. The Director of Public Safety is responsible for the overall management of Campus Police, the shuttle and the College van fleet, including planning, scheduling training, and managing the day-to-day operations of the department. The Director of Public Safety reports to the Vice President of Business and Finance. In addition to the Director, there is a working Lieutenant, three Sergeants, and ten officers, in addition to an office manager.

Lasell’s technological infrastructure consists of one physical Local Area Network connected in a Star topology with multimode gigabit fiber to a central server room located in Brennan Library. The server environment consists of a single VMWare virtual farm and a handful of standalone physical servers. The College infrastructure is standardized around Microsoft servers and enterprise products including MS SQL server for databases, MS Exchange for corporate messaging, and student email outsourced to MS Live@Edu. Over eighty approved campus-wide information systems support academic and administrative functions of the College. Backups are a combination of local backups residing at Lasell Village and hosted off-site backups. Over two hundred wireless access points are spread throughout the campus, providing wireless coverage in all residential buildings and on 85 percent of the rest of the campus.

The Department of Informational Technology (IT) is positioned in the Business and Finance Division and is led by the Chief Information Officer (CIO). The Department is responsible for planning and support of the network and systems, telecommunications, campus-wide information systems, desktop systems and personal devices, multimedia, classroom technology, and the Technology Help Desk. Key IT personnel are on call 24 hours per day, 365 days a year, to provide emergency maintenance and disaster recovery support. The Technology Help Desk provides live help to students, Lasell Village residents, and employees of the College and Village 24 hours per day, 365 days a year, to provide emergency support for critical functions such as password resets, issues with Moodle and other academic support systems.

The IT Department oversees technology and support for both Lasell College and Lasell Village. The Chief Information Officer oversees major projects, planning, budgeting, and system security. There are ten full-time employees within the IT Department, and the Department retains maintenance contracts for most software and major hardware components. Department programmers develop most software customizations and reports in-house, outsourcing projects when there is no in-house expertise. The CIO works closely with the IT Governance Committee, which is charged with overseeing policy, practices, and strategic planning for technology.

**Physical Resource Planning**

In 2008, Lasell engaged a three-firm team of architects and space planners to develop a Campus Master Plan in order to identify a long-term strategy for growth, support the College’s strategic plan, and provide the strategic context for a comprehensive fundraising campaign. The process included faculty and staff interviews; research and evaluation of existing data; and a catalog of the physical environment, including the landscape, circulation, parking, and architecture. The final plan creates a central green as a visual physical center of the campus, designates improvements to Woodland Road, and identifies existing buildings to be renovated or repurposed as well as new building sites and proposed additions to buildings; all of these projects reinforce the long-term goals of the College.

A variety of campus committees provide community representatives to offer input to facilities planning and administration, including the Board of Trustees Finance Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Senior Management Team, the Student Government Association (SGA) (which sends a representative to Plant Operations), the Environmental Sustainability Committee, and the Lasell Neighborhood Association. Each year, the Director of Plant Operations, in collaboration with facilities staff, consults input from student surveys and campus committees to compile a comprehensive operating budget. This report, along with the Capital Facilities
Plan, lists all maintenance requests and new projects in order of priority. The College budgets for the adaptation and renewal of facilities in order to ensure compliance with legal requirements and little deferred maintenance.

Classroom and educational space resource planning is guided by the Campus Master Plan and invested department heads. In 2008, the College engaged Rickes Associates to assess general and specialty instructional spaces and make recommendations based on current usage and planned growth. The Vice President for Enrollment Management, The Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Registrar, the Chief Information Officer, and the Director of Plant Operations collaborated to make recommendations to upgrade classrooms and add technology during the capital budgeting process. Each semester, the Registrar prepares a space utilization report that indicates classroom usage throughout the day. Based on this report, the Registrar works with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and department chairs to identify optimal scheduling of classes.

Resource planning for technology is guided by a variety of constituents to ensure community representation. These constituents include the Strategic Planning Committee, the Senior Management Team, the Student Government Association (SGA) representative to IT, faculty representatives, and department directors. In 2009, the College engaged Corporate IT Solutions to produce a Five-Year Technology Infrastructure Plan. This plan included a design for an infrastructure that would support anticipated growth in the student body and online programs, as well as business continuity and disaster recovery. Annually, the CIO reviews the strategic plan and feedback from regular strategic planning meetings as well as constituents from the listed groups, to assess requests for replacement and new technology resources.

In 2011 the IT Department adopted the Agile Scrum Development methodology to guide scheduling and completion of technology-related projects. Agile Scrum is an iterative or incremental methodology for project management and software development. Each month, Project Owners and members of the IT Team meet to select projects from the Project Backlog to be moved into the Sprint Backlog that will be completed the next month. During each month, the IT staff focuses on Sprint Projects, fixes to existing systems, and small changes.

**Compliance with Legal, Safety, and Environmental Requirements**

The College continues to be in compliance with local, state, and federal building codes and regulations; buildings are inspected annually by the City of Newton and by our insurance carriers. The City issues certificates of occupancy each year, and the Newton Fire Department performs periodic checks. All of the buildings have been tied into the City’s fire alarm notification system for quicker response.

Once a year, Student Government Association officers, representatives of Student Affairs, the President, and the Director of Plant Operations and Public Safety conduct a campus safety walk. Based upon this review, as well as an analysis of student traffic patterns, new lighting has been added to the campus each year. In addition, the Director of Plant Operations and the College Ombudsman communicate on a regular basis with community residents in order to address noise, traffic, trash, or other issues.

In 2008, Massachusetts established identity theft regulations via 201 CMR 17.00: Standards for the Protection of Personal Information. To comply with these regulations, the CIO and Council developed the Written Information Security Plan and a Record Retention and Disposition Policy. These policies were approved by IT Governance and distributed to the community. The College also maintains a Computer Use Policy and Laptop Guidelines to outline the proper use and securing of College data and systems for the College community.

All Campus Police officers are graduates of certified police academies that are conducted by the Massachusetts State Police and/or the Municipal Police Training Council. In addition, all officers are required to complete forty hours of in-service First Aid/CPR training and firearms recertification annually. The lieutenant makes available the Annual Campus Safety Guide and Fire Report to the community in order to maintain compliance with the Clery Act. In response to recent tragedies at other institutions, the lieutenant developed Emergency Campus Lockdown Procedures and oversaw the development of the College’s Emergency Response and Management Plan. The College performs an annual campus lockdown drill to test the effectiveness of the plan. A post-incident analysis or after-action review is conducted after each drill, to assess how to better prepare in the future.
The College is in compliance with the American Disabilities Act for students and employees. In 2010, the Dean of Student Affairs was identified as the College’s 504 Coordinator, and in that capacity he has worked with colleagues throughout the campus to better organize our response to student needs and to ensure that the College is as responsive as possible to identified needs. Effective in AY2012-13, the College has constituted a new position of Director of Disability Services, and the individual in that role will take on the responsibility as the College’s 504 Coordinator. The Director of Human Resources (HR) responds to documented disabilities claims at the College for employees. When a student or employee self-identifies as having specific, documented needs, the Director of Disability Services or the Director of HR works to ensure that appropriate physical and technical accommodations are made. Offices that are most often responsible for making appropriate accommodations include: the Academic Achievement Center, Residential Life, Information Technology, and Plant Operations.

Green awareness is growing on campus; in June of 2008, President Alexander signed the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment to lead climate and sustainability institutional reform by reducing carbon emission 80 percent on campus by 2050. The Environmental Sustainability Committee is responsible for the Green Campus Initiative at Lasell and has grown in impact and structure, with the added position of Assistant Director for Plant Operations & Sustainability. Initiated sustainability efforts include a single-stream recycling system, deconstruction of the Building and Grounds Barn, organization of a Bail Out Program during student move-out, the recycling of kitchen oil to heat homeless shelters, and installation of a high-efficiency industrial dishwasher. In 2009, Lasell was awarded a grant from the Tomfohrde Foundation to install energy meters to log electricity consumption in four residence halls, and the College was presented the Green Business Award from the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce. We recently secured over 600 LED bulbs to install around campus in ongoing efforts to reduce electricity consumption. The construction of East and West residence halls contained a rain harvest system. The construction of North Hall also includes a rain harvesting system, both of which are used to irrigate green space on campus.

