<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Appraisal</th>
<th>Projection</th>
<th>Institutional Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard One: Mission and Purposes</td>
<td>Mission Statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation</td>
<td>Planning structure graphic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Three: Governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Four: Academic Programs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Five: Faculty</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Six: Students</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Seven: Library and Information Resources</td>
<td>Library Description</td>
<td>Library Appraisal</td>
<td>Library Projection</td>
<td>Information Technology Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Eight: Physical Resources</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organization of Self-Study**

- Institutional Characteristics Form
- Chief Institutional Officers
- Organizational Charts
- Introduction
- Institutional Overview
- Standard One: Mission and Purposes
- Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation
- Standard Three: Governance
- Standard Four: Academic Programs
- Standard Five: Faculty
- Standard Six: Students
- Standard Seven: Library and Information Resources
- Standard Eight: Physical Resources

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**Institutional Overview**

**Standard One: Mission and Purposes**

- Mission Statement

**Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation**

- Planning structure graphic

**Standard Three: Governance**

**Standard Four: Academic Programs**

**Standard Five: Faculty**

**Standard Six: Students**

**Standard Seven: Library and Information Resources**

- Library Description
- Library Appraisal
- Library Projection
- Information Technology Description
- Information Technology Appraisal
- Information Technology Projection
- Institutional Effectiveness

**Standard Eight: Physical Resources**

- Description
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appraisal</th>
<th>Projection</th>
<th>Institutional Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Standard Nine: Financial Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Appraisal</td>
<td>Projection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Ten: Public Disclosure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Appraisal</td>
<td>Projection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Eleven: Integrity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Appraisal</td>
<td>Projection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutional Characteristics Form

This form is to be completed and placed at the beginning of the self-study report:

Date **June 20, 2010**

1. Corporate name of institution: **Eastern Connecticut State University**
2. Date institution was chartered or authorized: **1889**
3. Date institution enrolled first students in degree programs: **1889**
4. Date institution awarded first degrees: **1891**
5. Type of control:
   - Public
   - Private
     - State
     - Independent, not-for-profit
     - City
     - Religious Group
     - Other
       - (Name of Church) ________________________
   - (Specify) ______________
   - Proprietary
   - Other: (Specify) ______________

6. By what agency is the institution legally authorized to provide a program of education beyond high school, and what degrees is it authorized to grant? **Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education**

7. Level of postsecondary offering (check all that apply)
   - □ Less than one year of work
   - □ At least one but less than two years
   - □ Diploma or certificate programs of at least two but less than four years
   - □ Associate degree granting program of at least two years
   - □ Four- or five-year baccalaureate
   - □ First professional degree
   - □ Master’s and/or work beyond the first professional degree
   - □ Work beyond the master’s level but not at the doctoral level (e.g., Specialist in Education)
   - □ A doctor of philosophy or equivalent degree
   - □ Other doctoral programs degree granting program ____________
   - □ Other (Specify) 15 credit certificates
8. Type of undergraduate programs (check all that apply)

☐ Occupational training at the crafts/clerical level (certificate or diploma) ☒ Liberal arts and general

☐ Occupational training at the technical or semi-professional level (degree) ☒ Teacher preparatory

☐ Two-year programs designed for full transfer to a baccalaureate degree ☒ Professional

☐ Other: ____________________

9. The calendar system at the institution is:

☒ Semester ☐ Quarter ☐ Trimester ☐ Other ________________

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

a) Undergraduate ______ credit hours

b) Graduate ______ credit hours

c) Professional ______ credit hours

11. Student population:

a) Degree-seeking students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time student headcount</td>
<td>4323</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time student headcount</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>4550</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>4715</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Number of students (headcount) in non-credit, short-term courses: 189

12. List all programs accredited by a nationally recognized, specialized accrediting agency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Accredited since</th>
<th>Last Reviewed</th>
<th>Next Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Graduate</td>
<td>National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Accreditation (NCATE)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Undergraduate</td>
<td>(NCATE)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>(NCATE)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Education Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Education Undergraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education (K – 12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education (PreK – 12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role 7 Reading Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Biology and Earth Science Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Mathematics Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Mathematics Undergraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Social Studies Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Social Studies Undergraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full degree</th>
<th>50%-99%</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. In-state Locations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Out-of-state Locations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of program(s)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. Degrees and certificates offered 50% or more electronically: For each degree or Title IV-eligible certificate, indicate the level (certificate, associate’s, baccalaureate, master’s, professional, doctoral), the percentage of credits that may be completed on-line, and the FTE of matriculated students for the most recent year. Enter more rows as needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of program</th>
<th>Degree level</th>
<th>% on-line</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Technology</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>Up to 100%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of contractor</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of program</th>
<th>Degree or certificate</th>
<th># of credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. List by name and title the chief administrative officers of the institution. (Use the table on the following page.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

In 1889 the Connecticut General Assembly established the Willimantic State Normal School and 13 students began preparation to become teachers in classes held on the third floor of the Willimantic Savings Institute. The first male student enrolled in 1893. A new Willimantic State Normal School was constructed in 1895 on six acres of land deeded to the State by the Town of Windham. In 1937 Willimantic State Normal School became Willimantic State Teachers College as the College began offering a four-year curriculum and granting B.A. degrees. Twenty years later the College established its first graduate program — in education. In 1967 Willimantic State College became Eastern Connecticut State College and then was renamed Eastern Connecticut State University in 1983. In 1998 the Connecticut State University Board of Trustees approved Eastern’s new mission as Connecticut's public liberal arts university. Elsa Nunez became Eastern’s sixth president in 2006.
# CHIEF INSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function or Office</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Exact Title</th>
<th>Year of Appointment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair Board of Trustees</td>
<td>Karl Krapek</td>
<td>Chairman of BOT</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President/CEO</td>
<td>Elsa Nunez</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Vice President</td>
<td>Michael Pernal</td>
<td>Executive Vice President</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Academic Officer</td>
<td>Rhona Free</td>
<td>VP for Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans of Schools and Colleges (insert rows as needed)</td>
<td>Carmen Cid</td>
<td>Dean of Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jaime Gomez</td>
<td>Interim Dean of Education &amp; Professional Studies</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
<td>Dennis Hannon</td>
<td>VP for Finance &amp; Administration</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Student Services Officer</td>
<td>Kenneth Bedini</td>
<td>VP for Student Affairs</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Kenneth DeLisa</td>
<td>VP for Institutional Advancement</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Patricia Banach</td>
<td>Dir. of Library Services</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Information Officer</td>
<td>Joseph Tolisano</td>
<td>Chief Information Officer</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Education</td>
<td>Rochelle Gimenez</td>
<td>Dean of Continuing Education</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants/Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>Kimberly Crone</td>
<td>Director of Admissions &amp; Enrollment Management</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Kathleen Fabian</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>Patrick Kelly</td>
<td>Acting Dir of Financial Aid</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>Edward Osborn</td>
<td>Dir of University Relations</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Association</td>
<td>Michael Stenko</td>
<td>Director of Alumni Affairs</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Eastern Connecticut State University began preparing for its decennial reaccreditation by NEASC in the summer of 2008 when President Elsa Nunez appointed Vice President of Academic Affairs Rhona Free to oversee the reaccreditation process. Two faculty members, Nicole Krassas from the Department of Political Science, Geography, and Philosophy and Richard Silkoff from the Department of Business were appointed to co-chair the Steering Committee that would write the self-study report. The vice president and both faculty members attended a NEASC Self-study workshop in October 2008 in Southbridge, Massachusetts to become familiar with the reaccreditation process.

The Self-Study Steering Committee, comprising seven faculty, sixteen administrators and two faculty co-chairs was formed in September of 2008. Committee members represented various academic departments, the University Senate, and appropriate administrative and academic offices and support units. On October 29, 2008 the committee met for the first time to receive the charge from the president, review documents, agree on a schedule, and discuss chapter assignments. Each Steering Committee member was assigned to chair or co-chair a Standard sub-committees, with Standards One, Seven, and Ten having one chair and all others having multiple chairs.

On November 3, 2008, Standard chairs were sent a link to NEASC’s Data First Forms and instructed to complete these forms as a first step in developing the narrative for their chapter. At the same time the chairs were sent templates to use in writing their narratives. Each template provided the text for a sub-standard and asked the writers to incorporate description, appraisal and projection relevant to the sub-standard and note sources of evidence. In November and December 2008, the two Steering Committee co-chairs met with each of the Standard chairs/co-chairs to ensure that they understood the process and timeline for writing the chapter. Over the next few months the Sub-standard chairs met with faculty, students, and staff to obtain necessary information, completed Data First forms and sub-standard templates, and submitted them for posting to a password-protected web site. Concurrently, E-series and S-series forms were completed by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research.

On March 9, 2009 Louise Zak from NEASC came to Eastern to meet with the Self-Study Steering Committee. After that meeting writers began formulating drafts of chapters from the material on sub-standard templates. In some cases the narratives were developed by the chapter co-chairs and in others Dr. Krassas or Dr. Silkoff wrote the text based on the templates prepared by the subcommittees. After initial drafts were prepared Dr. Silkoff had to relinquish his role on the Steering Committee to turn his attention to student and department needs. This writing process continued until September 2009. At a meeting of the Steering Committee on September 30, a schedule for community review of initial drafts of chapters was approved. Chapter drafts were posted at a web site accessible to the campus community and faculty, staff, and students were encouraged to read the drafts, post comments, and attend open forums. Forums were held for each chapter except Chapter 9, which was still being written, between October and November 15, 2009. At the January 2010 University Meeting, NEASC was the focal point, with a group activity that was designed to ensure that the entire community was aware that their input to the process of writing the self-study had been valuable to that point and would be needed in the spring semester when the report would be finalized.

Based on comments submitted in writing or at the forums in December 2009, revised drafts of individual chapters were prepared in January and February 2010. These were compiled into a draft that was sent to NEASC for initial review in March, 2010. After receiving comments from NEASC, the chapters were revised once more and then posted for a second round of campus review. Two forums were held for faculty, staff and students in early May and written comments were invited by email. After these forums, the chapters were reviewed by the president and updated by Drs. Krassas and Free. Chapters were edited by a faculty member in June and early July and the final Self-Study report was ready for submission to NEASC and team members by September 1, 2010. Third-party comment will be solicited in September
at the same time marketing will take place on campus to ensure that faculty, staff and students are aware of and participate as requested in the NEASC team visit in October.

The highly collaborative process of writing the self-study involved many faculty, staff and students and occurred as Eastern approved and began implementation of its 2008-2013 Strategic Plan. This coincidence resulted in challenges in developing projections but prompted thoughtful discussions about realistic goals for the strategic initiatives. A goal of the self-study process was to assess the extent to which Eastern has in place the structures, resources, and culture to successfully implement the eighteen initiatives that make up the strategic plan. The process of self-reflection and assessment required by the self-study process helped to point out those areas where Eastern must change in order to fulfill its potential as Connecticut’s public liberal arts college and to become a university of first choice.
Institutional Overview

The last ten years at Eastern Connecticut State University have been characterized by constant, if not always consistent progress in aligning the University’s student body, physical resources, faculty, culture, and curriculum with its mission as Connecticut’s public liberal arts university. This mission was approved by the Board of Trustees in 1998, and was refined during the development and implementation of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan initiated by Elsa M. Núñez, who succeeded David G. Carter after his 17-year tenure as president. The plan guides faculty and staff in a wide range of decisions including curriculum development, resource allocation, and enrollment management to ensure success in achieving the plan’s goal of making Eastern a “university of first choice” for students and faculty.

Discussions surrounding the “university of first choice” tag line in the Strategic Plan were emblematic of the tensions inherent in Eastern’s evolution to an institution more akin to a private liberal arts college than to a comprehensive public university. How could the University increase its emphasis on academic rigor and selectivity without compromising its historic commitments to access and diversity? Where do Business, Education, and Accounting majors fit in a liberal arts college? Can faculty with a four-course teaching load teach the way their counterparts do at other liberal arts colleges? Can they be expected to pursue scholarly and creative work while implementing innovative, high-impact teaching practices? Such questions surface again in this self-study. None were answered fully in the process of developing the strategic plan; some, in fact, were brought into sharper dimension. The process of implementing the strategic plan has helped to resolve some of these issues, while others have been heightened by current financial conditions that affect both University resources and the demographics and goals of Eastern’s students.

Significant progress in several key areas over the last ten years has enabled Eastern to increase enrollment, diversity, and selectivity. The new Science building, the Child and Family Development Resource and Early Childhood Education Centers, the renovated Student Center, the new administration building, and new residence halls have helped to create a very impressive campus whose classrooms, laboratories, library, athletics facilities, and residential environment match those of any college in the state. Technological and information resources are abundant and supported by outstanding staff. Faculty numbers have increased significantly, and an emphasis in recruitment and hiring on innovative teaching methods and commitment to involving students in research and scholarship give Eastern’s students exceptional learning opportunities. Likewise, innovative programming in Student Affairs has resulted in significant progress in involving students in clubs and organizations. University personnel have secured major grants supporting faculty research, community outreach, and campus programs.

The success of the Office of Institutional Advancement has resulted in large increases in funds available for merit-based aid. Together with a new enrollment management plan developed as part of the Strategic Plan, such aid has helped Eastern to attract more highly prepared students. Donations to the ECSU Foundation of a large historic farm and other buildings—including exceptional examples of Victorian homes in the Willimantic community—provide unique programming opportunities.

Innovative approaches to advising, tutoring, and mentoring have been implemented that both enhance retention and graduation and help to address the faculty workload challenge. An increased commitment to community service, accompanied by a shift in the University’s approach to it have created striking progress in engaging both faculty and students in the Willimantic and northeast Connecticut communities. The creation of an innovative Liberal Arts Core and several new interdisciplinary majors have institutionalized the University’s liberal arts emphasis. At the same time, a new pre-professional experience program (Liberal Arts Work) has been approved that formalizes Eastern’s commitment to blending the liberal arts with career preparation.
In the NEASC report from 1990 three issues were identified as warranting special attention: (1) availability and quality of data related to student retention and graduation, (2) developing Eastern’s role as a public liberal arts college with reference to articulation of the mission and its implications for general education and roles of and support for faculty, and (3) assessment, planning, and their use in improving educational effectiveness. In response to a 2005 interim report, NEASC recommended that in the 2010 self-study special emphasis be placed on: (1) aligning the university’s mission with its programs and faculty roles, and (2) implementing the new general education program including its assessment.

The comments from the 2005 report affirm that Eastern has made significant progress through the Office of Planning and Institutional Research in gathering and analyzing data related to student retention and graduation. This progress has been continued in the work of that office and through the Nellie Mae-funded Project Compass initiative, which is aimed at understanding and increasing the retention, success, and graduation of low-income, first generation, and minority students. While efforts to integrate data gathering and analysis into the work of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research have been affected by staffing levels, significant progress has been made in identifying at-risk students and meeting their needs. This progress is addressed in the self-study.

A tiered Liberal Arts Core (LAC) replaced Eastern’s general education requirements in 2007. With the implementation of the LAC, development of several new interdisciplinary programs, realignment of graduate offerings, systematic evaluation of the role of distance education, and increased emphasis on undergraduate research and creativity, Eastern has progressed in aligning its programs with its mission.

A significant step in institutionalization of Eastern’s unique approach to offering a liberal arts education is the Liberal Arts Work program. This program reflects an understanding across campus that, while the liberal arts are infused throughout the curriculum and provide the foundation for all Eastern degrees, preparing students for careers continues to be a hallmark of the institution—just as it was when Eastern provided education primarily for teachers, all of whom spent time student teaching before graduation.

Faculty roles have not changed significantly as a result of the new mission, although questions of faculty workload have received considerable attention, including a comprehensive report from a Workload Working Group that generated changes in a number of procedures. Workload continues to be a source of concern to faculty and administration alike, and will likely be addressed again in collective bargaining negotiations. The Academic Plan, written as part of the Strategic Plan, emphasizes curriculum review as a strategy for improving educational outcomes but also for addressing faculty workload.

Assessment of student learning in the LAC is under way, as described under Standards Two and Four in this self-study. Assessment of learning in academic programs has expanded since 2001 and even since 2005, with some departments having developed sophisticated approaches that have led to substantial program modifications. The Division of Student Affairs has been very successful in using assessment of learning outcomes to evaluate and improve programs. Throughout the University, there has been a shift to “evidence-based” decision-making, reflecting a decade of emphasis on gathering and using data to assess program effectiveness.

At the time this self-study is being prepared, colleges and universities throughout the country, private as well as public, are being faced with fiscal challenges. While Eastern has grappled with reductions in state funding, the University is presently operating with a balanced budget, higher enrollment and faculty numbers than ever before, and recent net operating incomes that exceed levels of prior years. Tight budgets have affected operations, as is apparent in this self-study: some faculty lines have been filled on a temporary rather than a tenure track basis, out-of-state travel has been restricted, and some redeployments and reallocations have been necessary. In spite of this, the University has continued to meet the needs of students and faculty without interruption or sacrifice of quality.
Standard One: Mission and Purposes

Description

Eastern’s mission was clarified by its designation as the state’s public liberal arts university in 1998, which provided Eastern with a distinctive position within the Connecticut State University (CSU) system. That designation brought with it, however, an imperative for a kind of reflection and re-definition that the University has been engaged in for much of the last twelve years. In the first instance, the faculty and administration worked together to overhaul the university’s general education program to reflect more accurately the goals and objectives of a liberal arts education. The thinking that went into that major curricular revision carried over to inform the crafting of the most recent Strategic Plan, which marked a kind of watershed in Eastern’s project of institutional reinvention.

Rather than simply clarifying the then-current mission statement, it was determined, Eastern needed to articulate a new statement, one that would more clearly explicate the University’s role as a publicly-funded liberal arts institution. The resulting Mission and Core Values Statements served as the cornerstones for the entire strategic planning process, providing clear explanations of the University’s values and expectations for the future of the institution. The Mission and Core Values Statements are readily available on Eastern’s website, in the Course Catalog, and in several other university publications (an abridged version of the Mission Statement is used for some purposes).

The University’s institutional purposes are closely tied to its mission. Even as it forges ahead in its transformation from a public comprehensive university to a liberal arts institution, Eastern remains committed to its traditions and to its responsibilities as a publicly-funded university. Eastern aims to make a liberal arts education accessible to a wide range of students, regardless of race, age, gender, or physical ability. The University seeks to prepare students who are both intellectually engaged and socially responsible, who leave their studies with both expanded intellectual horizons and an appreciation of their obligations to the communities where they live. There is more to this process than simply creating appropriate curricula: faculty scholarship and creative activity contribute to the intellectual milieu that surrounds students at Eastern, and offices across the whole institution work to promote the University’s larger educational ethos through efforts to involve the entire campus in community service.

Eastern’s designation as the state’s public liberal arts university, the subsequent changes in the institution’s general education program, and the impact of the mission on the creation of the new strategic plan all demonstrate the extent to which the University’s distinctive mission and purposes are recognized and embraced by its various constituencies (the governing board, the administration, staff, faculty, and students.) Together, the Mission and Core Values Statements serve as a touchstone for all of the University’s decision making. From the development of broad institutional strategies to individual departments’ creation of new courses, every decision is weighed in the light of the University’s mission.

As a result of the most recent strategic planning process, the university is in the process of implementing mission-driven and mission-focused programs: all assessments require all programs to measure themselves relative to the mission.

In the last ten years, Eastern has re-evaluated its mission, and it is expected that the mission will be revisited every five years as part of the strategic planning process so that the University can continue to grow and adapt.

Appraisal

With the most recent iteration of the university’s Mission Statement and the adoption of the new Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC), Eastern is well on the way to confirming its role as a public liberal arts institution. The Strategic Plan provides the University with a structure to ensure that its commitment to
an affordable and accessible liberal arts education is an achievable goal. Eastern’s Mission Statement is rather longer than similar statements from the kinds of institutions whose company Eastern seeks to join. But that Mission Statement serves to address explicitly several key points that require deliberate articulation at this still relatively early stage in the University’s reinvention: the distinctive character of the institution; the advantages of a liberal arts education; Eastern’s commitment to diversity; and the values the institution seeks to instill in its students, faculty, staff, and administrators, including public service and global awareness.

The extent to which an awareness of the University’s mission and purposes is woven through the campus culture can be seen in the university’s Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC), its First Year Program (FYP), and other new requirements that grew out of the strategic plan. The LACC outlines Eastern’s general education requirements; it is a three-tiered system, purposely designed to extend across a student’s four years of study. The FYP, as the name implies, is specifically tailored for first-year students. Like other programs elsewhere in the nation, the FYP works to encourage student success by promoting students’ familiarity with University resources. Eastern’s FYP embeds the introduction of University resources in the context of a course cluster in which small groups of students (20-25) take two linked classes together, forming close connections with two faculty members and with each other. The cluster program thus sets the development of academic “survival skills” in the context of genuine academic inquiry. The FYP also includes an interdisciplinary Liberal Arts Colloquium. Part of the first tier of the LACC, these seminars stress the importance of thinking creatively and critically—benchmarks of a liberal arts education—in a small class setting (20 maximum) with an emphasis on discussion and writing. After their first year, students continue through a tiered system of classes in a variety of disciplines. Just as the tiered LACC spans all four years, new requirements including Liberal Arts Work and Global Citizenship ensure that, throughout their four years at Eastern, students consider, on the one hand, how their major disciplines are connected to the broader traditions of the liberal arts, and, at the same time, how the ideas they study in the classroom can be linked to life in their communities and the broader world.

But the fulfillment of Eastern’s mission cannot simply be achieved through curricular changes or the creation of new documents. It also requires the whole community—students, faculty, and staff—to “buy-in” to a vision of the University’s identity. Such buy-in isn’t automatic, however, but requires cultivation. The mission does face some challenges. The concept of the “liberal arts” remains poorly understood among some sub-populations, for instance, and particularly among many of the university’s target populations, i.e., those with little or no family history of higher education. There are efforts to clarify the mission for the whole institution. For example, the viewbook explains to prospective students what it means for Eastern to be a liberal arts college, and the institution emphasizes this point in a number of other documents. The University’s identity as the State’s public liberal arts university is addressed as well in orientations, admissions sessions, and so on.

In some ways, understanding of and consensus about the meaning of the University’s mission is developing organically. The remarkable increase in student housing in the last ten years, for instance, has had a dramatic and positive influence on Eastern’s campus culture. Students come to understand the University’s distinctive mission because they are, quite literally, living it. Having more and more students living on campus has, among other things, increased students’ engagement with the surrounding community. In the academic year 2008-09, Eastern eliminated the requirement that students living on campus be required to complete community service, replacing it with a mission-based strategic planning initiative on community engagement. The high volume of volunteerism experienced by our new Center for Community Engagement and the various organizations on campus indicates that there is a lasting commitment to community service on campus. Many community service activities are joint ventures involving faculty and staff, who act not simply as advisors or supervisors, but as fully-participating members themselves. The Liberal Arts Work requirement reinforces Eastern’s core value of engagement,
as service learning is one means of satisfying the requirement. Where the previous community service requirement was formerly seen by many students as a mere formality (and an irksome one, at that), students now approach community engagement as an integral part of their Eastern experience, one that dovetails, in many cases, with their academic work.

Similarly, while Eastern (and the CSU System generally) emphasizes teaching, the University’s faculty continue to distinguish themselves with research and creative activity in every field represented in our academic programs: every year, Eastern faculty publish and present new research or creative work, and win national and international grants and fellowships. Over the last five years it has become increasingly common for faculty to involve undergraduates in their research and to promote extensive independent research and creative projects by students. Just as Eastern’s newfound residential character has provided a natural context for the University’s core value of social engagement, the increasing interpenetration between faculty members’ research and their teaching gives students a close-up view of the kinds of intellectual engagement and curiosity that the University seeks to promote. Here, too, the Liberal Arts Work requirement serves to reinforce Eastern’s core values, as students can fulfill this requirement with a research or pre-professional experience.

While the University community seems to be converging on a common understanding of Eastern’s mission, that process is not without its tensions. The increased emphasis on faculty scholarship and on incorporating various forms of engaged learning and “high impact practices” (as called for in the Academic Plan) has highlighted the demands placed on faculty who teach 12 credits of coursework each semester (generally 4 sections of courses). Nearly everyone embraces the ideals behind the University’s mission of providing a liberal arts education that promotes engaged learning: those ideals are consonant with a culture that emphasizes individual attention for students. Faculty feel the strain, however, of trying to re-tool their curricula and pedagogy at the same time that they seek to maintain (indeed, increase) their own scholarly and creative output—and all the while, of course, the campus governance structure relies heavily on faculty service. The convergence of these demands has focused increased attention on faculty workload, though it is not yet clear what the solution might be.

Just as individual faculty members experience increased tension among teaching, research, and service, departments face challenges as they seek to serve the needs of the new core curriculum (the LACC and the FYP) and the needs of majors. Though most faculty applaud the tendency of these curricular changes, it is not always clear how departments that already feel themselves straining to meet their responsibilities to their majors can contribute to staffing new initiatives. Eastern’s collective bargaining agreement, its budget situation, and its culture currently produce tensions as the University works to realize its goal of becoming a “first choice” liberal arts university. This issue is examined more thoroughly in the Faculty chapter.

**Projection**

Eastern faces two potential hurdles in the full realization of its mission: on the one hand, the University must clarify its mission for key populations; on the other, the University must bring the community to a unified understanding of the mission.

First, the University must continue to develop ways to help clarify the mission for all students and their families, as well as for faculty and staff. In particular, the University must stress what it means for Eastern to be a public liberal arts university and why a liberal arts education is advantageous. The Offices of Institutional Relations, Advisement, and Admissions will continue to include statements that address these points in publications and internal documents. Faculty advisement for communicating the mission directly to students will also be addressed in the next five years. The Offices of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs will continue to incorporate statements about the meaning of “liberal arts” in presentations and orientation sessions.
In order to address the second challenge of unifying the community in a common understanding of the mission, the University’s Academic Plan directs that the Office of Academic Affairs will sponsor a series of events beginning in Fall 2010 to promote a discussion of how curricula and pedagogy should be modified to increase compatibility with our mission as a public liberal arts college that promotes engaged learning. The groundwork for this effort has been laid by sharing with departments information about levels of student participation in high-impact practices across academic programs. The Office of Academic Affairs will support continued integration of the experiences emphasized in the Mission and Core Values statements through support of the Liberal Arts Work, Global Citizenship, LACC, and FYP programs and through related faculty and curriculum development. Several Strategic Initiatives, including Campus Culture and Residential Life, have spawned ongoing discussions and activities that ensure that all aspects of campus life reflect the university’s mission.

The CSUS Board of Trustees will continue to review and approve any changes in the mission.

To ensure that programs, resource allocation, and activities are consistent with the university’s mission, formal review processes are in place, as detailed in Chapter Two. An Exemplary Program process is being developed to provide a structure for closely aligning resource allocation with mission.

Institutional Effectiveness

Eastern’s mission will be reviewed every five years as part of the strategic planning process. The university has linked assessment and affirmation of mission to planning and resource allocation. This occurred most recently with the implementation of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan which spawned 18 initiatives that are the focus of Eastern’s planning and allocation of resources.
MISSION STATEMENT

Eastern Connecticut State University is the state’s designated public liberal arts college. Within the Connecticut State University System, Eastern, a predominantly undergraduate institution, attracts and welcomes a diverse community of learners, supported by a teaching faculty, staff, administrators, and a residential campus, all of which promote intellectual curiosity, integrity, and social responsibility.

Eastern’s commitment to a liberal arts education is exemplified in its Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, a sequenced, interdisciplinary program that all students share, independent of their majors and career aspirations. As a result of this foundation, our students apply a broad range of theoretical approaches in a variety of active learning settings to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and perspectives necessary to prepare them for their personal, professional, and public roles.

In its role as a public university, Eastern develops students who can become productive, engaged community leaders. Eastern also serves as a social, cultural, and economic catalyst for the region and the state of Connecticut.

Eastern’s programs in the arts and sciences, teacher education and professional studies prepare students for careers or advanced study while providing them with the lifelong skills and confidence needed to succeed in a world of constant economic, social, and technological change.
Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

Description

Eastern’s planning and assessment of its programs and services is framed by multiple contexts: as a public university, and part of a four-campus system, Eastern must ensure that it is aligned with standards outlined by the State’s Department of Higher Education and with the mission of the CSU system; at the same time, of course, Eastern makes its plans and assesses its programs with an eye towards national best practices, as well. As at most public institutions of higher education, planning and assessment have moved from a peripheral to a central role at Eastern. Since the appointment of President Núñez in 2006, Eastern has developed new planning processes that emphasize broad participation, transparency, and an insistence on seeking solid data for use in decision-making.

Planning. A distinction can be drawn, for the sake of convenience, between Eastern’s short-term and long-term planning activities. See attached Visual “Strategic and Other Types of Planning at Eastern” for an overview of strategic and organizational planning. In the ordinary course of things, planning oversight, reporting, and accountability rest at the Vice-Presidential level. Each academic and administrative unit completes an annual report outlining its goals, its plans, and its assessment activities. All units on campus rely on the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR) and the University Fiscal Office for the basic information they need to plan and assess their activities. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research, reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, serves as the nexus for data collection and reporting on campus. The OPIR posts key University reports on its public website, and its staff (currently two full-time professionals) provides more specialized reports as needed—generally between 150 and 200 requests per year from various departments and offices. The Fiscal Office maintains a budget web page to assist departments and offices in planning.

Eastern has a good record of developing effective planning responses to near-term challenges and demands, drawing on the energy and expertise of faculty and staff from across the University to find solutions for sometimes unforeseeable circumstances. There is significant strength in the organization’s leadership to address fiscal challenges. There is depth of experience, comprehensive understanding of higher education and government policy, and vision coupled with pragmatic and creative problem solving abilities. During the recent fiscal crisis, the University formed an ad hoc budget committee to review Eastern’s financial condition, recommend contingency plans, and promote cost savings. That committee maintains a web site to share the most current information with the University’s employees and to engage the entire community in responding to budget constraints. Prompted in part by events on other campuses around the country, multiple offices including University Relations, Public Safety and Information Technology came together to plan and swiftly implement the University’s adoption of the MIR3 emergency notification system.

Eastern’s evolving approach to long-term planning is exemplified by the development and ongoing execution of the most recent strategic plan. The strategic planning effort was a massive undertaking that involved more than 250 faculty, staff, and students, as well as other key stakeholders, including alumni and representatives of town and state bodies. The approved plan for 2008-2013 is based on a thorough analysis of Eastern’s history, culture, opportunities, strengths, and challenges in light of the University’s mission. The strategic planning process led to the drafting and implementation of 18 initiatives designed, variously, to promote student success, to foster academic innovation, to enrich the campus culture, and to consolidate and extend the institutional resources required to underwrite Eastern’s successful pursuit of its mission. This collaborative process led to the creation of comprehensive plans outlining the University’s strategic priorities and directions, including the Physical Master Plan and the Academic, University Relations, Institutional Advancement, Diversity, and Information Technology plans.
As noted in Chapter One, the strategic planning process prompted a re-consideration and, ultimately, a re-articulation of the University’s mission. The plan’s 18 separate initiatives were identified in order to render explicit—and to develop concrete plans for achieving—goals that were felt to be implicit in that mission. The 2008-13 Strategic Plan establishes an overarching framework for all of the University’s planning activities. Its broad strategic visions have already been translated into practical plans, as with two initiatives (the Dean’s Cup and the Six Week Educational Enrichment Program [SWEEP]) designed to integrate university values and engaged learning into residential life experiences. To the extent that it served to articulate a long-term vision of Eastern as a “university of first choice,” the 2008-13 plan points the University’s way forward for years to come.

**Evaluation.** In recent years, Eastern has become increasingly intent on ensuring that its decisions are grounded in the careful analysis of data. Benchmarking, especially in relation to CSUS and COPLAC peers, as well as evidence-based assessment practices are becoming commonplace at Eastern. Eastern employs a variety of evaluation processes for its programs and services. At the institutional level, annual NSSE surveys, as well as comparisons with COPLAC and CSUS peer institutions provide comparative assessment of learning contexts and outcomes. The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), begun in fall 2008, provides nationally-normed comparisons to measure Eastern’s impact on students’ critical thinking and written communication skills. Eastern and CSUS exit surveys assess students’ rating of their preparedness and plans for professional and/or graduate education endeavors. Exit surveys of some major programs provide comprehensive quantitative and qualitative measures of academic outcomes. In addition to its analysis of student attitudes and outcomes, the University also seeks to understand its employees’ perceptions through the HERI Faculty Survey and the Chronicle of Higher Education Best Colleges to Work For survey. In short, the institution seeks externally validated assessments of its effectiveness and processes.

Planning across campus is prompted and shaped by the data gathered through these various efforts. For instance, NSSE results showed that Eastern’s first-year students rated the quality of academic advising significantly lower than did students at other COPLAC institutions. This finding, in conjunction with findings about retention and graduation rates provided the impetus to seek a Project Compass planning grant and also prompted a change in University policies related to faculty advising. In keeping with its commitment to basing decisions on an examination of solid data, Eastern has become an early adopter of the Voluntary System of Accountability, which provides comprehensive information in a transparent format to the public.

Partly in response to the 2001 NEASC report, Eastern has taken steps to promote assessment across the University’s academic departments. An Assessment Coordinator position was created and filled, departments were asked to provide information about assessment of learning outcomes in annual reports, and a University Assessment Committee was created. Subsequently, the coordinator position was replaced with a faculty member (the elected chair of the University Assessment Committee) on partial reassigned time. The University Assessment Committee (UAC) continues to support internal assessment processes and stimulates participation in the CSU Assessment grant process. In early 2009 the departmental annual report template was revised to require departments to submit information about assessment in a form that was aligned with NEASC’s E-series forms. Further, in 2002-2009 departments were funded to develop new assessment plans. Outside consultants were brought in to assist in all stages of this process. Department annual reports now indicate that while approaches vary by department (including comprehensive exams, nationally-normed tests, skills assessments, writing assessments, student and employer surveys, and graduate/alumni data) the vast majority of departments have plans for assessment of student learning outcomes.

All of Eastern’s academic programs are subject to regular periodic evaluation and review. A standing committee of University Senate, the Academic Planning and Review Committee (APRC) conducts
reviews for all academic programs and majors on a seven-year cycle, focusing on the following criteria:
1. Appropriateness of the required curriculum; 2. Quality of course instruction; 3. Quality of student recruitment, advisement, and retention; 4. Incorporation of students into pre-professional settings; 5. Faculty scholarship, research, and creative activity; 6. Student learning outcomes; 7. Adequacy of program staff, facilities, and equipment

The Academic Program Review process includes a program self-review, a review by external evaluators, and an administrative review. Some programs are subject to additional external review. The Social Work and Education programs, for example, are reviewed and accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), respectively. The new Academic Services Center is also subject to review by external evaluators, per the terms of its funding under a Nellie Mae Project Compass grant and a U. S. Department of Education Title III grant.