**Systems Security and Reliability**

The College ensures the reliability and security of technology through annual operational and capital funding. Aging equipment is replaced regularly through capital allocations based on critical need and priority of use. Information security is the responsibility of the CIO and all members of the IT staff. IT Governance reviews and approves institutional policies as they relate to information security. In February of 2008, the College reported a data breach from an employee accessing information without proper authority. A full list of security measures that have been put in place since the 2008 data breach is described in Appendix O: Post Breach Security Measures Memo. Measures put in place to protect network resources include network and application firewalls, network access control, automated Windows updates, segmented VLANS, password policies, and enterprise-level virus protections. Measures to protect data from misuse include change management for data access, scheduled folder-level access control audits, and audit user security for PowerCampus and Microsoft Dynamics GP.

**APPRAISAL**

Lasell College made significant investments in the physical and technological infrastructure in the past decade, all of which were guided by the Campus Master and Strategic Plans. The College embarked on the construction of five residential halls (Bragdon Suites, Rockwell Hall, East Hall, West Hall, and North Hall) with social spaces and lounges to support a doubling of the undergraduate residential student population. We added a second fitness center for students on campus in the McColland residence hall in 2009. The Donahue Center for Creative and Applied Arts, with state-of-the-art classrooms, faculty offices, and expanded studio and archival space, was built to support the physical and technical demands of the Fashion department as well as classrooms to support the 30 percent increase in classes offered. The Arnow Campus Center was created as a mixed-use space to provide needed social areas for students, staff offices, and residential living spaces for undergraduates. The major renovation of Hamel House gave a new home to the growing undergraduate and graduate Admissions Office and increased the inventory of offices on campus to support the 32 percent increase in employees. The renovation of Hoag House is the first of a long-term plan to upgrade residential houses for upper-classmen. During the summer of 2012 the College undertook a $4 million renovation of the Valentine Dining Hall, the student dining hall.
The College maintains a list of physical and technological infrastructure projects and planned maintenance. Funding is prioritized through the strategic planning process, the Campus Master Plan, a scheduled maintenance timetable, and compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

**Woodland Road**

Woodland Road is the crossroads of the campus and serves as the focus of many intersecting movement patterns from six major residential halls on the south-east corner of campus, the Campus Center and Lasell Village. Recently the city of Newton repaved the road and installed two speed tables with crosswalks and pavement markers to calm traffic speeds and better define crosswalks. To further improve pedestrian safety and create pedestrian circulation, the College invested $187,000 on new and safer sidewalks on Woodland and Maple Roads which included ADA compliant curb cuts. The College would like to reduce the speed on Woodland to 20mph; however, state regulations dictate that it must remain at 30mph. As part of an ongoing effort to establish gateways to the campus, a “Standard Sign Package” has been developed and added to buildings on Woodland and Maple Roads and Commonwealth Avenue to establish gateways into the campus.

**Academic Facilities**

As part of the Campus Master Plan the College engaged Rickes Associates to assess general and specialty instructional spaces. Using the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) guidelines, Lasell’s demands on classrooms falls below the maximum guidelines for Station Size and Utilization Rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Type</th>
<th>NCES Guidelines Station Size</th>
<th>Lasell Station Size</th>
<th>NCES Guidelines Utilization Rates</th>
<th>Lasell Utilization Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>20-25 ASF/station</td>
<td>21.8 ASF/station Wass Hall 281.9 ASF/station Wolfe Hall</td>
<td>67 percent Available Hrs</td>
<td>56 percent Day 15 percent Evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty</td>
<td>30-150 ASF/station</td>
<td>30.5 ASF/station Wass Hall 22.0 ASF/station Wolfe Hall</td>
<td>50 percent Available Hrs</td>
<td>30 percent Day 14 percent Evening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the past ten years, the College added or upgraded technology in most of the classroom facilities. Many of these renovations include repainting, new ceilings & lighting, flooring, sound panels, window treatments, classroom furniture, and multi-media equipment. Classrooms in the Donahue Center were equipped with state-of-the-art technology including SMARTPodiums, document cameras, and multiple projectors to facilitate an interactive learning environment. Although significant investments have been made to classroom technology, Vision 2017 articulates a need to create consistency in classroom control equipment as well as the need to expand “Smart” technology. Significant renovations to classrooms and science laboratories in Wass Hall are necessary and these renovations are addressed in the Strategic Plan. Each semester, the Registrar prepares a space utilization report that indicates the usage of classrooms throughout the day.

**Office Space**

Office space has been at a premium and will be even scarcer as the ranks of both faculty and staff grow. The need for additional office space is a recurring theme in the appraisal of the campus – particularly office space for full- and part-time faculty. Projected growth in administrative staff will also generate demand for additional office space. Over the past decade the purchase of new real estate, re-appropriation of existing buildings, and new construction added over 28,000 sq ft of office space. While all full-time faculty now have private offices, part-time faculty continue to share offices. Although there is sufficient office space, due to the nature of the College’s inventory of small buildings it is often difficult to cluster departments within a single building.

**Social Spaces**

Social spaces including meeting spaces, hang out space, causal late-night eating, and student activity space are all seen as important both to facilitate day-to-day social interaction and to create a stronger sense of community. Projects to increase social spaces on campus include the reallocation of library space to a Graduate and Commuter Lounge, construction of over 5,000 sq. ft. of social space in the new Arnow Campus Center, furnishing the Wolfe
Lobby and Glow Lounge with cafés, and social spaces built into each floor of the five new residential halls. The Café was moved from the Library to the Glow Student Lounge, providing additional study and social space within the Library, while providing a 24x7 study and social space to students in the Glow Student Lounge.

Automobiles
Automobiles penetrate into almost all of the campus, and parking is allowed on two major walkways resulting in a compromised experience for pedestrians. Parking on one of these major walkways was eliminated in the summer of 2012 with the completion of the Arnow Quad. As part of the construction of North Hall, the College has built an underground parking garage for approximately 72 student parking spaces. The College also secured approval to build a 34 space parking lot on unused land at the end of Maple Terrace, thereby allowing us to create a green space or quad which is now known as the Arnow Quad.

Parking is constrained when holding events and athletic games on campus. In response to identified parking issues, the College constructed two underground garages and in 2008 eliminated parking permits for first year students. Although new underground parking was created, above ground parking was lost with the construction of new buildings, thus creating a very small net gain in parking spaces. Even with these efforts students often work off-campus and automobiles continue to be ubiquitous at Lasell. Handicap accessible parking has improved as lots are repaved and additional handicap spots are added or moved closer to buildings. The College hired an outside firm to conduct a parking study that resulted in several recommendations to improve overall safety. The study concluded that the College has an adequate supply of parking on campus to support future growth needs.

Other Space Needs
Miscellaneous space needs were raised by most of those interviewed for the Campus Master Plan and during the Strategic Planning process. Those spaces include: athletic facilities – both indoor and outdoor, fitness facilities, quiet/contemplative spaces for consulting and spiritual time, performance space, facilities space including a loading dock, and space for holding a variety of large and small events. Some of these space demands have been satisfied with the addition of Grellier Field (an NCAA regulation size turf field), the prayer room in the Arnow Campus Center, the relocation of the fitness center to a larger space in the Edwards Student Center, new fitness facilities in McClelland Hall, and Athletic Training Rooms in Forrest Suites. Funding a new Athletic Center with facilities to support co-educational NCAA sports has been identified in Vision 2017. With the construction of the Donahue Center, grounds crew staging and storage space was lost and demand for in-house maintenance continues to increase. Facilities staff struggle with receiving large shipments down small residential roads, and the addition of a central loading dock would increase the efficiency of receiving goods.

Sustainable Technological Infrastructure
A sustainable technological infrastructure with systems to meet the needs of a growing online population continues to be a focus of town meetings and the Strategic Planning process. Major technological infrastructure projects over the past ten years included replacing end-of-life edge switches and the network core, spreading wireless internet access to 100 percent of the campus, incorporating multimedia technology in most classrooms, combining over 60 physical servers to four virtual servers, improving security systems, increasing Internet bandwidth 500x up/down, upgrading the ERP system to Sungard PowerCAMPUS, moving to Moodle Course Management System, and adding over fifty systems and subsystems to add capability to administrative functions. During this time, the College has maintained a technology replacement plan that funds equipment and software that no longer function or meet the requirements of the system or end user. The projects to upgrade edge switches, wireless, and multimedia classrooms for the Donahue Center were funded primarily by the George I. Alden Trust.

As the demand for technology to support online education continues to increase, funds and staff to support this platform for learning must be articulated. A written Information Technology Plan is needed to map out how the College will leverage new and existing technologies to achieve the strategic goals of the institution. This plan would also ensure that the institution does not overextend its dependence on end-of-life technologies. As online educational programming increases and the technological infrastructure is the only physical resources the online student interacts with, administrators must focus on these resources from the students’ perspective and attend to the deficiencies in these systems.
**Physical Resource Planning**

All high-level strategic planning is done by the Strategic Planning Committee with the input of the community through town meetings. In 2007 President Alexander expanded the Strategic Planning Committee membership to include many Director level positions at the College as well as increased participation from faculty, alumni, Trustees, and students. The increase in participation was effective in broadening participation of the College community in both the planning process as well as the implementation process of the strategic plan. The inclusion of neighbors and local community members in the strategic planning process helped to mend the reported town and gown issues described in the 2002 report, and the College works closely with the Lasell Neighborhood Association and the City of Newton in the physical planning process.

In all areas of management for the campus’s physical and technological infrastructure, we hire experienced staff through regional searches. Since 2002, staffing for IT increased from to 7 to 11 FTEs providing additional staff to support the Technology Help Desk, multimedia classrooms, networking, and programming. Staffing for Plant Operations increased from 10 FTEs in 2002 to 14 FTEs in 2012 to support carpentry, plumbing, and general maintenance. Although staffing has increased, demands from the community outweigh available internal resources significantly as quantified by the 500+ open Work Order queued collectively in the Facilities and Information Technology Work Order Tracking Systems. Since staffing is lean, much of the College’s facilities and technology history and documentation is not written and organized in either paper or electronic form. Both the Facilities and Information Technology departments provide support during normal working hours and offer “on call” evening and weekend service for emergencies. Though most calls are answered within 24 hours during business hours, off-hour support for students and events is lacking. As outlined in *Vision 2017*, there is a documented need for off-hours support that will be addressed over the next 6 years.

Technology infrastructure resource planning is based upon the IT Infrastructure Roadmap 2017 and a computer replacement cycle. Planning for the replacement of “big ticket” items such as wireless access points, end switches, phone system, security (CiscoNAC), and audio visual systems is not currently mapped out and are requested when “end-of-life” is determined by the vendor and sometimes after EOL if support can be provided in-house or by a consultant. All critical systems are replaced before or at the time they are no longer supported by the manufacturer. The College has funded the initial phases of the infrastructure roadmap with the purchase of a core switch, virtual infrastructure, storage, and backup systems. The five year computer replacement cycle has not always been fully funded annually, but in the FY 12-13 budget the College funded leasing ¼ of the desktop fleet with the plan to have 100 percent of the fleet on a four year replacement cycle in four years.

**Compliance with Legal, Safety, and Environmental Requirements**

Over the past ten years, the College has enhanced security with a comprehensive video surveillance system, card access to 50 percent of buildings and all major residence halls, 40 percent increased security staffing, installation of campus-wide Code Blue emergency phones, installation of an emergency text messaging system with enterprise computer screen controls, expanded shuttle service, and the implementation of an Emergency Response Management Plan. Over the past ten years Public Safety has increased from a Director and 7.5 FTE officers to a Director, Lieutenant, 3 Sergeants and 10 Officers (14 FTE). To improve residential hall safety, the College has added 4 part-time ID Checker positions to track guests who visit these buildings.

Lasell’s *Emergency Response and Management Plan* was updated this past year; the Plan is designed to be updated after no more than five years expire, with the understanding that revisions may occur more frequently as needed. An important aspect of the Emergency Response and Management Plan is community notification in the event of an emergency or important and/or unusual event. The Campus Police Department can utilize a number of systems to contact the community including but not limited to an emergency text messaging system, desktop alerting software, voicemail, email, and hand written notices when needed. Testing of these systems is conducted annually. Recently, the College enacted a test emergency gas leak in a large resident hall.

Although the College is in compliance with the American Disabilities Act for students and employees, not all buildings are ADA “friendly.” Many buildings such as the Student Center are not equipped with elevators. For
employees and students with documented needs, classes and offices are moved to new buildings that are easily accessible. New buildings over the past ten years include ADA “friendly” features such as blind and deaf “friendly” resident rooms and emergency lighting to alert the deaf of residential building emergencies. ATM machines were recently replaced in the Campus Center with an ADA compliant machine.

System Security and Reliability
The IT Infrastructure Roadmap 2017 was developed to address a sustainable infrastructure as well as reliability, disaster recovery, and business continuity. The plan focuses on planned replacement of end-of-life systems, strategic growth, and new technologies. The first phase of the project was a major network redesign to accommodate the trend toward enterprise server virtualization and eliminating individual servers as single points of failure. This phase created an efficient distribution of server resources and made significant strides toward business continuity and agile infrastructure growth. This phase also realized a significant reduction of electrical and cooling resources. The second phase of this project was funded in fiscal years 2011 and 2012 when funding was made available to replace an end-of-life core, expand the virtual infrastructure to support growth and provide a reliable backup solution. The next phase toward better disaster recovery and business continuity has started with the planning of a second data center at Lasell Village or off-site peer. According to Educause Core Data Services, 2011 Report (http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/PUB8008.pdf) a majority (70 percent) of institutions co-locate their network operations center (NOC), and half their telephone switch center, with their central IT data center. Fewer than half (41 percent) of institutions co-locate both the NOC and the switch center with the data center. Lasell has created, but has not yet funded, an “Infrastructure Roadmap” to co-locate the NOC off-site at either Lasell Village or another institution.

Since the 2007 reported data breach at Lasell, many security measures have been put in place to address known vulnerabilities as well as the new Massachusetts regulations 201 CMR 17.00 Standards for the Protection of Personal Information of Residents of the Commonwealth. These measures include: introduction of a change management systems, regular review of access to systems, encryption of backup tapes, removal of generic logons, significantly increasing the logging of activity on the network, encryption of laptops, and the introduction of a Written Information Security Program (WISP). Each year capital and operating funds are provided to support new system security appropriate for the institution. Though funds are available to support new systems, security is not the primary function of any individual IT staff member but is distributed throughout the team and is generally addressed as a lower priority over operational issues and projects for other departments.

PROJECTION

Physical Infrastructure
The College will continue to use the Campus Master and Strategic Plans, town meetings, as well as the outcome of specific studies to guide major physical infrastructure projections over the next ten years. Both the current Campus Master and Strategic Plans articulate the construction of a larger athletic facility to accommodate co-ed NCAA sports. The facility is currently designed to be located at the corner of Grove Street and Myrtle Avenue, and includes over 100 underground parking spaces and a loading dock for large deliveries. Smaller construction and landscaping projects recommended in these plans include: moving Case House to create a campus green, renovating Brennan Library to address current demands on the space and to create an entrance to the campus green, planting trees to line pedestrian walkways, and renovating Woodland Hall, the Yamawaki Art and Cultural Center, Wass Hall, Wolfe Hall, the Campus Center, and the current Athletic Center. The renovation to the dining hall is projected to be completed by the fall of 2012. An iconic building and signature open spaces are projected for completion over the next ten years; however, funding for these projects are secondary to funding a new athletic facility. Federal funds are being sought to create a mathematics laboratory in Wass Hall as well as other renovations to the Wass science labs.

Vision 2017 sets forth initiatives that are not directly infrastructure projects, but physical infrastructure is required to support them. For instance, office space will need to be created to accommodate the growth in faculty and staff. The ongoing effort to establish gateways to the campus will be completed in the next ten years as the “Standard Sign Package” will be applied to all building and campus roads.
Institutional initiatives set forth in Vision 2017 address a reduction in electricity, gas, and water consumption by 10 percent and the President’ Climate Commitment to reduce carbon emission 80 percent by 2050. Sustainability initiatives will be coordinated by staff, faculty, and students involved with a proposed Center for a Sustainable Society. The Center will work with the community to develop: energy efficiency programs for lighting, HVAC heating systems, air sealing and insulation of campus buildings, and new contracts containing provisions to purchase energy from renewable sources as well as to generate renewable energy on campus. Education programs are projected to be coordinated by student “EcoReps” and others around topics such as energy and water conservation, recycling, source reduction, and other sustainability initiatives.

**Technological Infrastructure Projection**

Vision 2017 projects an expanding online program in the graduate program, in a new Bachelors completion program, and in an expanded undergraduate summer term. To support the growth in online academic and administrative programs, the College will continually need to invest in hardware, bandwidth, and systems such as Moodle, Self Service, and MyLasell, and provide sustainable access to these systems. These systems also need to be retrofitted for mobile devices, as we have seen a recent jump from 10 percent to 30 percent usage from these devices and projects that this usage will jump to 90 percent in the next five years. The IT Infrastructure Roadmap 2016 (Appendix P) forecasts the need for major infrastructure investments to support business continuity and disaster recovery, which include a second data center as well as a more robust off-site backup solution that supports the burgeoning growth in media files. As the complexity of these systems is projected to increase, developing the in-house talent pool, through training, outside consultants, and additional staff to support these systems will need to be funded. By 2013, IT staff will expand the IT Infrastructure Roadmap 2017 to include new projections for security, information systems, multimedia, and support.