The Exemplary Program initiative, one of the eighteen initiatives of the 2008-13 Strategic Plan initiatives, creates a new level of programmatic review that dovetails with and extends the APRC process. This voluntary program directed by faculty establishes standards to identify exemplary academic programs for targeted strategic investment. Like the APRC review, the Exemplary Program review process will involve a program self-review, a review by external evaluators, and a review by a committee of Eastern faculty and administrators. An assessment rubric that is quite different from the one used in the past has been piloted and implementation of the Exemplary Program process will begin in Fall 2010.

Eastern’s commitment to systematically evaluating how well it is doing extends beyond the review of academic programs. The Division of Student Affairs is realigning its programs to incorporate co-curricular and academic outcomes and institutionalizing a formal assessment cycle for all services. Evaluation is linked to the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and the Learning Reconsidered model that employs specific student development outcomes. Residential Life, Counseling, Health Services and AccessAbility services have all been evaluated through assessment standards that require external review.

**Appraisal**

**Planning.** University-wide planning has been systematic, integrated, and transparent throughout the organization. The direct involvement of hundreds of members of the University community in the strategic planning and implementation process has been successful on many levels. Eastern faculty and administrators came together in a collegial and democratic process to produce quality plans that were sharply focused on the University’s mission as the state’s public liberal arts university. Facilities master planning, in particular, is a continued strength of this institution. A new ten-year master plan (2008-2018) has been approved, and planning continues beyond this timeframe with approved facilities bond funds for 2020. The transparency and collaborative engagement with the campus community that the Office of Fiscal Affairs has brought to budgetary planning are also particularly noteworthy.

Planning at the program level, although adequate, has been less systematic and comprehensive. Communication of plans and assessments at the departmental level are less widely available to the campus community than for University-wide efforts. An analysis of office web sites indicates that only 33 of 68 units post mission statements and only 20 units identify goals. This is a missed opportunity to enhance planning and effectiveness at the departmental level. Currently, annual reports of planning, assessment and change activities are not shared internally and are not systematically used as a focus for institutional change, other than academic program assessment reports which are shared with the CSU system office. The revision of the annual report template for departments opens the way for more effective sharing and comparison among departments, however, particularly where assessment strategies and results are concerned.
Eastern has been broadly successful in implementing the plans it has made, both at the University level (e.g. master plan and strategic plan) and at the level of individual divisions, departments, and offices. The President’s emphasis on assuring the completion of the strategic plan and her dedication of resources (staff, meeting time, multiple modes of communication) to this goal were significant. Of the eighteen strategic plan initiatives, eleven were approved by June 2009 and ready for implementation for July 1, 2009. The remaining seven initiatives were approved by April 2010. There is a sound process of delegation and accountability as well as determination and shared responsibility that supports this achievement. In June 2010 a Strategic Plan Assessment Coordinator was appointed with the charge to oversee the development and implementation of assessment plans for each of the 18 initiatives and to develop and implement a plan for assessing the effectiveness of the process that was used to write, institute, and implement the overall 2008-2013 Strategic Plan.

Given the number of changes that Eastern has inaugurated in such a short period of time, however, there have inevitably been some complications. In a handful of cases, circumstances—mostly resource considerations—have led to modified or scaled-down implementations of planned initiatives: on-line course submissions for the LACC have had to be postponed, and plans for the Center for Educational Excellence and for the recreation and intramurals proposal had to be trimmed back, for instance. More seriously, however, the committees vetting the implementation of the First Year Program and the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum identified difficulties in the implementation of both initiatives. Both initiatives would have benefited from better forecasting of departments’ capacity to make faculty available for staffing the planned number of sections. Both initiatives face questions about the resources needed to support faculty and course development. Finally, neither initiative made the kind of provision for assessment that Eastern now expects of itself. These challenges led to the creation of a high-level alignment committee that made recommendations regarding new directions for implementation of these programs.

The 2008-13 Strategic Plan moved the collection and analysis of data to the center of discussion: a central feature common to all of the initiatives was an insistence on basing decisions on solid evidence, rather than on assumptions or impressions. This shift has already begun to change the way planning and evaluation are discussed at Eastern, but it also revealed gaps in the University’s capacity to collect and analyze data in the ways that the community has grown to expect of itself. Especially beginning in 2008, when numerous initiatives moved out of the planning phase and into implementation, there was a sense that the University’s data and analysis were not timely or robust enough to perceive minor changes. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research does not have sufficient staff to provide adequate answers to all questions. The OPIR should be available to provide data for planning efforts as well as technical assessment consultation and comprehensive statistical and multivariate analysis; the OPIR should, moreover, function as an open repository for all planning documents.

Despite these challenges, Eastern has developed multiple strategies to collect relevant data, ask critical questions, and build assessment into all of its initiatives, and has begun to make strides in this area. Data to support planning is becoming more readily available through on-line accessible reports. The OPIR posts much of the most commonly needed data online, and ITS has provided more staff for customized Banner reports. The Project Compass initiative offers one model for future planning and evaluation strategies. That initiative coordinated efforts among the offices of Academic Affairs, OPIR, and ITS (particularly the Banner unit), drawing on the expertise of Math, Education, and Sociology faculty to develop models for both quantitative data analysis, and making better use of data systems to inform decision-making.

Eastern’s process of institution-wide planning has become highly participatory, transparent and evidence-informed during this period, but it is clear that more needs to be accomplished at the “local” level. To meet its own standards for evidence-based decision-making, Eastern requires better data collection and
analysis, improved assessment mechanisms, and better internal document sharing. Greater capacities in these areas, combined with the kind of face-to-face communication the University is already good at would facilitate more refined, aligned and rapid implementation.

**Evaluation.** Continuous efforts have been made to produce a more holistic and strategic assessment of the quality of Eastern’s educational experience. A variety of factors—including the strategic planning process, the development of the Academic Services Center, OPIR’s presentation of data from NSSE, the campus climate survey, and the administration of the Collegiate Learning Assessment—have led to greater awareness among faculty and staff of the University’s accomplishments and the challenges it faces. An assessment culture is becoming institutionalized at Eastern. According to ITS, Eastern is recognized as the leader in report development throughout the CSU System. In 2008 212 Eastern employees utilized eReports, 32,691 electronic reports were executed, and more than 260 customized reports were employed.

Evaluation activities are relatively systematic for academic departments and beginning for other areas of the University. All departments employ at least one process for assessing learning outcomes and some use up to nine methods. Significant efforts from 2007-2009 to promote department-level improvements in assessment were effective and most departments assess learning and modify programs based on findings. The CSUS Assessment Grant program, in particular, has funded approximately five projects per year since 2007, and continues to promote the growth of a culture of assessment of learning outcomes.

The depth and comprehensiveness of academic departments’ evaluation activities vary, however, and some departments lag in developing consistent and meaningful assessments. Strategies for and results of assessment are not yet shared across programs or departments in a structured or organized way beyond the assessment report, though a revision to the template for departmental annual reports should facilitate sharing and comparison of assessment strategies and results across departments. While the University Assessment Committee (UAC) has been effective in administering the CSUS Assessment grant process and in organizing assessment conferences, it has been less effective as a means of promoting assessment in programs and of sharing strategies and results.

Collaboration and infusion of knowledge about these assessment processes through the University Assessment Committee, Academic Program Review process, and the Vice-Presidents of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs is at the intermediate level. Efforts to evaluate two programs that are the responsibility of no single academic department—the First-Year Program and the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum—may hold lessons for the rest of the campus. Currently, assessment of learning in the FYP and LAC is in the experimental stages with some progress being made toward assessment in specific areas and overall through the Collegiate Learning Assessment. The UAC and the Vice President of Academic Affairs are currently reviewing the value of the CLA as a means of assessing learning outcomes in the LACC. A rubric-based approach is being considered as an alternative to be tried in 2010-2011.

The process for Academic Program Review has become more thorough, certain, and systematic, assuring comprehensive planning and assessment for all academic programs every seven years; all departments are now in compliance with this requirement. Assessment of academic programs occurs systematically for major programs, but minors are not currently reviewed by the Academic Program Review Committee. The First Year Program and the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum are so new as not yet to have gone through the program review process, but both have reviews scheduled. The FYP is scheduled for review in 2010 and the LAC in 2011, though there is a possibility that the LAC program review will be moved ahead so that it is concurrent with FYP review. The Exemplary Program Review Process has begun a still more comprehensive assessment of academic assessment.
A focus on assessment and evaluation has spread beyond the University’s academic programs. Two co-curricular programs are considering external review and accreditation in conjunction with new facilities: the campus police (Police Officer Standards and Training Council) and the Akus Gallery (American Association of Museums). The Division of Student Affairs has already committed itself to a regular planning cycle, and to a common set of standards and expectations. Student Affairs’ assessment of its services will be tied to student development outcomes and will employ external evaluators. The Academic Services Center review will become a model for comprehensive and systematic academic program review, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

The meta-look at assessment activities is in the beginning stages – essentially at the stage of general awareness and interest in action. An assessment of the 2001-2006 strategic planning processes was conducted and process evaluation of the current planning process has begun, but the University should establish a formal process of assessing planning and evaluation. Appointment of the Strategic Plan Assessment Coordinator represents a significant step in addressing this issue. Though a culture of assessment is beginning to emerge at Eastern, assessment and planning activities are as yet still decentralized and fragmented. Increased staffing of the OPIR and additional ITS staff for customizable reporting would improve the University’s evaluation capacity, just as it would enhance the University’s planning activities. Improved communication and sharing among departments would also serve to advance the state of evaluation at the University.

Projection

A foundation of planning and assessment has been thoroughly implemented through the recent strategic planning effort and will likely continue to be infused throughout the institution. The new focus on student retention and graduation rates, more specific information about students within major programs, the alignment of Student Affairs with educational and student development outcomes, an assessment requirement in annual reports, and the use of nationally normed student learning tests, such as the CLA, are expected to foster this culture. The Strategic Plan Assessment Coordinator, linking planning to assessment, will play a key role in ensuring the institutionalization of coordinated planning and assessment activities.

Planning. Eastern has established expectations of—and mechanisms for—broad-based involvement of the community in planning, and this trend is expected to continue. Increasing emphasis on data in reporting to external bodies including the System Office, greater use of nationally-normed assessment instruments, enhanced capacity of faculty and staff to engage in planning and assessment activities through experience and professional development and additional staffing in the OPIR will improve Eastern’s success in planning. When fiscal constraints ease enough to allow out-of-state travel, Eastern’s faculty and staff will likely begin to participate more fully with regional and national organizations and alliances (e.g. New England Resource Center for Higher Education, COPLAC, Campus Compact, LEAP/AACU), which will also facilitate planning efforts.

The coming years should bring increasing coherence to planning efforts across the University. Beginning in 2009, the standard for planning at the division and department/office levels was extended to long-term (generally four- or five-year) planning. As this long-term planning moves forward, each office will articulate goals and plans aligned with the mission, goals, and values articulated in the strategic plan. By 2013, all departments, offices, and centers will have mission statements linked to the University mission, a plan for achieving specific short and long term goals, and an articulated assessment plan. Specific assessment of implementation efforts and results will be reported in department and division annual reports. The administrative annual report template has been revised to highlight these planning parameters, and University Relations will provide a location on the department web template for this material. Each Vice-President (or like supervisor) will be charged with facilitating this process.
Similarly, changes arising from the most recent Strategic Plan should serve to rationalize planning activities for each department and office. The committee that developed the Exemplary Program process was concerned with the alignment of requirements for that process with those for annual report and the APRC process. Moving forward, these programs will share data gathering, analysis, and reporting requirements, such that information gathered and analyzed for the annual report should readily inform a program’s application for Academic Program Review and (optionally) Exemplary Program review. The Exemplary Program strategic initiative will provide a rigorous and democratic process of program review that will raise the level of self-assessment, evaluation, and planning for all academic programs on campus. More systematic data collection and implementation of the AdAstra demand scheduling software will inform the implementation of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum and be reported regularly to the LAC Implementation Team and the Liberal Arts Program Committee (LAPC).

Data-driven planning has become a cultural norm that will produce greater demands on the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. OPIR will require additional staff, including a permanent director and a full-time program assessment professional. New strategic plan management budgets target filling both of these positions but this is contingent on fiscal ability.

**Evaluation.** In the coming years, Eastern expects that academic assessment methods will become more robust across all departments. Promoting more comprehensive and deliberate sharing of assessment strategies and results across departments will, it is hoped, promote both a common culture of academic assessment and a pool of human and knowledge resources upon which to build more extensive assessment. The co-curricular programs within Student Affairs are expected to parallel the assessment cycle and approach of the academic programs, including the consistent use of external consultants. As a result, there will be greater alignment of co-curricular programming with the academic mission. By 2013, all academic and student affairs departments—and 80% of all University offices—will have achieved beginning level evaluation of identified long-term outcomes. The implementation of a University intranet in 2010-2011 will facilitate more systematic communication of these efforts and results.

During the next five years, a comprehensive assessment plan for the First Year Program and the LAC, as well as a holistic assessment plan for academic programs will evolve from the strategic plan proposals in each area. The Vice President of Academic Affairs, working with the Office of Planning and Institutional Research and the University Assessment Committee, will assure that relevant assessment findings will become easily accessible and employed throughout the University in decision-making.

Provided that budget circumstances allow for filling the projected positions in the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, that office will be able to increase its support to individual departments and programs in their assessment efforts by 2012. In keeping with the new Academic Plan, an enhanced OPIR would also undertake an analysis of university-wide assessment activities and effectiveness by 2013.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Eastern has made significant strides in planning and evaluation since the last self study and will continue to move forward with the above stated goals. In the last self study (and even at the five-year mark), the lack of available data was a significant issue. We have resolved many of our data issues. The strategic planning process will continue to clarify the mission as we move forward. The current financial challenges may slow resource dependent progress somewhat.
Strategic and Other Types of Planning at Eastern

**Strategic Planning**
- University Strategic Plan

**Organizational Planning**
- e.g., Master & University Relations Plans (5+ Years)
- e.g., Library Plan & Admissions Goals (1-3 Years)
- e.g., Office Annual Reports & Project Compass working groups (1 Year)

**Time Horizon**
- Long-Term
- Tactical
- Operational

**Characteristics**

**Strategic**
- Based on Mission and Values
- Bold Visions
- Developed Vis-a-Vis Historical Context
- Intangible Assets, such as Faculty Knowledge
- Input From Over 250 Campus and Community Volunteers

**Organizational**
- Problem-Solving
- Form Basis for Future Tasks
- Developed Vis-a-Vis Current and Anticipated Budget
- Existing Infrastructure
- Input Varies With Size and Scope of Plan
Standard Three: Organization and Governance

Description

*Organization and Governance: Eastern, the CSU System, and the Board of Trustees.* Eastern Connecticut State University is an institution where the different levels of governance enjoy substantial cooperation. Administration, faculty, staff, and students have generally maintained a close working relationship that has been mutually beneficial and has allowed the institution to grow and change in pursuit of its mission. The basic organizational design and governance structure currently in place has been consistent for more than 20 years.

Eastern is one institution of a four-campus system known collectively as the [Connecticut State University System](https://www.csus.edu) (CSUS). The CSU System operates under the aegis of a single [Board of Trustees](https://www.csus.edu/trustees), headed by a chair who is appointed by the governor of the state. The board has 18 members, 14 of whom are appointed to six-year terms by the governor and confirmed by the [Connecticut General Assembly](https://www.cga.ct.gov). The four remaining board members are student trustees, one from each campus, who are elected by their fellow students.

The CSUS Board of Trustees works in consultation with the State of Connecticut’s [Board of Governors for Higher Education](https://www.csus.edu/gov), represented by its staff vehicle, the [Department of Higher Education](https://www.csus.edu/dhe), which is headed by the Commissioner of Higher Education. The Department of Higher Education is charged with ensuring academic quality and fiscal efficiency in higher education and that higher education is accessible to the state’s students and responsive to the state’s economic needs. In addition to conducting licensure and accreditation reviews of all higher education programs in the state (public and private), DHE prepares system-wide operating and capital budget requests to the legislature for public institutions; operates state and federal student financial aid and minority recruitment programs; maintains a data base for budgeting and policy studies; prepares legislative proposals on issues of concern to higher education (including the monitoring of graduation and enrollment trends); and oversees the operations of state private occupational schools.

The Board of Trustees works to ensure that the activities of the CSU System institutions are aligned with statewide policies and priorities, as articulated by DHE. There are six standing committees of the Board: Academic Affairs, Audit and Risk Management, Development, Executive, Finance and Administration, and Student Life. The Board also maintains a Committee on Collective Bargaining. The Board meets eight times a year, with meetings rotating among the four universities and the System Office. Board meetings are open to the public. The Board has the authority to determine the general policy of the university system, review and approve institutional budget requests, set tuition and fees, and appoint the chancellor of the system and the university presidents.

The Board maintains a system staff with the [Chancellor](https://www.csus.edu/about/trustee) functioning as the chief executive officer. The Chancellor implements board policy and is responsible for the successful operation of the system. The Chancellor and the Board receive advice and counsel from a system of various councils that meet monthly to recommend policy and comment on pending issues. These councils are: Presidents, Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Student Affairs, Employee Relations, Information Technology, and Institutional Research. The administrators in these areas maintain constant communication to ensure that system efforts are aligned where necessary and reflect different campus perspectives where appropriate.

The Presidents of the four CSUS institutions report to the Chancellor, but have broad discretion in the management of affairs at their respective campuses. As such, the role of Eastern’s President will be discussed in the following section.
The relationships among the Board of Trustees, the administration, faculty, and staff of the CSU system, as well as their relative authority and responsibilities, are described and governed by Board of Trustees policies and procedures, which incorporate (in addition to the Board’s own policies) state statutes and regulations, collective bargaining agreements for faculty and administrative staff, and personnel policies and procedures for non-union management and confidential employees.