Over the next ten years, it is projected that several changes will be made to both academic and administrative information systems. To support a projected capital campaign, as well as growth in online programs, systems to facilitate sophisticated communications (customer relations manager), social networking, and data mining efforts will need to be acquired and implemented before the campaign commences. To support a shift toward a paperless campus, the document imaging project (which is currently only used for admissions applications) is projected to be distributed within every department on campus. A shift toward data-informed decision making requires that support for a data warehousing system and more sophisticated reporting, metrics, and dashboards for key data points be funded. Representatives from the IT staff will continue to maintain a leadership role in the PowerCAMPUS customer community as the Datatel – Sungard HigherEd (now Ellucian) merger “shakes out,” keep abreast of the PowerCAMPUS product line within the organization, and plan accordingly. The Campus Master Plan forecasts the need for three additional program specific computer labs: planning for these labs and the course specific software they will support will be addressed with department chairs.

**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

The senior management team, the management council, and the Board of Trustees, through the annual strategic planning process, review the Strategic Plan and the Campus Master Plan to assess progress and assess for updates to the plan based on current conditions. In addition, internal groups such as the IT Governance Committee and the Sustainability Committee monitor and assess progress towards the IT Master Plan and the sustainability initiatives of the College.

The mechanisms currently in place to ensure continuing assessment and quality improvements for facilities and technology are informed by town meetings, input from neighbors and board members in strategic planning sessions, changes in laws and regulations, as well as the outcome of specific studies and surveys conducted by external vendors hired to provide guidance and benchmarking. Information Technology continually receives feedback from the Student Government Association on the operation and planning of the technological infrastructure.
STANDARD NINE: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

DESCRIPTION
Lasell College has experienced positive financial results over the last decade. Between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2012, total revenues increased 142 percent, from $24.6M to $64.1M. Operating surpluses of over $1.5M were achieved each year, exceeding the budgeted operating surplus. Net assets increased 171 percent, from $16.9M to $45.8M. The College ended June 30, 2012, with a cash surplus of $3.2M on a budgeted surplus of $107,000 (data provided through June 30, 2012 are from unaudited financials).

Enrollment
The College has experienced extraordinary enrollment growth, increasing 65 percent in full-time undergraduates since Fall 2002. In addition, graduate programming has developed since 2002; we now have four graduate degree programs. Fall 2012 FTE enrollment stands at 1,803 students, up from 1,004 in fall 2002. The College’s residential population has grown 65 percent, from 770 residents to 1,271 resident students. Some of the growth in enrollment has been due to the expansion of residential housing capacity. In 2006, we built Rockwell Hall, housing 144 students; in September 2009, East Hall and West Hall opened, housing 135 students; and North Hall opened this fall, housing 102 students.

In the Fall of 2010, full-time undergraduate enrollment reached an historic high of 1,600, falling back to 1,507 in 2011. The drop in enrollment was the result of a smaller incoming class as well as attrition. The College has taken action to correct both of these concerns and first-year retention for Fall 2012 increased eight percentage points over last year (64% to 72%). Applications for admission for Fall 2012 broke all records, 40 percent above the previous year and 15 percent above the previous record. We welcomed 626 new students in the Fall 2012 (also an all-time high), and currently have a 24 percent increase in our inquiry pool for Fall 2013.

Endowment
The College’s investable assets (the Fund) are invested in accordance with a policy adopted by the Board of Trustees on January 26, 2009. The Investment Committee, within the framework of policy guidelines set by the Board and in accordance with the Bylaws of the College, has direct responsibility for the oversight and management of the Fund and for the establishment of investment policies and procedures; it has the power to employ or discharge investment managers, fiscal agents, or other advisors. The primary investment objectives for the Fund are (1) to preserve and enhance the real purchasing power of the principal, and (2) to provide a predictable and stable source of perpetual financial support for the programs and operations of the College.

The College has asset allocation guidelines of up to 70 percent in domestic equities, 20 percent in international equities, 40 percent in fixed income, and 20 percent in alternative investments. The guidelines and the investment performance are reviewed regularly; the College’s endowment fund investments are managed by SEI Private Trust Company. As of June 30, 2012, our endowment was invested as follows: 37 percent in domestic equities, 17 percent in international equities, 37 percent in fixed income, and 9 percent in alternative investments. In a deliberate strategy to grow the endowment, the Investment Committee and the Board of Trustees have, over the last decade, brought the spending rate down to four percent of a trailing three-year rolling average of the fiscal year-end market value of the principal of the fund.

The following table shows the College’s long-term and short-term investments at market value, for the five fiscal years ending June 30, 2008, through June 30, 2012:
Long Term and Short Term Investments
As of June 30, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>$2,611,874</td>
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<td>Equity funds</td>
<td>14,809,854</td>
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<td>6,418,043</td>
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<td>Insurance contracts</td>
<td>146,658</td>
<td>34,899</td>
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<td>Alternative Investments</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2,533,955</td>
<td>2,459,314</td>
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<td>Art work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>$71,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beneficial Interests</td>
<td>2,175,763</td>
<td>1,773,409</td>
<td>1,905,231</td>
<td>2,461,533</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Investments</td>
<td>$24,115,256</td>
<td>$22,283,073</td>
<td>$24,919,973</td>
<td>$29,571,719</td>
<td>$29,601,419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Debt

Standard & Poor’s issued the College a credit rating for the first time in April 2011. The BBB investment grade rating was a sound affirmation of the progress that we have made in the last decade.

As of June 30, 2012, the College’s outstanding debt totals $53.9 million. Approximately 46 percent of the debt is 30-year fixed-rate public debt that is backed by our BBB credit rating with Standard & Poor’s. The remaining 54 percent of the debt has been held by Citizens Bank since September 1, 2009, in a direct purchase transaction. Annual debt service for FY 13 stands at 5.8 percent of the operating expense budget. With the new residence hall opening, the increase in debt service from the 2011 Bond Issue increased from 4.8 percent in FY 10 to 5.8 percent of the operating budget in FY 13. As residential beds on campus are filled to capacity over the next five years, annual debt service as a percentage of the operating budget will drop back to approximately 5 percent and eventually to levels that existed in FY 10, in line with historical institutional trends.

Since the direct purchase agreement with RBC Citizens was up for renewal in 2014, the College took advantage of the low interest environment to discuss with several banks the options available for the debt associated with RBS. After receiving three proposals, the College decided to renew the agreement early with RBS Citizens, extending the renewal date from 2014 to 2022. We were also able to reduce the interest rate by 30bps. The College, like many sister institutions, has three interest rate swaps associated with the variable rate debt. As of June 30, 2012, the swaps, which are 67 percent of LIBOR with fixed rates ranging from 3.4 percent to 3.8 percent, are carried on the College’s financial statements as a liability of $7.7M. Since the swaps continue to have a large liability due to the low LIBOR rate, the College did not feel at this time that breaking the swaps was the proper course of action so the renewal was the best option at this point. Thus we have now attained a long-term fixed debt service schedule that is more reliable and less volatile than the previous structure. This adjustment will also address the criticism leveled by rating agencies that 2014 is too short a horizon.

Budget

The budget process for each fiscal year begins in October with the submission of comparative tuition, fee, and room and board data to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees approves tuition, fee, and room and board rates for the following fiscal year, based on the recommendation of the Board’s Finance Committee.
In January of each year, the Finance Office compiles a revenue budget based on enrollment projections. Budget managers also receive budget packages in January, and they begin a thorough review of operations and alignment with the strategic plan. Budget managers submit budget requests through their respective Senior Management Team member to the Vice President of Business and Finance. The Senior Management Team of the College then acts as the Budget Committee, preparing a preliminary budget in May for presentation to the Board of Trustees in June, upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees approves a final budget in September, based on September enrollments. At the October Board of Trustees meeting, the Finance Committee presents a final budget for approval. Historically, each budget consists of a budgeted operating surplus, and the College has outperformed the budget. One tool that we use to maintain a sound operational budget and ensure an operating surplus is the maintenance of a financial forecast model to assist us in strategic and operational planning. The financial model forecasted five years out; in 2009, the model was adjusted to a ten-year forecast. This tool is instrumental in meeting and achieving the budget set by the Board of Trustees each year. Each month, the College’s Director of Finance sends to budget managers a direct link to their respective budget reports. Each quarter, all Senior Management Team members physically sign their budget to actual report, acknowledging that they have reviewed their respective area budgets.

The Finance Office was recently reorganized to provide better oversight, greater efficiency in operations, and improved accountability. An Assistant Vice President of Finance oversees the business office along with payroll, reporting to the Vice President of Business and Finance. A new procedure manual for the Business Office lays out the functions and procedures of the finance operation. In 2009, the College implemented a tool with CashNet to allow students and parents to pay their bill online, via ACH or credit card. This service will be utilized for all other revenue-generating operations in 2012.

The College’s independent auditor, Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C., meets with the Audit Committee each spring to plan the audit of the fiscal year. Each fall, the Audit Committee meets with the auditors to review the audited financial statements, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The Audit Committee presents the summary of the audit to the full Board of Trustees at the October meeting.

The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees reviews the College’s IRS 990 tax return and recommends its acceptance to the full Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has the opportunity to review the tax return on the Board’s website. The Committee on Trustees is responsible for oversight of the conflict of interest policy. All trustees and senior management team members complete the conflict of interest policy form. The Committee on Trustees brings any significant conflicts to the full Board of Trustees for review.

Fundraising

In 2007, with the arrival of Michael Alexander as the College’s new president, a strategic planning process resulting in Vision 2012 was initiated. Through the strategic planning process, several ambitious fundraising goals were identified, including goals of $1 million in the Annual Fund and $40 million in the endowment by 2012. An electronic screening of Lasell’s donor base was completed early in 2008. What became immediately obvious after electronic screening, which identified 480 potential donor prospects, was that Lasell could potentially raise only $9 million—and then, to make things more challenging, the economy was hit hard by a major stock market decline.

In September 2008, Lasell College, working with fundraising consultants, The Wayland Group, began working on a Strategic Development Plan. The purpose of the plan was to provide a roadmap for Lasell’s advancement program for the next ten years. This was a plan to secure the resources necessary to support Lasell’s mission, program priorities, facility needs, and strategic initiatives. The major focus of the plan was to develop a strategy for board and leadership development and an overall framework for fundraising. The plan was structured in three phases: (1) a $10 million three-year fundraising initiative called Bridge to the Future (BTTF) to raise money for the Center for Creative and Applied Arts, the endowment, and the annual fund; (2) a two-year leadership phase to
include a feasibility study and a quiet phase; (3) a five-year $40 million comprehensive capital campaign to raise money for a new athletic center, the endowment, faculty and program support, and the annual fund.

A staffing investment was made to support the infrastructure needs of the first phase of this plan; it included the hire of a Leadership Giving Officer and a Data Coordinator. In July 2009, Lasell launched the Bridge to the Future Campaign. Kathy Urner-Jones, Special Assistant to the President for Advancement, was promoted to the position of Director of Development. It soon became evident that our current donor base could not support these ambitious fundraising initiatives; at this point, leadership development, and identifying Board prospects with capacity, also became a priority. There was a strategic effort to identify new members for the Board of Trustees and to grow the Board of Overseers to 100 members, through the recruitment of leaders from the external community.

Despite these challenges, fundraising at Lasell College remained relatively robust. In FY 2010, the first year of the BTTF, the campaign goal was $3,750,000. The development team exceeded the goal by nine percent, raising a total of $4,069,483. This included a $2 million pledge to name the Center for Creative and Applied Arts for Nancy Lawson Donahue ’49. The annual fund was rebranded as the Lasell Fund, and the College had another record-breaking year, raising $774,711 with the help of a $150,000 challenge from an alumna trustee. In FY 2011, the campaign goal was $2,775,000, exceeded by 16 percent, as a total of $3,214,625 was raised. Former overseer Robert Arnow pledged $1 million after the dedication of the Joan Weiler Arnow ’49 Campus Center in May. In spite of a difficult economy, the Lasell Fund raised $852,070, 10 percent beyond its goal.

On June 30, 2012 the College completed the Bridge to the Future fundraising initiative with a total of $10.3 million raised, exceeding the three-year goal by $300,000. In May of last year, with $2.8 million still to raise, former Overseer Robert Arnow offered a challenge. If Lasell could raise the final $2.8 million, he would donate a $1 million gift. The challenge was met and the goal was achieved. The initiative also benefitted by record results in the Lasell Fund each of the three years of the campaign. In the year just ended, the Lasell Fund did not reach its goal of $875,000, but finished at $853,682 ($2,650 ahead of the prior year) once again setting a new record for the College. The goal moving forward is to raise $1 million for the Lasell Fund and sustain that level of giving prior to embarking on the next multi-million capital campaign.

Several other significant events have occurred since the five-year NEASC update. In the fundraising area, these include a database conversion from FundAI to PowerCampus, resulting in the implementation of a prospect tracking and moves management system; the hire of the Diane Heath Beever ’49 Professor in the Arts, funded by a $1 million bequest in 2007; the recasting of the title of the Director of Annual Giving to Director of Annual Giving and Constituent Relations, creating more of a synergy between fundraising and alumni affairs; the creation of a GOLD (Graduates of the Last Decade) program to keep young alumni connected and engaged; the establishment of a new Parents’ Program; the identification of over three thousand “lost” alumni; and the more aggressive promotion of the Heritage Society, Lasell’s planned giving program. In the area of leadership development, significant events include the development of the President’s Advisory Council; a change in the Bylaws to eliminate corporators, so that all trustees become lifetime members of the Board of Overseers; and more active involvement of IA with the academic Program Advisory Boards.

APPRAISAL
The College is strong financially; net assets have increased considerably over the last ten years, and unrestricted net assets represent 73 percent of the total assets, affording us flexibility in managing our resources. The College maintains a healthy operating cash flow and projects cash flow out for three years running. In addition, more than 85 percent of our endowment is liquid within one day’s notice to the investment firm.

Each year, the United States Department of Education releases the Financial Responsibility Scores for each institution, based on the latest audited financial statements. A score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered passing and affirms that the institution is in good financial standing and able to meet its obligations to students. As the following chart indicates, Lasell College is in good financial standing and is grouped with many of its peer institutions at a healthy score level. During the market turbulence of 2008-2009, many institutions, including
Lasell College, saw the score drop, as losses in endowment value impacted institutions’ balance sheets. The score for Lasell College was challenged by additional debt in 2008-2009, as the result of the construction of two residence halls. For the year 2010-2011, which is not included on the chart, Lasell College’s score is again at 2.8, placing it near the top of the scale.

The College produces operating surpluses that are placed into the endowment or invested in capital infrastructure improvements. The College has several non-tuition lines of revenue to diversify its revenue stream: a management contract with Lasell Village, the Holway Child Study Centers, and various auxiliary services. In 2010, the Board of Trustees for Lasell Village and Lasell College ratified a new five-year management agreement. This contract renewal speaks to the satisfaction of the management of Lasell Village by the College. Services that are managed by the College still include Education, IT, Public Safety, Maintenance, and overall management.

The fall 2011 FTE for full-time undergraduates was lower by 93 full-time students than the fall 2010 enrollment of 1,600. At a tuition-dependent institution, fluctuations in enrollment make strategic and financial planning difficult. The number of graduates from New England high schools is expected to continue to decline in the next several years. The competitive marketplace in New England for attracting college students will only increase. Furthermore, the institution has increased residential capacity in fall 2012 by 102 beds, or eight percent. Increases in debt service with fewer students would stretch operating budgets at the College for several years.

The College has developed a consortium agreement partnership with an associate degree-granting institution in China; we are hopeful that this and other agreements of this kind will generate additional transfer enrollments into our bachelor degree programs, adding to the revenue base during the next several years. At the graduate level, we have entered into a partnership with Greenwood & Hall to help grow the online graduate student enrollment at a faster rate.

The College’s discount rate (financial aid as a percentage of tuition, fees, room and board) has grown from 29 percent in 2007-2008 to 32.7 percent in 2011-2012. The College has deliberately increased the diversity of the enrollment with respect to gender, ethnicity, nationality, and academic profile. On top of this deliberate strategy, the market collapse of 2008-2009 has compounded the increase in the discount rate as the institution has striven to
assist families impacted by the downturn in the economy. The continued high unemployment rate, global debt crisis, national debt crisis, and housing value decreases have added to the discount rate, as we maintain our competitiveness in the marketplace.