Although there is currently no formal process for assessing the work of the Board of Trustees, the Board seeks to monitor its own effectiveness through the periodic evaluation of the Chancellor and the four university Presidents. The board sets priorities, goals, and objectives for the Chancellor and the Presidents. The four Presidents are evaluated annually (with a respective in-depth evaluation every four years), which provides the occasion for assessing the extent to which the activities of the four campuses advance the mission of the system as a whole. The evaluation of the Chancellor serves as an occasion to gauge the effectiveness of the CSU System’s policies, including the System’s relationship to the branches of state government, and to adjust them if necessary.

Organization and Governance within Eastern. Eastern has been led by Dr. Elsa M. Núñez since her appointment as the University’s sixth President in 2006. The President is assisted in the administration of the University by a senior management team consisting of an Executive Vice President, four Vice Presidents (of Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Student Affairs, and Institutional Advancement), and a Chief Information Officer, as well as an Executive Assistant who also serves as the University’s Chief Diversity Officer. In all matters affecting educational quality and the University’s mission, governance is shared between the Administration and the University Senate, a principle enshrined in the collective bargaining agreement between the CSU System and the AAUP. Together, the Senate and the Administration share responsibility for University policy in areas such as curriculum; degree requirements; academic standards; admissions policies; academic freedom; tenure, promotion, and continuing appointment; budgeting; planning; and organizational structure.

The University Senate consists of members drawn from the instructional faculty, the administrative faculty, the Student Government Association and the administration. There is one representative from each academic department (including one for the Library and Counseling faculty, and one for the Athletics Faculty), three senior administrative officers, the President (who holds a non-voting seat), five representatives from the administrative faculty, four at-large members elected by the instructional and administrative faculty, and three students selected by the student government. The Senate presents its decisions in the form of bills and resolutions. Bills require the approval of the president to become University policy.

The Senate elects and oversees standing committees, each of which has jurisdiction over a specific area and studies issues and problems within that area for the purpose of proposing policies and recommendations. Standing committees include Academic Affairs Committee, Academic Program Review Committee, Budget & Resource Allocation Committee, Curriculum Committee, First Year Program Committee, Information Technology Committee, Liberal Arts Program Committee, Liberal Arts Works Committee, Organizational Committee, Personnel Policies Committee, Student Academic Advising Committee and Support Services Committee, Elected at-large committees organized through the Senate include Academic Misconduct, CSU Professorship Awards Advisory Committee, Faculty Development Committee, Grade Appeals, Individualized Major – Advisory Committee, Information Technology Committee, Promotion & Tenure Committee, Research Reassigned Time, Sabbatic Leave Committee, Termination Appeals Committee, University Writing Board Committee, Academic Excellence Awards, Excellence Awards Committee, Honorary Degree, and Planning and Priorities Council.
The Senate undertakes periodic (but not regularly scheduled) examinations of its constitution and by-laws to ensure that the system of governance is mindful of the institutional mission and serves the needs of the organization. For example, the Senate reviews its constitution and by-laws each time a new faculty collective bargaining agreement is approved to ensure compliance with contract provisions. In recent years, the Senate has revamped its committee structure to address changing needs; new committees on the First-Year Program, on academic advising, and on Information Technology have been formed in response to curricular revisions and strategic planning initiatives.

The University’s organizational structure and system of governance are subject to adjustment as the need arises. Recommendations can be made either to the administration or to the University Senate, and implemented through the normal procedures of each. A third avenue for review lies externally, with the Board of Trustees. Both the Academic Affairs and the Finance and Administration Committees of the Board of Trustees may review the University’s organizational structure when needed, and implement policy changes as necessary. The Academic Affairs Committee of the BOT has jurisdiction over policies relating to academic matters and the Finance and Administration Committee of the BOT oversees policies governing Management and Confidential Professional personnel that fall outside union jurisdiction, and is also charged with examining the distribution of personnel across the various functions of the University.

Personnel matters at the university are governed by six collective bargaining agreements pertaining to unclassified (AAUP and SUOAF) and classified employees. For employees not covered by contracts a document HR Policies for Management and Confidential Personnel provides information regarding employment policies. Each of these documents provides policies and guidelines affecting working conditions, benefits, and responsibilities of such employees.

Members of the University community may address concerns about University policy to the University Senate. When issues are brought to the attention of the Senate Executive Committee, they are typically referred to one of the standing committees for investigation. The standing committee consults with interested parties within the faculty and administration, and also accepts input from any member of the University community. If the standing committee feels a policy change is appropriate, it can submit a bill to the Senate for approval. It is thus the standing committees of the Senate that monitor the University’s programs and policies on a wide array of issues.

Eastern’s academic programs are divided among three schools: Arts and Sciences, Education and Professional Studies, and Continuing Education. Each school is headed by a Dean who reports to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. All of Eastern’s academic departments are housed in either the School of Arts and Sciences or the School of Education and Professional Studies. Each department is represented by a chair, who, according to the terms of the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement, is responsible for leading the department in fulfilling its responsibilities in academic and personnel areas and for facilitating the functioning of the department. The School of Continuing Studies houses no departments of its own; rather, the Dean and Associate Dean of Continuing Education work closely with the other two academic deans and with department chairs to arrange course offerings (e.g. off-campus, continuing education, distance education, evening, or week-end classes), to facilitate the development of new courses and majors for students enrolled in the School of Continuing Studies, and to coordinate other matters of academic policy. International course offerings (study abroad and travel courses) are under the supervision of the School of Continuing Education (travel courses) and the Intercultural Center (study abroad).

Basic control over the curriculum at Eastern is lodged with the faculty, subject to approval for new degree programs by the President, Trustees, and Board of Governors. This responsibility is spelled out in the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement, particularly with respect to faculty responsibility for
academic programs and curriculum. Policies relating to matters of educational programs, faculty personnel, and other appropriate aspects of institutional policies are established through the University Senate.

**Student Government and Student Interest.** In addition to sending three representatives to the University Senate and electing one student member of the CSUS Board of Trustees, Eastern’s students have their own governance system in the form of the **Student Government Association (SGA)**. The goal of SGA is to connect students to faculty, to the administration, and to each other in order to advance student views and interests. The Preamble to the SGA constitution stresses the bond among students, faculty, and administrators—an essential feature that is in keeping with the university’s mission as a liberal arts institution. The SGA encourages a club and organization structure that emphasizes activities wedded as much as possible to the University’s academic program and to the ideals of civic engagement expressed in its mission.

SGA is made up of an executive board and senate. The executive board consists of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Business and Management Chair. The number of Senate seats is determined by enrollment, with one student representative for every 200 students. Elections are held in the Spring and Fall; students must hold a minimum GPA of 2.5 in order to run for office. Four committees make up the Student Government Association: Budget and Management (BAM), Internal Issues, Student Issues and Promotions. Important matters and questions that arise are referred to the appropriate committee for further research, discussion and debate and are reported back to the full Senate at a future meeting.

SGA also appoints senators to a number of University committees as requested by the University administration. These committees include, but are not limited to: Faculty Senate Committees, Honorary Degree Selection Committee, Student Center Advisory Board, and the Design Review Committee. As part of the strategic planning process, the SGA President was a member of the President’s Advisory Committee and was part of the team making decisions on initiatives at the highest level.

The SGA President meets regularly each semester with the University President. The Executive Board is periodically invited to attend the President’s staff meetings. In conjunction with the President’s office, SGA also sponsors two to three President’s Breakfasts each semester. Representatives from the 50 student clubs and organizations are invited to share information and ideas with the University President and other senior administrators.

**Appraisal**

**Organization and Governance: Eastern and The Board of Trustees.** The Board of Trustees maintains a clear understanding of Eastern’s distinctive mission and purpose. The Board approved Eastern’s mission as the State’s public liberal arts university on November 6, 1998. The Board holds the authority to ensure that that mission is accomplished, as well as the right to approve any modifications of Eastern’s mission. Eastern (like all of the CSUS institutions) produces regular reports for the Board of Trustees on the institution’s operations. Board members can thus consider operational events in light of the University’s mission and purpose to ensure that Eastern’s actions and policies are consistent with its mission.

The current system of committees and councils works well to ensure that information is shared and policies and actions are coordinated appropriately, both among the campuses and between each CSU campus and the System office. The Board’s committee format and (where appropriate) its consultation with advisory committees and task forces serve to involve numerous campus and system office personnel in the drafting and discussion of new policies, as well as in the revision of existing policies. Before the Board delivers its final approval of any policy change, the appropriate Board committee holds a final drafting meeting where campus representatives are present.
The organization of the CSU system has operated in a coordinated fashion without much change since the last self study. The system calls for the Board of Trustees to develop—and for the Chancellor to execute—broad policy directions, while leaving the Presidents of the four campuses considerable latitude to manage their institutions’ own affairs and develop their institutions’ own distinctive characters. The success of the entire enterprise rests on the effective functioning of individuals and groups at both the campus and system levels, as well as the cooperation among those groups.

Organization and Governance within Eastern. Eastern’s organization and governance structure has worked effectively over the last ten years to allow input from both administrators and faculty into the University’s academic program. The system in place allows input from diverse constituencies across campus in both critiquing existing policy and offering proposals for new policies. The existing system has worked effectively to produce clear policies on matters as divergent as proposing new courses or majors, applying for sabbatical leave, and procedures for applying for tenure and promotion. The Senate governance process allows a voice for all members of the Eastern community in the running of the University.

The adoption of the new Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LACC), which replaced the previous General Education Requirements, provides a good view of Eastern’s governance system at work on a large scale. A number of proposals were vetted through Senate committee meetings, public forums, and the Senate. The program currently in place was ultimately adopted by the Senate and approved by former President (now Chancellor) David G. Carter. Implementation of the LACC is now overseen by the Liberal Arts Program Committee, a standing committee of the Senate, which approves proposals for courses to be accepted into the LACC, and has a policy for periodic review of those courses that are accepted to ensure they continue to fulfill the goals and objectives of the Liberal Arts Program.

If anything, the transparency and the participatory character of Eastern’s governance has increased under the leadership of Dr. Núñez. Since her arrival, President Núñez has worked aggressively to ensure that all campus constituencies have access to her office. In addition to holding open office hours in which any member of the community can present issues to her in a private meeting, the President has maintained an ambitious schedule of meetings with different groups: one meeting a year with the residents of each residence hall; regular breakfast meetings with key members of the Student Government Association; periodic meetings with members of the various employee union stewards; regular breakfast meetings with members of the faculty; and yearly meetings with each academic department.

In addition to maintaining good employee relations through open lines of communication, President Núñez recently set the terms for an extraordinarily participatory strategic planning process, described in greater detail in Chapter Two. The design and implementation of the strategic plan’s 18 initiatives involved the efforts, all told, of more than 250 employees serving on numerous committees, each of which shared its work with the rest of the University by posting the minutes of its meeting online and by holding open forums. While the incorporation of multiple perspectives could at times seem to slow down the strategic planning process, the end result was a set of policies that have earned the support of faculty, staff, and administration. All changes recommended through the Strategic Plan implementation process that affect academic policy or other areas under the jurisdiction of the University Senate have been approved by the Senate. Assessment of the strategic planning process will be accomplished through careful development of assessment plans for each initiative with oversight from an appointed Strategic Plan Assessment Coordinator (appointed in June 2010).

The effectiveness of Eastern’s organizational structure related to this curriculum is currently being reviewed through the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Similar review was effected by the strategic planning process, for as proposals were advanced by implementation committees, organizational changes were recommended as needed. These proposals were then reviewed by two oversight committees: the
Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee (SIPS) and the President’s Advisory Committee (PAC). While the primary purpose of both SIPS and PAC was to review each proposal with an eye toward the effectiveness of each in achieving the goals established by the strategic plan, both committees, and especially PAC, were also required to oversee any organizational changes to ensure resources are allocated in the most effective manner possible. Within this process, SIPS acted as an advisory committee to PAC, and PAC acted as an advisory committee to President Nunez.

Student Government and Student Interest. SGA has made progress with regard to greater visibility for and attention to student needs, although more needs to be done to identify the issues that are of greatest concern for students. The number of students participating in the student Senate has grown, but more outreach is required to engage the still-substantial commuter student population. The most recent election saw contested offices for all Executive Board positions, as well as increased turnout by students. SGA continues to review its constitution and bylaws annually.

The process of allocating funds to clubs and organizations was also improved this year with a move to an online request form. SGA needs to continue to make the student body aware of what is happening within the organization.

Projection

Organization and Governance: Eastern and the Board of Trustees. It is projected that the trustees will continue to operate generally as they have in the previous ten years both in terms of organization, their relationship to Eastern and to the DHE. Since there have not been any serious proposals advanced at the legislative, DHE, or system levels to alter the current system of governance and management, it seems reasonable to expect that current policies and procedures will remain in place.

Organization and Governance within Eastern. The University expects to continue its record of effective governance, drawing on its good relationships with its governing board, the State’s Department of Higher Education, and those internal organizations, such as the University Senate that function as bodies establishing or monitoring policies or playing advisory roles.

Eastern has generally promoted and maintained a climate where all organizations and individuals in the University community have been able to participate meaningfully in the development or revision of policy. In the 2009 survey, Great Colleges to Work For, Eastern ranked in the top ten of medium-sized institutions in the area of collaborative governance. While a number of organizational changes will likely emerge from the strategic planning process, there is no reason to expect any change in Eastern’s fundamental character, which promotes the participation of the entire community in discussions about University policy. Organizational changes that are anticipated include a shift in responsibility for event scheduling and for oversight of the Liberal Arts Core.

There is currently no regularly scheduled, formal process for reviewing Eastern’s organizational structure and system of governance. In an effort to ensure more systematic review in the future, the University Senate will propose an amendment to its bylaws charging the Organization Committee with a review of the Senate’s bylaws and committee structure every five years in order to ensure that the Senate’s structure continues to fit the governance needs of the University. Based on such reviews, the Organization Committee may from time to time make recommendations to the University Senate to improve the system of governance as needed.

Student Government and Student Interest. SGA will seek out membership from commuters and encourage the creation of an organization for this group of students. Traditionally Eastern has not experienced a strong and sustainable commuter association. While the new Student Center has resolved the need for space for commuters an association/organization has not been an outcome. While commuters
do have many places on campus to spend time between classes with other students (residents and commuters) they simply have not pushed for an association/organization. SGA conducts commuter student forums once a semester whereby they solicit input from commuter students. The Budget and management Committee will continue to review existing policies and make improvements in the allocation and funding process for student clubs and organizations. While SGA organizes forums to gather student input and has an active web-based campaign inviting students to express their concerns and opinions and present new ideas, a needs assessment should be part of SGA’s future plans. This will likely take the form of a "quality of student life study" that captures students’ assessments of their needs more formally.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Eastern’s external and internal governance structures are clear and stable. There is substantial agreement and goodwill among the administration, the faculty and the support staff. The institution works to make changes to its governance structure when needed and has been sensitive to creating needed changes. Assessment of the need for changes in governance at the campus level takes place periodically through Senate committees, administrative review, and as part of the systematic Strategic Planning process.
Standard Four: The Academic Program

Description

Organization and Oversight of Academic Programs. Eastern’s academic programs are consistent with its mission as the state’s public liberal arts university. The University offers 31 undergraduate majors, ranging from standard disciplinary offerings like Biology, English, and Economics to a new interdisciplinary major in Labor Relations and Human Resource Management; students may also design individualized majors to pursue a course of study cutting across traditional disciplinary boundaries. At the undergraduate level, Eastern also offers 53 minors (including eleven in interdisciplinary fields), and eight undergraduate teaching certification programs. Additionally, the University’s Graduate Division offers ten graduate degree programs (including three involving teacher certification).

The majority of Eastern’s academic programs are housed in departments in either the School of Arts and Sciences or the School of Education and Professional Studies. Such programs are administered by chairpersons elected by department faculty, and are under the oversight of an academic Dean. Departments are required by the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) to have by-laws describing their structure and procedures. Procedures for addressing deficiencies in departmental bylaws or disputes related to them are delineated in the CSU-AAUP CBA. The CBA also defines the responsibilities of chairpersons and directors of interdisciplinary programs.

A small number of programs are not housed in individual academic departments. The First Year Program and the Liberal Arts Core are overseen by committees primarily composed of teaching faculty (the First Year Program Committee and the Liberal Arts Program Committee, respectively). In lieu of department chairpersons, the First Year Program is administered by an appointed faculty member, while the Liberal Arts Core has been administered by a faculty member elected by a Senate committee (a committee that is, in turn, elected by the University Senate). The Individualized Major and Bachelor of General Studies programs are administered by the Deans of the appropriate schools in conjunction with faculty from appropriate departments.

Policies related to academic programs and requirements are generally approved through an appropriate Senate committee (e.g. Academic Affairs, Curriculum, Liberal Arts Core, or First Year Program Committee.) Policy changes come from these committees as recommendations to the University Senate.

When a new program is proposed, the coherence and quality of its goals, structure, and content are evaluated, first by the academic department that would house it, and subsequently by the University Curriculum Committee (which is composed mainly of teaching faculty), the appropriate academic Dean, the University Senate, the President, the Connecticut State University Board of Trustees, and, ultimately, the Board of Governors for Higher Education. Any changes in a program’s goals or structure, and any significant changes in its content must be reviewed and approved by some or all of the above listed bodies, depending on the scope of the changes proposed. The University Curriculum Committee, for instance, reviews and approves all new courses and all revisions to existing courses; courses in the Liberal Arts Core are subject to additional oversight by the Liberal Arts Program Committee. The CSU system office identifies low-enrolled programs on an annual basis and requires justification for program continuation. If it were determined that a program should be discontinued, that decision would go through the same process required for program approval.