Financial aid at Lasell College is a strategic resource used to further our goals as outlined in the strategic plan, including enrollment growth, expanded student diversity, improvement in the academic profile, increase in net revenue per student, and strengthening of the College’s market position. In this effort, Lasell College has partnered with Maguire Associates, a nationally recognized enrollment management consulting firm, in building an aid award strategy for incoming first-time full-time students.

The Vice President for Enrollment Management reports and discusses the use of aid with the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees, presenting information at all full Board meetings. In keeping with the strategic plan, for example, knowing that Lasell had limited beds in 2010 for new students, the College reduced the discount rate on new students, with the realization that yield would suffer. The discount rate for new students dropped 4.5 percent, net revenue per new student increased by $2,850, the academic profile improved to the strongest on record, and the College achieved other strategic goals, including an increase in minority and male students. Every available bed was filled, and additional students were turned away for lack of housing.

The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees and the full Board of Trustees received an update in the Fall of 2011 from an outside financial aid consulting firm on the variables impacting the financial aid number and the overall discount rate. Continuing the updates to the Finance Committee on institutional financial aid strategy, in terms of significant changes to overall institutional enrollment goals or compatibility with other institutional goals will be needed in future years.

Half of the College’s debt is fixed rate, affording predictability in debt service for planning. The other half of the College’s debt is variable rate, currently in a direct placement mode with RBS Citizens Bank and up for renewal in 2022. The unpredictability in debt service for half of our debt adds a layer of volatility and risk to the College’s financial planning.

The tuition, fees and room and board rates have increased at Lasell College from $25,000 in 2002 to $41,300 for the 2011-2012 academic year, an increase of 65 percent. The chart below shows that the percent of increase in tuition for Lasell College has surpassed the HEPI index for most of the last ten years. The College had made a strategic decision in 2007 to over time increase the tuition and room and board rates. After a review of peer comparison institutions, Lasell College’s tuition and room and board rates were among the lowest in the group. We did not feel that was the best place for the College to be in the marketplace and decided to try to achieve an overall rate that would put us in the middle of the peer group instead of at the bottom of the peer group. Despite the tuition and room and board rates increasing 27 percent from 07/08 to 11/12, the net revenue per student has only increased 21 percent, as the College has been investing in financial aid to attract students and grow enrollment.
The College will need to do a better job in discussing cost increases and the positive impact in the increase in quality and outcomes of its students. A substantial change in the institution’s business model may need to be undertaken to compensate for tuition and fee increases.

**PROJECTION**

The College recognizes the need to improve retention and expand the outreach of the undergraduate admission team. A broad spectrum of faculty, staff, and trustees met in October 2011 for a strategic planning session. Much of the focus was on enriching the academic experience as well as improving retention and admissions.

The College has set an undergraduate enrollment goal of 1,800 and a graduate enrollment goal of 500 by 2017. Both goals will serve the institution well financially. After expenses are carefully managed, both goals will allow the institution to achieve significant operating surpluses that can be used for endowment, financial aid, and infrastructure needs. The 102 beds in the new residence hall will aid the College in reaching the 1,800 enrollment goal. We have also set a goal of four additional master’s degree programs, bringing the total number of graduate degree programs to eight. This robust graduate offering will assist the College in growing overall enrollment. The addition of summer online undergraduate offerings in the next few years not only will strengthen the experience of students during the traditional academic year but also will aid the retention efforts on campus.

As referenced in Standard Six, the College signed an agreement with a vendor to recruit twenty undergraduate resident students from California for the fall 2012 semester. This investment in undergraduate admissions represented one step the institution was taking to help increase undergraduate enrollment and reach the 1,800 enrollment goal. After six months of work with the vendor, we decided not to renew the agreement for west coast recruiting, because of fewer than expected admitted students. Additional initiatives to increase undergraduate enrollment include the elimination of the application fee and an acceleration of the review process in admissions. The College also engaged the Board of Trustees in a dialogue on the institution’s financial aid strategy, specifically institutional aid. The Board of Trustees and College management has discussed the enrollment goals, their alignment with institutional aid, and the impact on the overall discount rate.

Retention initiatives are also included in the strategic plan, as efforts to boost the academic experience and enrollment. The hiring of a staff of professional advisors is seen as a critical step in supporting students and strengthening their connection to the institution; this connection, in turn, will help the College to build community and retain students at a higher rate. Our undergraduate admissions team has identified a group of new full-time students who are at risk and need additional support services. In an effort to provide a better experience and
increase retention, the institution has hired an additional staff member in fall 2012 who will work with a group of students identified by Admissions as needing extra services.

The College has made a concerted effort to increase the number of full-time faculty. A focus on improvement in the quality of teaching at the College has inspired the launching of the Teaching and Learning Center, supporting faculty as they design and strengthen the academic experience. The addition of Director of Internships as a faculty position has also increased the number of internships and the quality of the internship experience. Continued focus on these initiatives will assist the College in reaching enrollment goals and improving the academic experience of students. The planning for a major capital campaign has been underway for several years and will continue for the next year. In accordance with the 2017 strategic plan, campaign results will provide resources for financial aid and infrastructure needs that will help the institution meet its retention and recruitment goals.

In an effort to increase the graduate enrollment and rely less heavily on the undergraduate tuition revenue, which is in turn highly dependent on institutional financial aid, the College has been investing and will continue to invest significant resources in the graduate program. These investments, including the creation of more degrees, faculty training in online teaching, and the College’s agreement with Greenwood & Hall for the marketing and recruitment of online graduate students, will bring in additional revenue. This additional revenue will make it possible to expand the graduate program as well as to provide additional support for the undergraduate program.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees and the senior management team review the Financial Planning Model, the Strategic Plan (Vision 2012 and now Vision 2017), the Campus Master Plan, as well as focused plans (ie, Strategic Development Plan) to ensure that financial resources are applied in order to achieve the goals of those plans as well guide students to achieving the educational outcomes necessary for a degree in their chosen profession.

The Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees meets bi-annually with the College’s external auditors to ensure that the financial resources are spent appropriately and in accordance with the annual budget. The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees and the senior management team are flexible depending upon changing economic conditions in the global economy and will alter decisions to maintain the financial viability of the institution.
STANDARD TEN: PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

DESCRIPTION
The past decade has seen an explosion both in the ways that information is communicated and in the volume of information available. Lasell has embraced the use of newer technologies and has seized that opportunity to make itself more transparent. The College has worked diligently to create an integrated communication process that provides broad audiences access to information in multiple formats.

The major print publications of the College emanate from four areas:

- **Academic Affairs**
- **Admission Office**
- **Institutional Advancement**
- **Student Affairs**

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
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The Academic Catalog, produced annually, includes required regulatory information and academic policies and procedures; it also provides the community with a broad understanding of the history, mission, and core values of Lasell. For students, faculty, and staff, it serves as a ready reference on the daily workings of the College. Courses, learning goals, and educational outcomes are published for each academic department and, as of fall 2012, for the institution. Admission procedures and requirements and the process for the transfer of credits are described in the Catalog, as is information regarding financial aid policies, tuition, fees, and the College refund policy. The Catalog provides a College Directory, available as well on the web; the Directory lists all current faculty, staff, and administration, citing degrees and departmental affiliation. Also listed are current members of the Lasell Board and their affiliations.

Department chairs and managers annually review their respective areas of the Catalog and submit changes, corrections, and updates for inclusion in the subsequent edition. Faculty review courses and course descriptions for currency, and these are updated for the Catalog. The Catalog is available in print and on the College’s internal and external websites. It is distributed widely across campus, and it is mailed to all high schools in our recruitment area.

The Office of Institutional Advancement strives to enhance institutional awareness in the media and the public at large, as well as inspiring philanthropic support from alumni and friends. Key message points reinforced through IA media promote the institution in ways that are consistent with Lasell’s mission statement. A team of professional writers and editors reviews the Office’s print and electronic publications to ensure that content is current, complete, and accurate. *Leaves*, the College’s alumni magazine, is available in print and on the College website, as are the College’s Annual Report and most press releases and newsletters.

Graduate and undergraduate admission offices produce printed promotional materials that are updated annually for accuracy and consistency. These publications provide short descriptions of programs and activities, directing readers to the Catalog and College website for greater depth and currency of information.

The Student Handbook and Planner is updated annually and is distributed to students through the enrollment confirmation process. The Handbook outlines policies related to student community conduct, reiterates academic policies found in the Catalog, and provides a comprehensive guide to campus resources. Specifically, the Handbook outlines academic support services, academic policies, policies regarding general conduct, and available co-curricular and nonacademic opportunities. The Handbook can also be accessed online, on both the internal and the external sites. Each year, the Office of Student Affairs solicits updates, corrections, and additions for the Student Handbook from departments across the College. The Handbook is then reviewed, revised, and edited for annual publication.
Faculty achievements are published regularly in *Leaves* and on the College website. An annual compilation of faculty achievements is produced by Academic Affairs and is distributed to the Board of Trustees, the administration, and other groups.