Learning goals developed by department faculty for discipline-specific programs and by relevant committees for interdisciplinary programs are posted on a common web site. Program requirements are published in the university catalog (print and online since 2002, online only beginning Fall 2010), at
department web sites for discipline-specific programs, and at program web sites for interdisciplinary programs. To make it easy for students to understand program requirements all web sites have a standard format.

With an average class size of 25.8 at the 100- and 200- levels and of 19.1 at the 300- and 400- levels, Eastern is comparable to its Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) peers, which have averages of 23.7 and 16.3, respectively. While a full-time teaching load at Eastern is 12 credit hours per semester, after adjusting for non-instructional assignments, full-time faculty at Eastern teach 9.8 credit hours per semester on average, compared to 12.7 across COPLAC schools (see COPLAC Data Profile; a further discussion of credit hours taught is in Standard Five). Instructional expenses plus research and academic support services comprise 35% of the University’s total operating expenses. Allocations of faculty lines, physical space, and program resources are made by the Vice President of Academic Affairs in consultation with the Deans, Program Directors, and President. Physical space is allocated through the Space Allocation Committee consistent with the University’s Master Plan.

A handful of programs at Eastern (Accounting, Business Administration, Business Information Systems, Communication, Education, the Physical Education certification program, Social Work, and Digital Art and Design) have their own admission and retention requirements. These requirements align enrollment with resources and are aimed at identifying students with skills and abilities needed for success in the major.

With the exception of certain classes in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, all instruction at Eastern is conducted in English. Successful completion of a degree thus requires proficiency in English. Eastern’s undergraduate admissions requirements for international students include a minimum TOEFL score of 550 (or 213 on the computer-based test). Moreover, all students must demonstrate their facility in written English by completing the University’s three-stage Writing Across the Curriculum requirement (described below in the discussion of the undergraduate program). Further details about admissions policies can be found in Standard Six.

Ongoing evaluation of existing programs is handled by assessment at the departmental level, with results communicated to the University administration through annual reports. All academic programs are also subject to periodic evaluation by the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC). The APRC assesses each program with regard to seven criteria ranging from the appropriateness of the required curriculum to the adequacy of program staff, facilities, and equipment. A new level of programmatic review—the Exemplary Academic Program Review process—will be opened to the campus in the Fall of 2010, and will provide departments with the opportunity to demonstrate the ways that they meet criteria of excellence, and to outline plans to move beyond APRC expectations. A more detailed account of programmatic review at Eastern is provided under Standard Two. Where appropriate, Eastern’s programs also pursue discipline-related accreditation. The Education and Social Work programs are the only programs on campus with such external accreditation at this time. The Education program is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), while the Social Work program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Eastern has a long tradition of offering a limited number of courses at several sites in Eastern Connecticut to accommodate the needs of adult and commuting students. While these off-campus options provide important opportunities for some students, they represent a very small portion of total enrollment. Eastern also offers courses for teachers in Jamaica.

Though Eastern offers online courses in most academic programs, online offerings—taught by faculty and staff who teach on-ground courses—represent only a small percentage of total course offerings (1.6% in Fall 2009). Still, the number of students enrolling in online courses is on the rise, with 1,913...
students taking an online course between Fall 2008 and Fall 2009, up from only 163 students two years earlier. With the exception of the Master’s in Educational Technology, however, no program is offered more than 50% online. A new Senate committee was created in 2009-2010 to make recommendations for policies and procedures to ensure that online courses maintain an appropriate role in the curriculum. Eastern ensures that students have necessary information and technical literacy through requirements that are built into the Liberal Arts Core as described below.

Undergraduate Degree Programs. As detailed in the University Catalog, all students in Eastern’s baccalaureate degree programs complete 120 credits of coursework to graduate, at least 30 of which must be completed at Eastern. Students in baccalaureate programs must take at least 60 credits of coursework at the intermediate or advanced levels (i.e., 200-, 300-, or 400-level courses), with at least half of those credits at the advanced level (i.e., 300-level or higher). Students may take as many elective classes as they desire, consistent with the completion of other degree requirements. Students must complete both the University’s Liberal Arts Core requirements and an academic major (for the BA, BS, and BGS degrees) or academic concentration (for the AS). First-year full-time students participate in the First Year Program. The University’s writing requirement specifies that all students must take a general introductory course as well as an intermediate and an advanced writing-intensive course appropriate to their disciplines. With implementation of the new strategic plan, students will also complete a pre-professional experience to satisfy the Liberal Arts Work (LAW) requirement and fulfill a Global Citizenship requirement.

General Education. Eastern’s general education requirement has been revised since the last self study to be more consistent with the University’s liberal arts mission. The 46-credit Liberal Arts Core (LAC) has three tiers. Tier I requires students to explore the Arts and Humanities, Historical Perspectives, Social Sciences, Mathematics, and the Natural Sciences as disciplines. These courses make the development of critical and analytical modes of thinking their central learning objective. At Tier II, students are required to synthesize and apply the knowledge they gained in their first-tier classes in five areas: Applied Information Technology, Creative Expression, Cultural Perspectives, Individuals and Societies, and Natural Sciences. Tiers I and II include offerings that focus on the subject matter and methodologies of the disciplines as well as on their relationships to one another. Tier III requires that students reflect on and draw connections to their liberal arts education in an upper-level capstone course. Eastern’s Liberal Arts Core requirements thus ensure that all students not only take courses from a range of disciplines but also synthesize what they have learned through independent inquiry at an advanced level.

The LAC requires that incoming students demonstrate basic technological literacy. For the first two years of the program (2007-08, 2008-09), these skills were evaluated through a self-assessment and students who needed skill development were offered self-guided workshops administered by the Office of Information Technology. In Fall 2010 the evaluation and skill development will be completed through embedded assessments in FYR 174, a one-credit course taken by all first-time students. The Tier II Applied Information Technology requirement requires students to apply information technology in problem-solving, the pursuit of knowledge, and the communication of ideas. A further discussion of information and technological literacy (including programs offered by Eastern’s library) can be found in Standard Seven.

The Major or Concentration. Where the Liberal Arts Core gives students a substantial and coherent introduction to the broad areas of human knowledge and their theories and methods of inquiry, each student also pursues an academic major requiring in-depth study in at least one disciplinary or interdisciplinary area. Eastern’s major programs have varying credit requirements, ranging from 33 to more than 50 credits. All programs require a progression from introductory to advanced coursework, and most include a capstone experience in which students synthesize what they have learned in the course of their studies. With permission from their departments, students may apply two courses from their major
to the Liberal Arts Core requirements, encouraging a synthesis of disciplinary knowledge with a broader liberal arts perspective. In some cases, a department’s own capstone course can serve to fulfill the Tier III LAC requirement, prompting students to reflect both upon the modes of knowledge and methods of their own discipline and the relation of that disciplinary knowledge to the wider field of liberal studies.

While the new Liberal Arts Work requirement will ensure that all students have a significant pre-professional experience, programs designed to provide professional training have traditionally included requirements for practice in the field. For example, Business Administration and Communications programs require that students complete an internship. Education and Health and Physical Education majors complete a field experience requirement, as do Social Work majors. In Economics and in Labor Relations and Human Resource Management internships are highly recommended.

Eastern’s commitment to liberal education is anchored in three principles: Engagement, Integration, and Independence. Students become engaged academically through their work in class, which requires imagination and intellectual commitment; they become engaged socially through participation in a variety of clubs, athletics, and co-curricular activities; and they become engaged in the community through projects and programs that address the needs of Willimantic and the region. The University’s liberal arts core curriculum (LAC), majors, and co-curricular programs emphasize the relationships between diverse fields of study as well as the impact of people, ideas and events. These programs make connections among courses and between campus and community life. The academic and personal realms of students’ lives are integrated, so that students can see their studies as a part of who they are and who they may become.

**The Graduate Program.** The Graduate Division, part of the School of Education and Professional Studies, administers graduate programs at Eastern. Graduate education represents only a small percentage (6.5%) of the University’s total enrollment. Two departments in the School of Education and Professional Studies offer master’s programs in their disciplines. The Education department offers Master of Science degrees in Early Childhood Education, Educational Technology, Elementary Education, Reading and Language Arts, Science Education, and Secondary Education. The Business Administration department currently offers a Master of Science in Organizational Management (the department’s Master of Science in Accounting program has been suspended pending analysis of student demand and availability of qualified faculty). These graduate degree programs are planned and scheduled so that students may pursue them on either a full- or part-time basis.

Admission to a graduate program is based upon an applicant’s previous academic achievement and evidence of ability to successfully pursue advanced study in the proposed field. The applicant must hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education in the United States or an equivalent degree from a recognized institution in another country. Students may be admitted provisionally to teacher preparation programs offered by the Graduate Division, though provisional admission does not guarantee full admission into a graduate program. Students on provisional status may enroll for a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours. To move from provisional to full admission status in graduate programs in Education, students must apply for and be accepted by the Committee on Admission and Retention in Education (CARE) without restriction.

Upon formal admission to a graduate degree or planned study program of any kind, the student is assigned a faculty adviser. Following the established requirements of each program, the adviser and the student develop a plan of study for the degree. Though specific degree requirements differ from program to program, all graduate programs at Eastern require a minimum of 30 credits of approved graduate-level courses. All graduate programs have core course requirements covering the seminal issues and knowledge in the field and the research methods appropriate to the discipline, culminating in either a comprehensive examination (Plan A) or a master’s thesis (Plan B); professional degree programs also
require internships and clinical practica. In some programs, the required coursework is extensive, leaving little room for elective courses; in other cases, students work with their advisers to choose elective courses that add depth to their course of study. After the Dean of Education and Professional Studies approves the student's plan of study, it is recognized as the student's official planned program of courses and/or project requirements.

Comprehensive examinations and thesis/portfolio submissions typically occur twice each year, once in the Fall semester and once in the Spring. Graduate students who do not pass the comprehensive exam/portfolio may rewrite again the following semester. If the student fails for a second time, however, no additional opportunities to retake the exam are given and no degree is granted. Students taking the comprehensive examination in Organizational Management who fail three or more of the five exam questions are considered to have failed the entire exam. Students who fail one or two questions have the opportunity to be reexamined on those content areas within 20 days. Failure of either one or both of the repeated content areas will result in a failure of the entire exam.

The development of new graduate programs and changes to existing graduate programs follow essentially the same on- and off-campus review processes that undergraduate programs follow. The Graduate Division is responsible for the administration of all graduate programs at the University, a function that is shared with academic departments in the School of Education and Professional Studies. The Graduate Division office staff currently consists of the Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies, an administrative assistant, and a secretary.

The University does not have a formally defined graduate faculty, but faculty must hold a doctoral degree to teach graduate courses. This degree requirement can be waived only with permission of the appropriate department chairperson and the Dean of Education and Professional Studies. In these cases, individuals (full-time and part-time) must have a demonstrated equivalent level of competence in the specific subject area. The faculty is responsible for student advising and all areas of instruction. Departments assign graduate advisers in the various academic programs on the basis of their credentials, research, and professional interests.

The degree to which departments offering both undergraduate and graduate degree programs must negotiate the distinction between undergraduate- and graduate-level work varies by subject. The Business Department’s Master of Science Degree in Organizational Management is only tangentially related to the undergraduate business program, for example. Students enrolled in the graduate Organizational Management program come from many different undergraduate academic backgrounds. Because the Organizational Management program may be a student’s first exposure to “business” courses, that program must provide students with the foundations of the discipline even as it moves them into advanced work in the field. The Education department’s graduate programs, by contrast, are reviewed annually according to the conditions set by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Those accreditation standards require the department to define the relative emphases in program objectives for the graduate and undergraduate programs, as reflected in curricular, scholarly, and program requirements.

Eastern’s graduate programs focus on preparing students for professional practice in related fields, and the evidence suggests that they are generally effective in achieving their objectives. The Organizational Management program has articulated specific objectives outlining the skills and abilities the program’s students should develop, and assesses itself annually to insure that those goals are met. All master’s degree programs in Education have very clearly articulated matrices of performance assessment measures aligned with the education unit’s conceptual framework, with Connecticut statutes, and with standards articulated by NCATE and other professional associations (e.g., National Council of Teachers of
Mathematics). Anecdotal evidence indicates that graduates of Eastern’s graduate and professional programs succeed in entering or advancing in jobs in their fields.

**Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit.** Eastern’s undergraduate and graduate degrees (and other forms of academic recognition) follow the practices common to American institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the programs. Classes are structured to meet for 15 hours for each credit.

The courses the University offers are described in the Undergraduate and Graduate course catalog. The catalog is revised every two years to ensure the accuracy and currency of its descriptions. A recent review did reveal some disparity between what is listed in the course catalog and actual offerings in recent years; some courses that appear in the catalog had not been offered in some time. None of the gaps that were found would have impeded four-year graduation rates, however, either because the courses that had not been offered were electives or—when those courses did fulfill requirements—because other courses fulfilling the requirements were available. University Senate policy does not currently stipulate removal of courses from the University Catalog if they are not offered within a specific amount of time. A more detailed discussion of the University Catalog (including the ways that that document is increasingly supplemented by online resources) appears under Standard Ten.

Once courses are created and approved by the appropriate supervisory bodies (discussed above and under Standard Two), each department is responsible for supervising the delivery of courses. Department chairs can access Banner reports to monitor grade distributions for each class and to identify courses that have a high risk of failing students. All courses offered each term are submitted to the Dean of the appropriate school who has final say on the schedule.

The CSU-AAUP collective bargaining agreement (page 25) requires student opinion surveys of all courses. Instructors are also encouraged to seek peer review of their teaching. Both the peer and student evaluation processes are key sources of information regarding course delivery, and are also used to assess teaching effectiveness as part of the renewal, promotion, tenure, and post-tenure review processes.

Academic policies relative to academic probation and dismissal; adding and dropping courses; withdrawing from the University and requesting a leave of absence are all clearly spelled out in the catalog and the Student Handbook. Eastern has established clear policies and procedures regarding academic misconduct, including plagiarism. Plagiarism policies and procedures are available in the University Catalog, Student Handbook, and the Faculty Handbook as well as on a university website. Eastern has also created the Office of Judicial Affairs, which reports to the Dean of Students, to educate the university community on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Cases of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are reported to and tracked by the Office of Judicial Affairs. University policy currently allows the faculty member to decide what sanctions should be imposed for academic misconduct, including a failing grade in the course. After two instances of a failing grade or three or more instances of a report of academic misconduct to the Judicial Affairs Office, additional sanctions such as academic probation, suspension, or expulsion are considered. An Academic Misconduct Committee deliberates on student appeals of academic misconduct charges.

The university supplements its focus on course integrity and faculty supervision and support with a focus on students. The Admissions Office seeks to admit only qualified students to the University—students who will be able to succeed at Eastern. Departments have also been encouraged to work with the Advisement Center regarding students on Academic probation and to identify high risk classes (courses where a substantial percentage of students are at risk of failing). Recently, the University has embarked on an ambitious retention and four-year graduation program. A full discussion of admissions, recruitment, and retention policies and procedures is provided under Standard Six.
Eastern is governed by the Department of Higher Education regulations as stipulated by the Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Learning. These include specific regulations for off-campus and distance learning courses. Eastern has only one program (the Master’s in Educational Technology) that is offered more than 50% online, and has limited course offerings at off-campus locations. Courses offered for credit off campus are administered by the School of Continuing Education (SCE), and maintain the same academic standards as courses offered at the Willimantic campus. All off-campus classes administered by the SCE are taught by regular Eastern faculty, although the percentage of part-time faculty teaching off campus is higher than on the main campus. All hiring decisions for off-campus classes are made by the academic departments, which also evaluate all off-campus offerings.

The mission of the School of Continuing Education is part of the larger mission of the University. The SCE does not have the authority to offer for-credit courses of its own—all courses carrying Eastern credit are housed in academic departments—but coordinates with department chairs to ensure that courses are offered at times and in formats that meet the needs of part-time and adult students and provides advising for those students. The SCE oversees undergraduate certificate programs for individuals who want to study a specific area in a shorter period of time than would be required to earn a degree. All courses in an undergraduate certificate program may be applied to a degree program at a later time.

Mechanisms for evaluating prior learning and criteria for the award of academic credit are outlined in the University Catalog. Students may be awarded a maximum of 60 credits for various types of non-traditional learning ranging from Advanced Placement (AP) examinations to credit for Lifelong Learning. The Registrar’s Office reviews and applies credit transferred from other universities for undergraduate programs. Individual departments can assign credit to fulfill major requirements for their programs at the discretion of the department chair. The Advisement Center can waive LAC requirements for full-time students and the School of Continuing Education for part-time students. Credits transferred from other institutions are not included as part of the student’s GPA and are not counted towards the 30 credits that a student needs to take at Eastern in order to graduate. Students may receive credit by participating in the Academic Exchange Agreement after approval from the Advisement Center. Courses taken as part of the Exchange Agreement from any other CSU school, regional Community College or the University of Connecticut are counted toward the number of credits needed to be taken at Eastern in order to graduate.

Assessment of Student Learning. Because academic programs offer different learning models, the nature, quality, and extent of student learning and achievement in Eastern’s programs are assessed using a variety of methods and reporting procedures. This variety is evident in the E-Series Forms included as part of this self-study. Every academic department articulates learning goals and reports on their efforts to assess those goals. Academic programs evaluate student learning through the Departmental Assessment Plan and share their assessment results in their annual reports, which are submitted to and reviewed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Some academic programs independently collect alumni and employer feedback and interview students to meet certification and/or accreditation requirements. Any such data collected are added to the appropriate Annual Reports.

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) was established to support programs in the assessment of student learning. The UAC is primarily composed of faculty with some administrative members and one student. The UAC coordinates some assessment activities, with the exact nature of their work changing as committee membership and leadership changes and as new assessment needs arise. The committee coordinates the CSU Assessment grant process on campus, has coordinated workshops and programs that supported departments that were developing new assessment plans, and, in the last year, has assisted with administration of the Collegiate Learning Assessment.
At the institutional level, the Academic Program Review process and external accreditation of some programs (Education, Social Work) demonstrate the institution’s approach to student learning, as will the Exemplary Program Review process, when it is fully instituted. The Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) is charged with oversight of the assessment program for all academic programs. The data on student learning outcomes that departments supply in their annual reports becomes part of the overall departmental assessment system used for the Academic Program Review and, if a department chooses, the Exemplary Programs process. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research administers and reports on results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) each year. These results are being used to inform program modifications. More information regarding assessment may be found in the University Assessment Report.

Quite apart from such institutional assessment measures, students have several venues for demonstrating their mastery of the knowledge and methods of their chosen disciplines. Students share their work with their peers, their professors, and the public at the Arts & Sciences Research Conference and Exhibition, the Education and Professional Studies Excellence Expo, Honors Thesis Presentations, and external conferences and competitions.

Appraisal

The university is effective in delivering its academic program. The implementation of a campus-wide Academic Plan will be a crucial component that will bring together the various aspects of the University’s academic program and ensure that the University mission is coherently addressed at all levels. The Academic Plan was accepted in Spring 2010 and will be implemented in the Fall of 2010. Among other issues not directly related to curriculum, the plan will focus resources and attention on incorporating high-impact practices into instruction and curriculum review to promote four-year graduation.

Organization and Oversight of Academic Programs. Eastern’s internal curriculum approval procedures and those mandated by the CSU System and the state’s Board of Governors for Higher Education ensure that programs offered are consistent with the University’s mission and resources. Approval and modification policies and procedures apply equally to undergraduate and graduate programs. Though the broad framework of program approval and modification is quite sound, the University’s Curriculum Committee process could be streamlined to operate more efficiently. Currently, numerous copies are made of each form for the committee. Work on making fillable forms with the capability to add digital signatures and to send the documents electronically should be continued, with the goal of the curriculum approval process being largely paperless by 2020. Current procedures do not require approval for an existing course to be delivered in an online format. This issue is addressed in a set of recommendations made by the ad hoc Distance Learning Committee and will be considered by the Academic Affairs Committee in Fall 2010 when it reviews the recommendations. The Distance Learning Committee also made recommendations regarding procedures that will ensure that added online courses do not create the possibility that a program can be completed more than 50% online.

The APRC process requires each academic department to reflect on the appropriateness of its curriculum for the field of study, and also prompts departments to analyze the results of regular assessment. The 2008-2013 Strategic Plan included the development of an Academic Plan that calls for departments to complete a curriculum review to ensure that current major requirements are consistent with four-year graduation and faculty expertise. When fully implemented, the Exemplary Program Review process will provide further incentive for thoughtful reflection on programs’ curricula and learning outcomes.

The Strategic Plan called for alignment of the First Year and Liberal Arts Core programs and administration. In the case of the First Year Program it is clear that the First Year Program Committee
develops policy and the appointed faculty member (Director of the First Year Program) administers the program consistent with those policies. The Liberal Arts Core has been administered by an elected chair of an elected committee, resulting in a blurring of the policy-making and administrative functions. A special committee created in response to the strategic plan recommendation for an alignment plan has proposed that the functions be separated for the LAC as they are for the FYR with the elected committee developing policy and an appointed faculty member administering the program. This recommendation will be acted on in Fall 2010.

Relative to other public liberal arts colleges, Eastern has adequate resources to sustain and improve its academic programs. Resources are allocated based on enrollment, discipline-specific standards, and expectations for particular physical resources (e.g., laboratory or studio space). The University attempts to balance student credit hours per full-time faculty member across departments and to ensure that all programs have the physical resources necessary to provide high-quality educational experiences. Eastern’s facilities for the visual and performing arts are most in need of expansion and modernization, but a Fine Arts Instructional Center is in the near-term plan, with funds for design having been approved by the state bond commission in Spring 2010. More detailed discussion of faculty teaching is provided under Standard Eight, and facilities are addressed more fully under Standard Eight.

The Undergraduate Program. The university has taken great strides to ensure breadth and depth of education for students across a range of subjects. In the last ten years, Eastern has emphasized the expansion of its undergraduate curriculum, including the creation of the Liberal Arts Core curriculum, the Global Citizenship requirement, and the Liberal Arts Work requirement.

General Education. The LAC was designed specifically to address a lack of clarity in the old General Education Requirements and to create a general education program more appropriate to the institution’s mission. The 46-credit LAC continues to cover a breadth of knowledge, but the articulation of the three tiers serves to structure students’ exposure to a variety of disciplinary perspectives and the comparison and synthesis of those perspectives. The LAC is now in its final implementation phase, with departments developing and offering Tier III courses. So far, the transition from GER to LAC has gone smoothly with the exception of some transfer courses from the community colleges.

The Mathematics competency requirement has been affected by new Math SAT placement cut-off scores standardized across the CSU schools and community colleges. With the new cut-offs, more students are placed in developmental and remedial math. In response, the math department is developing new courses to ensure that all students can complete a college-level math course in their first year. A new approach to the Technical Literacy competency requirement is being employed in Fall 2010. This uses assessments embedded in the FYR 174 course. Integrated curricular elements have been developed with varying levels of success. Greatest success has been achieved with information literacy, largely due to the support and advocacy of library staff.

The Major or Concentration. The cohesiveness and effectiveness of major and minor programs are evaluated periodically through the Academic Program Review Process; through ongoing review of program enrollment, retention and graduation rates; and through assessment of student learning. Several programs, including Psychology and Biology have been modified in light of results of these assessments to enhance student knowledge and understanding of the discipline. The Liberal Arts Work requirement will ensure that all students see the application of skills and knowledge they acquire in their major to the world beyond the university.

Major and minor programs are added only when there is demonstrated student demand and when there are adequate resources. Recent additions include the creation of separate Music and Theatre majors to replace a Performing Arts major and an interdisciplinary Labor Relations and Human Resource
Management major. An interdisciplinary Women’s and Gender Studies major is making its way through the approval process. All of these programs are consistent with Eastern’s mission, use existing faculty expertise, and, for the most part, take advantage of available seats in existing courses, thereby increasing students’ choices and also increasing the probability that upper level courses have sufficient enrollment to be offered as scheduled.

Eastern’s academic program helps students to develop both intellectual and social independence. Active and collaborative learning produces graduates who are self-initiated learners and reflective, independent thinkers. These abilities enable Eastern graduates to take active roles in their personal lives, their workplaces and their communities.

**The Graduate Program.** Eastern’s graduate programs, appropriately for a University of this sort, emphasize professional practice in their curricula and in their scholarly and programmatic requirements. These programs provide students with the opportunity to master a complex field or professional area through planned programs of study. The capstone requirements of the thesis or comprehensive examination challenge each student to demonstrate his or her ability to analyze problems related to the area of specialization and to present results in an appropriate manner. The University’s insistence that all faculty teaching graduate courses hold the Ph.D. or equivalent credential ensures that these faculty are qualified to offer graduate-level instruction and supervise graduate research.

All graduate programs have clearly stated learning goals and all students are subject to assessment of their learning and abilities. Evidence from external certification, positive evaluations of students in student teaching, successful employment, etc. indicates that Eastern’s teaching oriented graduate degree programs are successful at teaching practice. During Academic Year 2008-2009, the University submitted all required special program area (SPA) reports (including specific reports for each graduate education program) for its joint site visit from NCATE and the State Department of Education in Fall 2009. The Master’s in Organizational Management also trains professionals for practice, but data documenting success are less available, as the program does not require external accreditation.

**Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit.** As a constituent unit of the Connecticut State University, Eastern adheres to all the requirements for academic integrity as specified by the Connecticut Department of Higher Education. These standards are detailed and Eastern is in compliance with DHE standards for Graduation Requirements as per Section 10a-34-17 of state law.

Eastern employs multiple methods to ensure consistency and integrity in awarding academic credit and provides students with opportunities for earning credit through transfer, testing, Credit for Lifelong Learning, etc.. All mechanisms for awarding of credit have clear guidelines and criteria and appropriate offices are designated responsibility for the awarding of credit. The closely monitored process for the awarding of credit for prior experience has been institutionalized and has been successful in helping qualified students progress toward timely graduation.

The University has consistently worked with local two-year colleges to establish consistency and clarity in the transfer of academic credits. Eastern is part of a [Transfer Compact Program](#) that promotes transfers from the Connecticut Community Colleges to CSU institutions. An [online course equivalency](#) tool is available to assist potential transfer students to plan their coursework. As part of an initiative by the four CSU schools and the Connecticut Community College campuses, Eastern has identified a set of courses that are being incorporated into a Common Course Numbering system.

The University informs students and faculty about grading procedures using both printed and electronic materials. The University has implemented the Academic Performance Notification network to identify at-risk students and a Risk of Failure system in the Banner reporting system to identify courses that
should be supported with tutoring or supplemental instruction. The full implementation of the First Year Program is also serving as a point of information for students in understanding grading policies as well as policies regarding academic misconduct.

The quality of accelerated and distance courses is subject to the same standards as other courses. All are offered under the supervision of an academic department and all are taught by regular faculty of the university. The majority of accelerated courses are offered during Summer and Winter sessions, and the vast majority of those courses are taught by full-time faculty. For example, of the 19 accelerated courses taught during Winter session 2009, 14 were taught by full-time faculty and only five by part-time faculty.

Currently, there is only one academic program that students can complete almost entirely online. However, with the proliferation of online courses, there needs to be better monitoring of the number of courses individual students take online in order to honor the terms of our accreditation. To that end, a campus and system-wide committee system has been established to monitor online course offerings. The committee on campus is a mix of administrators, support staff and teaching faculty.

**Assessment of Student Learning**. Eastern’s program review and program approval/modification processes ensure that each educational program meets or exceeds the institution’s expectations for quality. Assessment of student learning and achievement, however, is evaluated using different measures across departments and, while variation is to be expected, the quality of and depth of assessment is uneven as is evident in the E-series forms. Some programs do an in-depth assessment of a range of learning goals and have been consistently completing annual assessments, while others are only now finalizing assessment protocols.

The University has been taking steps to develop a more even culture of assessment across the campus. The Assessment Committee and the assessment coordinator assist departments in the evaluation and implementation of assessment procedures. The identification of learning goals has become an important element in the assessment of learning outcomes. Reporting requirements related to assessment have become more standardized with the introduction in 2009 of a new template for reporting assessment of learning outcomes in department annual reports. The template requires specification of learning outcomes, performance criteria, assessment methods, and related program modifications.

Then, too, the University’s program approval and review processes have begun to build in greater focus on assessment, prompting departments and programs to consider questions of assessment as part of all their programmatic activities. The experience of the Liberal Arts Program Committee (LAPC) is instructive in this connection. Eastern’s Liberal Arts Core is only three years old, and methods for assessing and, where necessary, remediating the program have not been finalized. Assessment of the LAC has begun with two years of administration of the Collegiate Learning Assessment, but since seniors who have taken the test in the last two years did not complete the LAC, the results are not helpful in assessing the LAC. Likewise, as discussed under Standard Seven, information and technological literacy programs need to be further developed to meet all LAC goals. Recognizing the shortcomings and incoherencies of some of the initial assessment plans, the LAPC will develop a new plan for assessment that will be implemented in AY 2010-2011.

On the whole, the university has begun to take a broad-based and systematic approach to the assessment of student learning, one that is focused on educational improvement through understanding what and how students are learning through their academic programs and through the new Liberal Arts Curriculum. The current system for evaluating student learning appears to be working smoothly at the various levels (departmental, programmatic, and institutional) with little overlap or duplication. Work remains to be done, however, in ensuring the consistency of assessment activities across academic programs.
Organization and Oversight of Academic Programs. The University’s mission as the state’s public liberal arts institution is the backbone of its new strategic plan, which is formulated to shape the University through 2013 and beyond. Eastern will continue to offer major programs that reflect its role as Connecticut’s public liberal arts university. These majors include traditional liberal arts disciplines as well as pre-professional programs that are consistent with the University’s history, mission, and resources as well as with the workforce needs of the state. The institution’s degrees and other forms of academic recognition will continue to be appropriately named and will continue to follow practices common to American institutions of higher education in terms of both the length and the content of the programs.

Eastern’s system of academic administration and faculty participation will continue to reflect the provisions of the CSU-AAUP CBA and University Senate policies and procedures. Procedures for program development and approval at Eastern have shown themselves to be efficient and effective, and are not likely to change significantly. Proposals to add or delete academic programs will continue to be reviewed at at least five different levels. The entire approval process will continue to be guided by questions of the need for a program and the University’s ability to support it. Existing University Curriculum Committee procedures will continue to guide the review and approval of courses for the award of credit. Guidelines will be developed for approval of online courses.

Current processes for the periodic review of programs—internal review by the APRC and, where appropriate, certification and/or accreditation by external bodies—will remain in place, but will be supplemented by the new Exemplary Program Review process. In the process of fully implementing the Exemplary Program process, the initial rubric employed in the program pilot will be developed into a more sophisticated set of tools for evaluating program effectiveness. While the Exemplary Program Review process will be voluntary, it will provide an additional opportunity for programs to evaluate themselves and consider possibilities for programmatic modifications. The Exemplary Program Review process will provide a tool to support decisions about resource allocation and will be aligned as closely as possible with the existing Academic Program Review process.

Any modifications in academic programs will be carried out through established procedures based on the results of learning assessment studies, changes in student demand, the strengths of the faculty in departments, and the availability of resources.

Undergraduate Program. In the next few years changes in the undergraduate program will reflect the implementation of the Liberal Arts Work and Global Citizenship requirements, required participation in the First Year Program, and full implementation of the Liberal Arts Core. Eastern will promote international experiences for students as part of the Global Citizenship initiative.

General Education. There is no expectation that the LAC will be changed significantly in the near future. As with major and minor programs, however, the program may see some modifications or adjustments as learning assessment data become available.

Major or Concentration. While majors and minors may be modified in response to learning assessment data, no significant changes in existing programs are anticipated. The curriculum review process called for in the Academic Plan will encourage departments to review program requirements with an eye to promoting four-year graduation rates and aligning curriculum with faculty interests and expertise. New interdisciplinary majors may be approved where consistent with the university’s mission and resources. More majors programs will incorporate internships or pre-professional experiences in response to the Liberal Arts Work requirement.
The Graduate Program. To attract and build part-time graduate enrollment, the University will develop a plan for more “accelerated” programs, work out more flexible, innovative scheduling patterns, and explore the possibilities for increasing the number of distance-learning courses in existing programs.

Two graduate programs, the current Master’s of Science in Organizational Management and the dormant Master’s in Accounting programs, will be the focus of discussion in the near future. A member of the Business department is currently researching options for the programs, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs will coordinate discussions among Business faculty in the Fall of 2010 to consider options for expanding, modifying, or eliminating the programs. These discussions will focus on determining the extent to which the programs meet a need in the state and promote Eastern’s mission with its focus on undergraduate education; the discussions will also consider whether the programs can be supported with existing staff.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit. Eastern will continue to approach the awarding of academic credit with an eye towards enabling qualified students to earn degrees in a reasonable amount of time, consistent with maintaining the high standards appropriate to the University’s role as a public liberal arts institution. To facilitate a relatively seamless transfer experience for students coming from Connecticut’s community colleges, Eastern and the other CSU campuses will continue the development of common Transfer Compact applications, a common informational web page, and a common CSU/CTCC transfer equivalency matrix.

Eastern’s resources for information resources and technology are of very high quality. The library and IT staff are very responsive to faculty and student needs, and will continue to make changes in offerings based on assessments, student demand, changes in technology, and the availability of resources. Technology will increasingly be incorporated into the curriculum through various modalities such as Adobe Connect through Eastern’s Blackboard/Vista platform. On-ground courses will use a mix of technologies and will increasingly become hybrid in nature, while online course offerings will increase in most academic programs.

Many institutional issues, practices, policies and procedures will need to be addressed internally at Eastern regarding delivery of course materials online, however. At this stage, it is certainly possible to affirm that no student will be able to complete more than 50% of any program online unless an application for a substantive change to that program has been made and approved. Any such online program, moreover, would be offered primarily for non-traditional students. To ensure the quality of online course offerings, the University’s administration will consider and act on the recommendations of the Senate-appointed ad-hoc Online Course Committee. The institution will need to develop a clear plan for monitoring online course offerings and student registration in online courses.

Assessment of Student Learning. Departments will continue to use effective methods for assessing student learning outcomes based on changing expectations and requirements of the APRC, the University Assessment Committee, and the Eastern and CSU administrations. Regular assessment of both the breadth (LAC) and depth (Major) of students’ learning will become more consistent to ensure that students are leaving Eastern with adequate training in both the liberal arts generally and their field of study specifically. Student learning assessment across academic departments will become more consistent in the next five years. A clear assessment plan for the LAC should be in place for the LAC by the Fall of 2010, and a process to assess the LAC on a regular basis will be established in the next five years.