In July 2010, the College launched a complete redesign of the external website, www.lasell.edu. The new website serves primarily external audiences; as content is added, however, it offers an increasingly rich source of information to the internal community. Central to the website redesign was a new content management system that allowed for a greater number of content contributors, expanding and broadening input in the creation of content. A Web Council was created to bring together content producers holding responsibility for individual sections (e.g., athletics, news media), under the guidance of the Web Director. In the web redesign process, content was organized around user needs rather than institutional structure. Analytics tools permitted the identification of information most often sought by users; this information was placed within easy reach. For example, research indicated that users frequently sought information on academic programs and on financial aid/tuition and fees. As the web structure was developed, these areas were made accessible on the home page. Contact information was added to each page as the new site was constructed, so that inquiries could be made to specific areas or departments.

Content from the previous site was reviewed and revised during the migration to the new site. During AY2011-2012, the Web Director and Web Council members continued to refine the site, as web traffic is monitored and measured. The Web Director meets regularly with departments across the campus to assist stakeholders in understanding the power of the web and to generate departmental pages with greater depth and transparency.

**Compliance**

In compliance with the Campus Security Act of 1990, the Office of Public Safety publishes an annual Campus Safety Guide & Fire Report that provides information regarding campus safety and reported crime statistics. On an annual basis, the report is sent electronically to the entire College community and is also available in the Campus Police, Human Resources, and Student Affairs Offices. It is available on both the internal and the external websites.

The most recently audited financial statements for the College are available on the website. In addition, the College’s IRS tax form 990 is available through the Office of the Attorney General of Massachusetts. The College also posts information regarding FERPA, graduation and retention rates, current academic programs, charges and refund policies, current course offerings, and current faculty and administrative officers in the College Catalog and on the College website.

**APPRAISAL**

The introduction of a more comprehensive website in 2010 has provided the institution with far greater opportunities for transparency and disclosure. Through the repeated administration of the Admitted Student Questionnaire Plus (ASQ Plus) to all admitted students, regardless of enrollment, we identified that over 85 percent of prospective students were visiting our website multiple times and over 95 percent gave it a favorable rating. There is an increasing migration to electronic communication, or, at the very least, an integration of print and digital formats. For example, a new online directory has been integrated with the HR software to provide accurate and timely College staffing updates on the internal and external websites. In addition, the course offerings, formerly a static listing in the Catalog, are now available on the website and are updated quarterly to reflect curriculum changes and additions. Use of a single source point for this type of information eliminates redundancy and reduces errors. Greater use of electronic communication also supports the College commitment to sustainability.

Although all publications are reviewed for accuracy prior to reprinting, the web is a constant work in progress, with new information posted daily and sometimes even hourly. The College continues to identify new opportunities for refining processes, incorporating more information, and expanding content and the base of content producers. With this wonderful opportunity come challenges, as we strive to determine what information is best shared through which vehicle of communication. Lasell’s IT Department, Web Director, and Web Council
are working to both educate the community and integrate information sources. IT and the Web Director are working to create single data sources wherever possible, enabling users to make changes in one place and effect universal change throughout College systems.

While all of the academic and student policies of the College are available online, some are embedded in the Catalog and the Student Handbook, which are posted as PDFs (Portable Document Files). Unfortunately, PDFs are not readily available to screen readers and are not W3C compliant. This is an area with opportunities for improvement.

This self-study has helped us identify the need for a more formal review of College sponsored social media sites. Currently, there are multiple departments using social media, and while it is a frequent topic of discussion at Web Council, no formal review structure has been developed. This has been identified as an area we need to strengthen.

Results of the assessment of departmental learning outcomes are well documented and are readily available on Moodle, Lasell’s course management system. Curricular improvements are based on assessment, as is detailed in Standard Four.

As the College strives to comply with the expanded Higher Education Act, this self-study has helped to identify areas where improvement is needed. It has been determined that incorporating the student-right-to-know information into a single page will provide greater ease of access to the user. A new Facts, Figures, and Faces page launched this past August.

PROJECTION
Across all areas, the College is working on better dissemination of information. For example, institutional student learning outcomes will be published in the AY2012-2013 Catalog, and the details of the revised general education curriculum will be published in the following academic catalog. Career Services information is available as well but currently is not readily accessed; we are working to incorporate greater depth in this area of www.lasell.edu.

The College continues to identify ways to present the institution more broadly, more clearly, and more concisely. The Office of Institutional Advancement has just completed a Community Impact report and has distributed it throughout the College and the larger community. That office is also publishing the results of the recently completed strategic planning process, as we strive to make our planning transparent to both an internal and an external audience. Both of these publications are/will be available online. As increasing numbers of people access the College website via portable devices, moreover, Lasell has developed a mobile website platform that incorporates its entire website and will recognize the device of the user.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
All of the College’s recurring print publications, which are published annually, are reviewed and revised through a systematic process to provide complete and current accurate information. The catalog, student handbook, and all admission publications are circulated across departments for broad input and consistency of message across publications. Admission publications are additionally reviewed by currently enrolled students in an effort to ensure the accuracy of the message. As noted above, the new content management system used for our website has provided improved efficiencies in our ability to post more information in a timelier manner. To facilitate and manage more content, an internal structure was developed to review posts for consistency and accuracy. In addition to the oversight provided by Web Council, individual posts are also screened by the staff in the office of Web and Electronic Marketing.
STANDARD ELEVEN: INTEGRITY

DESCRIPTION
Integrity, honesty, and ethical decision making, tenets of Lasell College’s mission, continue to inspire prospective students, students, faculty, and staff to strive for the highest standards of conduct in an educational environment that is student focused.

Academic freedom and academic integrity are central to the Lasell educational experience for both students and faculty. As is documented in the Faculty Handbook, the College follows AAUP guidelines in ensuring academic freedom for faculty, both in teaching and in research. Students are expected to maintain a high level of academic integrity. Expectations for academic honesty are clearly stated in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism, copyright violations, cheating, theft/vandalism, or forgery are dealt with by course instructors. Students may be sanctioned in several ways as outlined in the College Academic Dishonesty Policy and Student Handbook. The Vice President for Academic Affairs is notified of infractions as outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

Students are introduced to the College’s standards for academic integrity in their first year writing sequence (ENG 101 and 102). In these courses, students learn citation formats appropriate for crediting other authors’ ideas and words, as well as how to paraphrase appropriately and how to cite paraphrased work. The focus on academic integrity extends to all students through statements in the Catalog and policies provided to all faculty for inclusion in course syllabi. In addition, the College library maintains a webpage on Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism and provides workshops to students on evaluating the reliability of websites. The library also provides resources through MOODLE to assist students in citing sources and evaluating the reliability of websites.

All employees are given an Employee Handbook (revised recently) upon hire and sign a statement indicating that they have received and reviewed this document. The Human Resources Office requires that all employees read the harassment policy every year and confirm by signature that it has been read and understood. In addition, the Human Resource Office offers training and workshops throughout the year to help employees better understand certain topics and policies.

The pursuit of diversity and the promotion of social responsibility remain high priorities for the Lasell community and are encouraged at many different levels. One goal in the College’s strategic plan is increased diversity in the Board of Trustees, the staff, the faculty, and the student body. Students are exposed to diverse cultures and values through various community service activities, study abroad opportunities, and international service learning trips.

Lasell College’s nondiscrimination policy, which prohibits discrimination against any student, staff member, faculty member, or prospective employee because of race, color, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, handicapped status, and/or religion, provides protection under all state and federal law and is clearly stated in the student, faculty, and employee (orientation) handbooks. This policy is also articulated in College publications and appears on the College’s website.

There are policies and procedures in place for the reporting of any student, faculty, or staff grievance. The Dean of Student Affairs manages all student body grievances and student-related judicial issues; there is also an appeals process in place. Faculty grievances are brought to the attention of the relevant department chair or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If a grievance cannot be resolved, a more formal grievance process is initiated, involving the Grievance Committee. Staff grievances are addressed by the Director of Human Resources.

The College also has an information technology policy, to ensure appropriate use of all Lasell computer and networking systems. Users of the Lasell community are expected to act as responsible members of the digital community who do not misuse these resources. There is also a fundraising guidelines and approval process that outlines the procedure for conducting fundraising activities for student clubs and organizations.