Eastern is committed to the premise that any curricular changes be based largely on the results of assessment and the availability of resources. Changes to the curriculum (such as the recent decision to
shift the mid-level writing requirement from a portfolio to a writing-intensive class in the major) will be assessed for effectiveness, and any changes made will be based on the results of those assessments.

The University needs to further develop data collection methodologies for Alumni and Employers in all areas of study to determine the adequacy of programs in preparing students for future study and employment.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Eastern has policies and procedures in place that promote assessment of the quality, integrity and effectiveness of academic programs. Although assessment of learning outcomes remains uneven, great strides have been made in the last ten years. Program review has become more systematic and the Exemplary Program process will result in the development and use of more sophisticated tools for program assessment.
**Standard Five: Faculty**

**Description**

*Faculty.* Like many institutions of higher education, Eastern has full-time faculty ranks of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor; the University also employs part-time faculty. Full-time faculty are hired through a process that is much like that common at other universities, and which follows state regulations for hiring state employees. Full-time faculty can be appointed to tenure track or one-year special appointments. Faculty in temporary lines can serve a maximum of two years within a six-year period. Eastern does not have conditional appointments after the probationary period.

Of Eastern’s full-time faculty, 175 have earned doctoral degrees and 29 have Master’s degrees. Faculty who do not hold doctorates fall into one of the following categories: 1) they work in fields where the Master’s is the appropriate terminal degree (MBA, MFA, etc.); 2) they were hired at a time when the University’s standards for faculty hiring were different (and are now nearing retirement); 3) they are newly-hired faculty who have received conditional appointment letters indicating that they must complete the Ph.D. for continuing appointment; or 4) they are faculty hired under full-time special appointments (one-year contracts).

Eastern’s commitment to diversity is reflected in the makeup of its faculty and its faculty recruitment efforts. Eastern follows all state and federal guidelines for affirmative action in hiring, and the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) provides the framework for employing faculty using non-discriminatory affirmative action processes and for creating diversity through Minority Recruitment and Retraining Funds. President Núñez has, moreover, extended Eastern’s commitment to diversity through new search procedures developed by the Office of Equity and Diversity. The University’s 2008-2013 strategic plan establishes inclusive goals for attaining and maintaining diversity on campus as one of the University’s core values. Eastern has made substantial progress on the gender gap among the ranks of the faculty; in 2010, 43% of faculty members were women. In the same year, 26% of the University’s faculty were members of racial or ethnic minorities—a rate more than double that of Eastern’s peer institutions in the Council for Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC).

Retention of full-time faculty has not been well studied. In most years, several faculty members retire and several leave voluntarily for other reasons. In AY 2008-2009, one tenure-track faculty member did not return and five retired in response to a retirement incentive. In AY 2009-2010 one faculty member retired, one tenured faculty member resigned to take a position at another university, three faculty members on temporary appointments resigned to accept teaching positions elsewhere, one tenure-track faculty member resigned to take a position at a research institute, and one other tenure-track faculty member resigned. There is no formal process in place to help the University understand how our environment might be more conducive to retaining these faculty, nor is there any record kept of how often and why first choices in searches may turn down offers of employment.

The University monitors and responds to changing departmental performance and needs. However, Eastern has faced resource and occasional recruitment constraints that have made such responses difficult. For instance, when Business experienced a large increase in the number of majors, there was not a proportional increase in the number of full-time faculty.

*Part-time Faculty*

Part-time (PT) faculty members are primarily engaged in instructional delivery. Department chairs assign courses to part-time faculty based on three criteria: credentials, experience, and merit. The performance of part-time faculty in this role is not assessed in any uniform process, though student opinion surveys are conducted for all teaching faculty as mandated by the CBA (see below, “Evaluation of Faculty”). The role of part-time faculty in department business is determined by the departmental
bylaws, and their integration varies by department. There is a formal orientation event for part-time faculty and a part-time faculty handbook. Departments sometimes provide additional orientation events and involve part-time faculty in social events. Part-time faculty have access to travel and faculty development funds mandated in the CBA (see below), and are eligible for—and receive—certain University awards. As of a recent change in policy, part-time faculty have some access to health benefits, but the use of those was limited to between ten and 14 part-time faculty members in each of the past three years.

There are several different ways to compute the ratio of part-time to full-time faculty at Eastern. Data reported to COPLAC for the 2008-2009 academic year show that Eastern employed 244 part-time faculty members and 202 full-time faculty members in Fall 2008. In the 2009-2010 academic year, nine departments actually had more part-time faculty members than full-time faculty members—in two cases, part-time faculty outnumbered full-time faculty two to one. Of course, many part-time faculty teach only a single class, while full-time faculty generally teach four classes, so a simple head count does not provide a clear picture of the ratio of part-time to full-time faculty.

COPLAC calculates the ratio of part-time faculty instruction to full-time faculty instruction by first determining the full-time equivalent (FTE) of part-time faculty—that is, by determining how many full-time teaching faculty would be needed to teach all of the credits taught by part-time faculty members (in practice, the FTE of part-time faculty equals the sum of all credits taught by part-time faculty divided by twelve). In the Fall of 2008, the full-time equivalent for part-time faculty was 91.5, or 31% of the total full-time equivalent faculty of 293.5, markedly higher than the 21% average for COPLAC institutions.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ECSU</th>
<th>COPLAC Average</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Full-time faculty (headcount)</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Part-time faculty (headcount)</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Full-time Equivalent (FTE) part-time faculty (sum of all part-time faculty teaching credit load / 12)</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D FTE all faculty (A + C)</td>
<td>293.5</td>
<td>217.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FTE part-time faculty / FTE all faculty (C / D)</strong></td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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The CBA details its own formula for calculating the percentage of part-time faculty work at each CSU campus. This formula considers part-time faculty instructional load credits (less the number of non-instructional credits carried by full-time faculty for administrative tasks, research reassigned time, etc.) as a fraction of the total load credits carried by all faculty in a given year. For the 2009-2010 academic year, for instance, 465.04 non-instructional load credits carried by full-time faculty must first be factored out of the 1,136.72 part-time instructional faculty load credits; the resulting 671.68 credits represent 18.92% of the 3,549.17 total faculty load credits for the year—under the contractually-mandated maximum of 21%.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Full-time Faculty Instructional Load Credits</td>
<td>1,947.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Full-Time Faculty Load Credits for Non-Instructional Duties</td>
<td>465.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Part-time Instructional Faculty Load Credits</td>
<td>1,136.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part-Time Faculty Ratio</strong> (C – B) / (A + B + C)</td>
<td><strong>18.92%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Eastern employs many capable and dedicated part-time faculty—some who have taught at the University for many years—its reliance on part-time faculty for the delivery of its academic programs is, by any measure, greater than the University would like to see as it pursues its transformation into a public liberal arts university. In Fall 2008, 48% of LAC Tier I sections were taught by part-time faculty and
part-time faculty taught approximately 41% of the sections in Tier II of the LAC. (It is important to bear in mind, however, that Tier I of the LAC, in particular, includes a number of classes—first-year Composition, introductory Mathematics, Health and Physical Education, etc.—that are commonly taught by part-time faculty at many institutions across the country.) Between Fall 2004 and Fall 2008, the number of sections taught by part-time faculty outside the LAC—that is, in the various departments’ major programs—increased from 28% to 35%. In that period, the number of credits that Eastern’s students earned in classes taught by part-time faculty rose from 32% to 38%.

**Academic Freedom and Professional Conduct**

Academic freedom guarantees in the CBA insure faculty autonomy in the classroom. In keeping with conventional interpretations of academic freedom, there is an expectation that courses are consistent with approved course descriptions and goals. ECSU-AAUP has an Academic Freedom Committee, but that committee has had very few cases to discuss. There has been no case of a violation of academic freedom upheld by grievance since the last self-study. Faculty autonomy is also fostered by the Academic Misconduct Committee of Senate, which was created to address matters relating to students’ academic comportment to ensure that the faculty member’s instructional academic freedom to determine classroom policies is not violated.

The CBA provides guidelines regarding the ethical behavior expected of faculty, and the University Senate also made a statement on this topic in its bill on Academic Misconduct. In 2008, the University Senate established policy and procedures for handling cases of alleged misconduct in research by faculty members. The Grade Appeals Committee provides both students and faculty with due process to redress issues of grading and ethical treatment. When students or community members complain about the behavior of a particular faculty member, the university diligently investigates, meets with the faculty member (often with an AAUP representative), and works to resolve the situation. These events are relatively rare, but when they do occur, they are typically resolved in a reasonable and equitable way. In cases of verifiable and egregious misconduct, the CBA provides a Special Assessment pathway for the University to investigate inappropriate behavior on the part of a faculty member, but no Special Assessments have been conducted since the last self-study.

In 2003, according to CSU mandate, the University investigated the ethical use of faculty-authored textbooks assigned in courses taught by faculty authors. The University review panel on Course Adoptions of Faculty Authored Texts and Other Materials developed guidelines for determining how financial gain from royalties arising from textbooks assigned in courses at Eastern could be handled ethically. This panel ruled on several cases where this practice was occurring. In 2007-2008, CSU implemented a new procedure and guidelines for faculty offering external consulting services. The approval form (Reporting of Research or Consulting Compliance Form) and guidelines are available online at [http://www.easternct.edu/humanresources/forms.htm](http://www.easternct.edu/humanresources/forms.htm).

The CBA has provided a pathway for addressing faculty grievances that covers both full-time and part-time faculty. This multistep pathway was streamlined in the 2002 contract. At the local level, Eastern’s AAUP and management have mutually developed a positive working relationship; problems are typically, but not always resolved at the informal complaint phase and there is very limited use of the formal grievance steps.

**Evaluation of Faculty Members**

Criteria for evaluating full-time and part-time faculty are specified in the CBA, which outlines a regular, orderly, codified procedure for evaluation of faculty for renewal, tenure, promotion and post-tenure assessment. Standards for the evaluation of full-time faculty are articulated more specifically in the Senate Bill on Promotion and Tenure for full-time faculty, which can be found online. At Eastern, the Promotion and Tenure bill has been revised periodically. While this bill cannot contradict the CBA, it
has primacy in Eastern’s procedures. Eastern’s administration has dynamically worked with the AAUP in keeping the Senate Promotion and Tenure bill up to date.

At all levels of evaluation, the University emphasizes the quality of a faculty member’s contributions. The CBA and Senate Bill clearly place load-credit activity (teaching and reassigned time work) as the most important category for demonstrating quality for renewal, promotion, and tenure. The CBA mandates that all courses be evaluated by students through a student opinion survey that is generally administered near the end of the semester. The results of student opinion surveys are addressed differently by different departments, but faculty members report those results individually when applying for renewal, tenure, and promotion, and when undergoing sixth-year assessment. Teaching is followed in importance in deliberations about renewal, promotion, and tenure by scholarly or creative activity; University service and professional activity round out the four categories.

From Academic Years 2006-2008, 85% of applicants were granted tenure. Most of the 15% denied tenure were applying before their penultimate year and therefore could apply again; consequently, less than 15% of faculty fail to earn tenure by their penultimate year. Rates of promotion to Associate Professor and Full Professor during the same period were 76% and 64%, respectively.

**Teaching and Advising:** Faculty responsibilities are laid out in the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The instructional teaching load for full-time is specified in the CBA as twelve faculty load credits (FLCs), where each weekly lecture hour earns one faculty load credit, and each weekly hour of laboratory or studio instruction earns three-fourths of a faculty load credit. (Per CBA guidelines, this discount for laboratory and studio instruction can be partially restored by supplemental credits, but only with a concomitant reduction from the allocation pool for research reassignment [see below].) Full-time faculty are required by the CBA to schedule five office hours distributed over three days of each week.

Re-appraisal of workload is typically a top priority in contract negotiations, but that mission faces obstacles on many levels. There has been a grassroots movement outside the collective bargaining process to address workload issues. In 2008-2009, President Núñez commissioned a Workload Working Group to develop recommendations for modifying faculty workload. The group’s recommendations have been addressed over the last 18 months, with the exception of a key recommendation to change courses from three credits to four credits. Members of the Workload Working Group became members of the committee charged under the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan with developing an Academic Plan. The approved Academic Plan does not include a recommendation for a change of courses from three to four credits.

While a typical 12-FLC assignment would represent four three-credit classes each semester, portions of a faculty member’s teaching load may be reassigned for a variety of purposes, and the average instructional load is actually 9.7 FLCs. There are formulae for determining load reassignments for chair duty, for a variety of university officer positions, for research, and for faculty and curriculum development. Department work accounts for nearly half of the total of reassigned time, while reassigned time for scholarly or creative activity (sabbaticals, research, etc.) accounts for a further one-third of non-instructional loads; the remainder of reassigned time is for administrative purposes. Faculty in some departments receive non-instructional load credits for administrative or quasi-administrative work on a consistent basis. These include the certification officer in the Education department, the Director of the Theatre, and the Coordinator of the Planetarium. Most assignments of this kind are made on a year-to-year or semester-to-semester basis, although some (including the Director of the Writing Program and the Director of the Radio Station) were written into appointment letters and have been in place for several years.
A faculty member’s teaching load may also be reduced in a given semester to offset accrued overloads from previous terms in which the faculty member may have taught extra classes in response to programmatic need, or may have taken on administrative assignments carrying load credit without a corresponding reduction in course load. The disparity between the contractually-stipulated 12 FLC load and the average of 9.7 instructional FLCs arises, then, not because faculty are “under-loaded,” but because they assume a variety of non-instructional responsibilities, on the one hand, and because they are contractually obliged to reduce accrued overloads in a timely manner, on the other. Indeed, departments accrue an average of 27 “excess load credits” each semester due to faculty members teaching more than the requisite 12 FLCS, with ten departments accruing more than 24 excess load credits.

Faculty members are primarily responsible for all instruction, though undergraduate students do serve as assistants in some classes. (There are small numbers of graduate student assistants, but they are used to supply administrative services to academic and administrative departments, rather than to provide instruction.) Most undergraduate assistants receive academic credit for their work, though writing tutors for English 100P are paid. Undergraduate students also serve as peer mentors in First Year Program (FYP) clusters. The mentors are trained by the FYP staff, are mentored by the faculty member, and receive credit for their service. The CBA limits the use of student teaching assistants in its delineation of faculty responsibilities. Only faculty members can grade student work.

Eastern makes every effort to provide faculty with the technologies they need to enrich their teaching. Over the past decade, the University has been steadily retrofitting classrooms with data projectors, document cameras, and multimedia peripherals working through an instructional console outfitted with a PC and Ethernet access to our information technologies. The Center for Instructional Technologies (CIT) also makes software available to faculty in a variety of ways. Academic programs can also use departmental operating funds to purchase technologies appropriate to their disciplines, and faculty have won grants from the CSU system office and the State of Connecticut, as well as from private and federal sources to supply technologies and additional pedagogical materials. Equipment available to faculty campus-wide generally meets student and faculty needs. The University recently built a new Science building, which brings state of the art laboratory spaces to students in the Natural Sciences. Facilities and equipment for the Visual Arts and Performing Arts do not meet the standards set elsewhere on campus, but these deficiencies will be addressed with the construction of a new Fine Arts Instructional Center. A fuller discussion of instructional technologies and facilities can be found under Standards Seven and Eight.

Teaching and Advising: Advising. Student academic advising is among the faculty responsibilities specifically outlined in the CBA and is included in faculty evaluation, but does not carry load credit. Each faculty member is assigned advisees in his or her department’s major as well as advisees who have not yet declared a major. (Faculty are not involved in advising for students in the School of Continuing Education—unless a student seeks out a faculty member’s advice, of course. Students in continuing education programs receive advising services from the staff of the SCE.) Advising loads are monitored informally by the Academic Advisement center and by department chairs. A recent analysis of advising loads in 17 departments over eight years showed that advising loads ranged from 11.5 to 40.5 advisees per faculty member. In seven departments faculty have more than 20 advisees each (the historic departmental average), while faculty in three departments have more than 30 advisees each.

A new program for advisement has been implemented as part of the strategic planning process that will focus faculty members’ advising efforts on declared majors. Freshmen or transfer students who begin as undeclared majors are assigned a professional advisor and a faculty advisor from a department that has few majors. Freshmen who arrive having declared a major have both a faculty in that major and a professional advisor. These changes were made following recommendations of a Senate committee on Academic Advising that was formed to address weaknesses in advising revealed through student
responses on the NSSE survey. Five full-time Student Development Specialists now provide advising in the Advising Center.

The Center for Educational Excellence and the Advising Center provide workshops for faculty on advising issues, but there is no formal evaluation of academic advisement. NSSE results from 2007 and 2008 indicate that satisfaction with advising among Eastern freshmen is as high or higher than at COPLAC peer institutions. However, NSSE results also showed that freshmen at Eastern get more of their advice from family and friends than do freshmen at other COPLAC institutions.

**Faculty Responsibilities: Other Student-focused Activities**

Independent study and creative projects are supported with load credits assigned to supervising faculty. These activities are summarized in Departmental Annual Reports. In 2008, a website on student scholarly/creative activity was launched to showcase student research. For the past three summers, the University has provided short-term housing for students who are involved in research with a faculty member. In Summer 2010, housing was paired with stipends for students and faculty and a food allowance for students in a new initiative designed to support the Liberal Arts Work program. Both the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Education and Professional Studies hold annual student research conferences. The student participants present posters, give multimedia presentations, or perform for an audience of faculty and peers. In past years, the presentations were adjudicated with awards for outstanding work. Many of our students also present their research and creative activity at international, national, and regional meetings. Some of our students have won awards at these meetings as well. The deans of the schools, the ECSU-AAUP and the Eastern foundation have provided small amounts of funding for student research projects in collaboration with faculty members.