All of these policies and procedures are reviewed and updated on a regular basis and represent guides for a fair and equitable educational and work environment.
APPRAISAL
The College has made significant progress in providing a culture of fair and open communication among all of its constituencies. Each year, the community reviews and updates its strategic plan to make sure that it is focused on achieving or, in many instances, exceeding institutional goals. Town meetings have become part of the process for getting input and honest feedback about the future direction of Lasell from the entire community.

Data Breach Update
The landscape of higher education is always changing, resulting in unanticipated challenges. How quickly and completely these challenges are addressed may also represent a measure of an institution’s effectiveness. The data breach we faced in 2008 and an investigation in 2010 by the Attorney General’s Office clearly illustrate these challenges. The data breach was documented in the 2008 NEASC self-study progress report; it resulted in major changes and protocols in the Information Technology Department. These included the restriction of Domain Admin privileges to three IT managers rather than giving them to the entire IT Department, disabling Netmeeting to remotely control PCs and moving to GoToAssist, a change in the local administrator password to all machines and many of the back-end equipment passwords, encryption of backup tapes, completion of a personal identity (PI) audit, adoption of a Change Management system for multiple sign-offs of managers to make logon accounts and access to systems with PI, installation of Identity Finder on all faculty and staff computers to identify potential PI, and approval and dissemination of the Written Information Security Policy, in compliance with Massachusetts regulations 201 CMR 17.

Agreement with the Attorney General’s Office
Lasell’s integrity was challenged when the Attorney General’s Office investigated the student lending practices of several institutions of higher learning in the Commonwealth. Lasell was identified as one of several schools whose procedures needed to be reviewed, and the College cooperated in an investigation by the AG’s office that included a review of Lasell’s arrangement with Citizens Bank as its sole preferred lender for Stafford loans.
Under the terms of an agreement reached in August 2010, Lasell provided a one-time reimbursement to students and alumni who, between 2003 and 2007, first secured federal Stafford loans from Citizens Bank for their Lasell education.

The reimbursement fund established as a result of the settlement totaled $191,314 and was divided among approximately 1,500 student borrowers, with eligibility and individual reimbursement amounts specified by the Attorney General. Lasell no longer has a preferred lender or preferred lender list and now exclusively uses the Federal Direct Lending Program for Stafford loans to students. The College also complies with the Federal Financial Aid Code of Conduct.

Civility in the Community
Lasell expects all members of the community to act responsibly. During the past two years, students brought to the administration’s attention an undercurrent of uncivil behavior within the study body. Students complained that certain individuals were forming cliques and were behaving disrespectfully toward others. The Student Government Association (SGA) met to address these concerns, to develop programming that would enhance awareness of this issue, and to specify appropriate sanctions.

Several years ago, a website (Juicycampus.com), surfaced on college campuses around the country; it promoted gossip and derogatory comments about students, behavior that became known as cyber bullying. Lasell students were participating in this uncivil behavior. SGA sent an anti-bullying message to the student community and brought the situation to the attention of the Senior Management Team, which promptly directed the Information Technology Department to block the website from College computers.

In fall 2011, the Executive Committee of the Student Government Association (SGA) met to develop a civility campaign and to design an implementation program. They developed a document entitled “Lasell College’s Values to Live By: For the Students, By the Students.”
Lasell College’s Values to Live By

*For the Students, By the Students*

We live by **THE GOLDEN RULE.**

The Golden Rule is never out of style; Treat others the way you want to be treated!

Consider others regard with kindness and respect in honor of their beliefs!

We live by **RESPECT.**

Do not be afraid to look around campus. It is nice that things may seem different than where you come from. New people lead to new experiences and new friends!

We live by **ACCEPTING DIFFERENCES.**

As the years progress, so should your levels of maturity and responsibility. Be the mature adult you are capable of being!

We live by **RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS.**

A Kind and Courteous gesture can make all the difference in creating an enjoyable and ideal community!

We Live By **COMMITMENT.**

Believe in something, dedicate yourself to it, follow through on it and honor it. Make a pledge to yourself to take a respectful stand and commit yourself to a worthy cause!

SGA launched the campaign, making presentations to various student constituencies and the Board of Trustees; they also printed stickers listing the six values and placed them strategically around the campus.

The Senior Management Team also discussed this problem and decided to make civility thematic in discussions around campus. Students were encouraged to change the culture by not ignoring uncivil behavior when it occurred, but instead alerting fellow students to their own behavior and reporting any infractions. The Donahue Institute for Values and Public Life continues to foster awareness of the importance of civility in its programming throughout the academic year.

Lasell is experiencing a renaissance of the arts on its campus. It seemed fitting that this year, the theme for the annual meeting of the Board of Overseers was Civility, Community Building, and the Arts, with guest speakers who engaged the audience in a lively discussion about ways in which Lasell can take these divergent areas and integrate them to enhance the experience of students and alumni.

The relationship between the College and the Lasell neighborhood has also improved significantly since the transition in institutional leadership in 2007. The College regularly communicates with its neighbors and has shared the campus master plan and the strategic plan. This transparency has helped to redefine Lasell’s relationship with its neighbors as one of trust and mutual respect.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance**

Certain staff members have recently been named responsible for all ADA-related concerns. Students can bring their concerns to the Dean for Student Affairs; the Director of Human Resources will continue to address staff and faculty ADA issues.

**Research Across the Curriculum/Internal Review Board**

Research Across the Curriculum is the most recent initiative funded by the Davis Educational Foundation. Faculty members are helping undergraduate students develop research skills that apply across many disciplines. Graduate students also undertake research projects in various courses in their respective programs. An Internal Review Board (IRB) has been in place since the establishment of the Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies.
Conflict of Interest
The Board of Trustees and the Senior Management Team review the College’s conflict of interest policy and sign disclosure statements on an annual basis. This year, the Senior Management Team made a decision, subsequently approved by the Board, to include individuals at the College who make major purchases on behalf of the institution. This includes the Director of Facilities and Plant Operations and the Chief Information Officer.

Diversity
The recruitment of a diverse faculty has seen considerable success at Lasell, as has the enrollment of students from underrepresented communities. Two faculty members established the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which highlights and examines issues of diversity in the College community. The Committee comprises faculty, management, staff, and student members. In 2011, the Committee held a first Unity in the Community breakfast to celebrate Black History Month.

The Senior Management Team encourages the hiring of minority candidates to fill vacant and newly created positions on campus. All posted job descriptions have a clause that states, “Lasell College is committed to increasing the diversity of the college community. Candidates who believe they will contribute to that goal are encouraged to apply.” The Senior Management Team promotes the advertisement of all open positions to the broadest pool of candidates.

PROJECTION
Lasell College will continue to review all of its policies and procedures on a regular basis, to ensure the highest level of compliance. The IT Department will continue to improve security measures, including the removal of unneeded PI data discovered during the PI audit, the development of better systems for and enhanced awareness of the purging of PI data, and regular training of employees on protection of PI data. As Lasell grows and its data needs increase, it may be necessary to hire a network administrator to ensure that all data security precautions and laws are followed.

Lasell will also continue to pursue diversity within the community. Minority representation that reflects those who support and benefit from the mission of the institution with respect to all boards, faculty, staff, and students is a College goal. The Human Resources Office is continually identifying sources for minority candidates when staff or faculty positions are open. Leadership development continues for the Board of Trustees, the Board of Overseers, and Program Advisory Boards, with a focus on identifying minority candidates. The College will also provide more training in areas including but not limited to the management of diversity, sexual harassment, and effective hiring practices.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
How does an institution know whether or not the policies and procedures in place are guaranteeing effective governance, academic freedom, academic integrity, diversity in all constituencies, social responsibility, and civility? Integrity will always remain critical in the operation of the institution, in the delivery of education, and in the effective and efficient stewardship of all its resources, not the least of which are financial investments in the institution made by those who pay tuition, lend the College money, and donate. The College must continue to assess and evaluate its performance in these areas. Feedback from students, faculty, and staff will be sought, either through open community forums or by including questions about integrity, honesty, and ethical decision making in our various constituent surveys. Several surveys are already in place: a student satisfaction survey and exit interviews when students or personnel choose to leave Lasell. Because retention remains critical to the College’s success, the Student Success Committee is constantly looking for ways to improve the student experience at Lasell. The only way to make improvements is to know where the College is falling short. With the 2008 addition of a Director of Institutional Research, the College can devise new ways to gather and analyze data and can look for opportunities for continued improvement.