In many departments, faculty advise disciplinary clubs, or honor societies, that encourage student research and collaboration. Honors societies provide intellectual stimulation through seminars, foster growth with induction ceremonies, and some reward outstanding research or creativity. Many departments also offer an awards ceremony at the end of each academic year to acknowledge the scholarly/creative work of their students.

Student learning outcomes assessment is not a mandated activity in the CBA, but is mandated by BOT policy. Each department is required to complete student learning outcomes assessment on a yearly basis. The results of these assessments are part of departmental annual reports as discussed in Chapters Two and Four. Resources for assessment are provided partially through the System Office in the form of an annual Request for Proposals for funding for the development and implementation of assessment tools and programs. The Education department has a faculty member who receives non-instructional credits for assisting with assessment and recording of student learning outcomes for NCATE. Other departments (eight since 2007-2009) have received resources to support the development of assessment plans.

**Faculty Responsibilities: Shared Governance**

Eastern’s faculty is actively engaged in fulfilling the mission of the University at all levels. The high level of faculty participation in the recent strategic planning process is indicative of faculty members’ commitment to that responsibility. It is notable that in both 2009 and 2010, Eastern was awarded designation based largely on faculty and staff responses to a survey by the Chronicle of Higher Education as a Great College to Work For.

The teaching faculty maintains principal authority over the University’s academic programs. Course changes, changes to academic programs, and new academic programs at Eastern originate with the faculty and are approved by committees composed primarily of teaching faculty. This process is described in detail in Chapters Two, Three and Four. Teaching faculty are responsible for evaluation of
all academic programs through the Academic Program Review Committee. APRC procedures are administered through the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, but the committee is composed of teaching faculty. The APRC Committee reviews results of the process and provides support for programs undergoing review. Programmatic assessment is detailed further in Standards Two and Four.

**Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity.** Although Eastern considers teaching the highest priority for its faculty, most of them also engage in research and creative work. Each year, Eastern faculty members publish books and scholarly articles, present at conferences, and perform or exhibit creative work for external audiences. While not all faculty pursue scholarly research and/or creative performance equally, most are actively engaged in having their creative work acknowledged by their peers. Increasingly, faculty members attempt to engage undergraduates in this work. Each department details the scholarly and creative work of its faculty in its annual report; the University’s annual reports show lengthy lists of publications in peer reviewed journals, books in print, performances and admissions into juried shows.

The new Exemplary Program Review process instituted as part of the 2008-13 strategic plan includes faculty research and creative activity as a criterion of distinction. The process was piloted in 2009-2010 and will be expanded in 2010-2011; though the process has not been fully implemented yet, faculty research will be one element used to assess programs seeking designation as exemplary programs.

**Faculty Support: Compensation**

Analysis of COPLAC faculty salaries for academic year 2008-2009 shows that the average salary at Eastern is higher than the COLAC average. The average nine-month base salary across all ranks at Eastern was $72,740 while the average across all COPLAC schools was $65,092. According to data compiled by AAUP, Eastern’s salaries for assistant and associate professors in 2009-2010 are in the third quintile among universities of its type. Those for full professors are in the second highest quintile. The total value of compensation for Eastern faculty is in the second highest quintile at all ranks. These figures are not adjusted for regional differences in cost of living.

**Faculty Support: Faculty and Curriculum Development**

Curriculum innovation and development is supported in several ways. The CBA requires the distribution of Faculty Development and Summer Curriculum Development funds. These funds are allocated through an RFP process with faculty committees reviewing and ranking applications. In the case of the Faculty Development grants, the committee makes the awards itself. For Summer Curriculum Development grants, the committee makes recommendations to the deans who have generally followed the committee’s recommendations.

Faculty Development fund use by full-time faculty has seen a large increase in the last ten years. Over half of the full-time faculty (125) have requested support, and 80% of those requests were funded. Of 98 faculty receiving awards, 20 were fully funded. An analysis of Summer Curriculum Development funds shows that requests for curriculum funding exceed the funds available for this purpose by more than 100%. Comparatively few part-time faculty apply for and receive faculty development funds. Only 42 part-time faculty applied for developmental support in the years studied. Of these 42, 17 were not funded at all, 21 received partial funding, and only four were fully funded.

The university also hosts the Center for Educational Excellence (CEE), a unique entity in the CSU system. The CEE, which is administered by a faculty member who receives non-instructional credits for the work, provides a wide range of faculty development opportunities. These include supporting faculty who wish to incorporate service-learning in courses, providing workshops on pedagogy and best practices, promoting asset-based instruction, supporting faculty in the use of electronic portfolios,
In 2009, the sabbatical leave activities to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for the full academic year at half pay. Prior to 2009, the committee received 18 applications for sabbatic leave and recommended all sabbatical leaves for the full academic year at half pay. The report of the 2008-2009 Workload Working Group recommended that the process for allocating research reassigned time was modified. The committee reviewed and ranked applications and made recommendations to the deans and Vice President of Academic Affairs, who followed the committee’s recommendations. Each year the committee is charged with reviewing its procedures and proposing changes to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Faculty can also apply for reassigned time for research, which involves a partial release from teaching responsibilities; such reassigned time for research represents less than ten percent of non-instructional faculty load credit at Eastern. An analysis of data from a 15-semester period indicated that, while some individuals were repeatedly granted reassigned time, more than half of the faculty received no reassigned time for research (many faculty, it must be noted, do not submit requests for reassigned time). The same analysis found that faculty in some departments request and receive considerably more reassigned time than faculty in other departments.

Prior to 2009-2010, each dean formed a committee that reviewed and ranked requests for research reassigned time. These committees made recommendations to the deans, which were generally followed. In response to a recommendation in the report of the 2008-2009 Workload Working Group, the process for allocating research reassigned time was modified. A Research Reassigned Time committee was elected by Senate; this committee reviewed and ranked applications and made recommendations to the deans and Vice President of Academic Affairs, who followed the committee’s recommendations. Each year the committee is charged with reviewing its procedures and proposing changes to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Tenured faculty may apply for sabbatical leave after every six years of service to pursue scholarly or creative projects. Sabbaticals are requested and awarded either for one semester at full pay or for the full academic year at half pay. At the end of a sabbatical, the faculty member provides a report of the sabbatical leave activities to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The University Senate recently revised the Senate Bill on sabbaticals that makes compliance with this reporting requirement a criterion for the next sabbatical. Currently, the University awards 14 sabbaticals per academic year, up from twelve since the last self-study. The pool of applicants for sabbatical leave has grown in the last ten years. In 2009, the sabbatical leave committee received 18 applications for sabbatic leave and recommended all
18 for consideration. Fourteen sabbatic leaves were awarded. In 2008 there were 20 applications, 17 of which were recommended by the committee for consideration. Thirteen of those 17 were awarded sabbaticals.

The CBA also mandates funding for CSU AAUP Research Grants as well as the process for awarding such grants. Analysis of CSU AAUP research grants awarded from 2001-2009 indicates that the amount of funding requested exceeds the awarded funds by a wide margin. While some faculty members apply for funding through this program every year, 80 of our 201 faculty never requested grant funding in the period studied. The amount of money requested varies, as might be expected, as do the amounts awarded. As with Faculty Development and Summer Curriculum Development funds, review and recommendations for funding are made by a faculty committee with faculty from one CSU campus evaluating the applications from another campus. Recommendations of the committee determine the awards.

In recent years, faculty have expressed greater interest in pursuing external grants. Although no formal data has been collected on this issue, it would appear that, in the past at least, the processes for pursuing and securing grants, from application to administration, can sometimes discourage the faculty from pursuing external funding.

**Appraisal**

Eastern’s faculty is hard-working and is fully engaged in the effort to achieve the University’s aim of becoming a public liberal arts university of first choice. Eastern’s administration is open in its dealings and is committed to the same goal. The faculty and the administration generally work very well together at Eastern.

Eastern has complex, well-defined roles for full-time faculty, and uses part-time faculty primarily for instruction. The important duties of curriculum and program development, advising, and research and scholarship with our students are, appropriately, in the hands of full-time faculty. Courses at Eastern are conducted exclusively by faculty. Though undergraduate teaching assistants assist with some courses, they do not replace faculty in any sense; they are, rather, in training with supervising faculty members as they learn how to teach by assisting with logistics, by perhaps giving a presentation, and by working with students in the course.

Hiring processes for full-time faculty are uniform across the campus. Changes made in the last three years to streamline the search process have made the hiring of full-time faculty more efficient and allowed most academic departments to compete in a timely way for the best faculty recruits. Eastern has a highly-qualified faculty and continues to hire outstanding new tenure track professors. The processes for hiring full-time faculty on special (emergency) appointments and for hiring part-time faculty are clearly less rigorous than those for tenure-track hiring. Such appointments are sometimes made without formal search committees or formal reports, though some departments require faculty approval of all one-year and part-time hires.

The criteria and categories for renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment of full-time faculty are clearly outlined in publicly-available documents. The AAUP Contract and the Promotion and Tenure Bill are kept fully up to date and available on-line at Eastern. The university’s criteria and categories for the evaluation of part-time faculty, by contrast, are quite informal, and vary from department to department.

Eastern has a well-conceived and well-executed affirmative action plan for hiring faculty belonging to under-represented groups. Every area of the University is committed to this plan as a core value, as is
evidenced by Eastern’s considerable success in recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty. Eastern continues to lead COPLAC institutions in the diversity of its faculty.

Data ranking universities offering master’s degrees nationwide show that faculty salaries are in the middle of the range while total compensation is in the second highest quintile. Among COPLAC institutions, Eastern ranked third highest of twenty-five institutions in 2008-2009 average base nine month salary across all ranks.

**Teaching and Advising.** The faculty offer courses and maintain programs that are subjected to assessment and evaluation to ensure professional best practices and expectations. Courses and programs are assessed in various ways, within the limitations of time and financial support. This critical work is supported largely by the good will and special interest of faculty and departments. Both departments and individual faculty members take the responsibility to revise and update their courses and to incorporate new teaching approaches and technologies as opportunities arise, though not all faculty members and departments are equally active in this regard.

Eastern is alert to the need for appropriate instructional technologies and provides access to as wide a range of modern technologies as the University’s financial circumstances permit. All classrooms at Eastern now have a full suite of technology needed for teaching. The new Science Building, the first classroom/laboratory building built since 1989, has greatly increased the faculty’s capacity to deliver instruction in many modalities, including the application of modern technologies. Though Eastern does leverage technology to offer online classes, they are relatively few in number.

While specific data are lacking, there is no evidence to indicate that faculty members have faced any infringements of their academic freedom—indeed, the absence of any substantive complaints concerning academic freedom is itself the best evidence that the University respects the academic freedom of its faculty. In Connecticut state government, in CSUS in general, and in particular at Eastern, ethical behavior of faculty is taken very seriously. The University has articulated appropriate policies holding faculty and students to high ethical standards in the classroom, in the laboratory, and in research. The University takes steps to ensure that faculty, staff, and students understand their ethical obligations and—in the rare cases when concerns arise—addresses problematic cases directly.

As Eastern has pursued its transition from a regional comprehensive institution to a public liberal arts university, questions concerning the nature and balance of the faculty’s workload have arisen repeatedly, as have questions about the amount and variety of support available to support faculty members’ development in their teaching and scholarship or creative activity.

A number of factors suggest that the ranks of Eastern’s full-time faculty are not quite large enough to support its changing mission in the ways that all members of the community would like to see. Faculty have done their best to rise to the occasion of supporting exciting new initiatives like the Liberal Arts Core and the First Year Program while still carrying out the work of their departments’ major programs, providing advising and mentoring to students, and performing a wide range of administrative and quasi-administrative duties. One measure of the amount of extra work that faculty have undertaken is found in the fact that departments at Eastern carry an average of 27 excess load credits each year—more than the 24 FLCs of a full-time faculty member’s teaching load. On average, then, one might say, each department at Eastern would require an additional full-time faculty member just to deliver its current program. (The fact that each hour of laboratory and studio instruction carries only three-fourths of a credit masks the true extent of the overload: rectifying this discount would render a fuller accounting of the work that many faculty do every semester.)
Such over-extension of the full-time faculty has a number of consequences. In the first instance, it means that the University’s reliance on part-time faculty is greater than anyone would like. Though Eastern has managed to remain under the ceiling on part-time instruction outlined in the CBA, part-time faculty have at times taught as many as 43% of the credits offered in a given term, a number that is far too high to be consistent with the mission of a liberal arts university. Students should be able to learn from faculty who have both the time and the professional commitment to the institution that would enable them to connect the work of an individual class to the University’s broader curriculum and mission. Academic departments that must rely on a changing group of part-time faculty to deliver significant portions of their curricula can find it difficult to ensure the coherence of their programs: even when part-time faculty are talented and skillful teachers, they are unlikely to be able to provide the kind of curricular continuity and development that departments would wish to achieve.

The demands on full-time faculty members’ time have other consequences, as well. Many faculty find it difficult to offer the kind of individual attention in teaching, advising, and mentoring that most faculty believe they should provide to students at a liberal arts university. While the hiring of professional advisors has alleviated faculty members’ advising load to some extent, faculty in departments with many majors still find themselves overwhelmed by the task of advising upper-division students. The fact that full-time faculty are spread so thin has also at times threatened to compromise the implementation of strategic initiatives that serve to advance the University’s mission. The University’s administration is alert to these difficulties, and has attempted to address them as best as possible. President Núñez has left a number of non-instructional posts vacant in order to hire additional faculty—though the University’s ability to do so is compromised by the state’s current budget crisis and hiring freeze.

Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity. Finally—and not least—increasing demands for faculty to perform service and administrative duties in addition to their already heavy teaching load leaves little time and energy for the scholarly and creative activity that should be the hallmark of a liberal arts university. The strain on faculty members’ research and creative agendas is exacerbated by what has been, in practice, an erosion of the amount of support for scholarship and faculty development. University support for faculty development has not increased at a rate consistent with the growth of the faculty and the student body. While Eastern’s administration is to be commended for going beyond the minimum levels of support for conference travel and faculty development dictated by the CBA, there has simply not been enough funding to support the scholarly and creative agendas of the University’s increasingly active faculty.

For some time now, Eastern has been hiring faculty whose graduate training disposes them towards a greater focus on research than was common at Eastern in the past. The fact that a number of senior faculty opted to take advantage of recent retirement incentives means that the University’s faculty is now made up largely of younger and mid-career faculty who consider research a key part of their professional activity. As a consequence, more faculty than ever before are competing for faculty development funds, travel funding, sabbaticals, and so on—funds that have remained relatively flat. The competition for research support might be still more intense were it not for the fact that some senior faculty opt not to apply for all the funding they might like, recognizing that junior faculty rely on those funds to support the activity needed for tenure and promotion. The academic deans, from the same consideration, generally prioritize funding for tenure-track junior faculty, meaning that senior faculty may be less able to sustain their scholarship and creative activity as they progress through their careers at Eastern.

Eastern’s administration has been moving in recent years towards greater transparency in the distribution of faculty development funding and reassigned time for research, which is a positive development. The administration is aware of the additional resources needed for Eastern to become a public liberal arts university of first choice: the obstacles that faculty face arise from a lack of resources, not of institutional commitment.
Projection

Teaching and Advising. Eastern’s faculty numbers will continue to be adequate to meet the University’s mission, though doing so will likely continue to be something of a strain. No change in the number of full-time faculty is anticipated in the next two years. Eastern will continue to recruit and hire faculty who bring excellent credentials and who reflect the diversity that is so important to our campus. Retaining those faculty, however, will be increasingly difficult unless constraints on tenure-track hiring are lifted. With the state’s hiring freeze in place, the University has been limited in making tenure track hires, even to replace retiring tenured faculty. In the 2009-2010 academic year, the 23 new faculty appointments were all to one-year positions. The University was permitted to conduct three tenure track searches in 2009-2010, two of which were successful; all other 2010-2011 appointments to replace faculty who have retired or resigned will be temporary.

At least in the near term, then, while the number of full-time faculty will remain stable, the percentage of full-time faculty in tenured or tenure-track positions will surely decline as tenured faculty retire. CBA prohibitions against faculty serving more than two years on temporary appointment in a six-year period, moreover, may lead to considerable turnover in the full-time temporary ranks. Eastern has recruited and hired many talented faculty—a fact demonstrated by the positions that many of those faculty have taken upon resigning from temporary appointments at Eastern. Current conditions, however, make it difficult—and may make it impossible—to retain them. In the 2008-2009 academic year, 69% of Eastern’s full-time faculty were tenured and 19% were tenure-track, for a total of 88%. In that year, COPLAC institutions averaged 59% tenured and 33% tenure-track faculty, for a total of 92%. If Eastern is unable to resume tenure track hiring, the percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty at Eastern will fall further below the COPLAC average.

This reduction in the presence of tenured and tenure-track faculty will hamper efforts to implement some of the innovations called for in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, as there will be fewer faculty with deep knowledge of Eastern’s programs and culture. Temporary faculty may also be less likely use the high-impact and innovative teaching practices (such as mentored undergraduate research and creativity, service-learning, and group learning) called for in the Academic Plan, although some of the temporary faculty hired in the last two years have been very successful and enthusiastic adopters of these practices.

Eastern plans to maintain current levels of enrollment and, with a stable number of full-time faculty, the reliance on part-time instructors is not expected to increase, though the University will continue to rely on part-time faculty for some instruction. In some departments, part-time faculty bring valuable expertise in essential areas of study (e.g. Business Law) that are not represented among the full-time faculty. In other departments, part-time faculty provide important support for courses where there is a need for multiple sections at the introductory level (e.g., Mathematics and English). The Academic Plan calls for curriculum review that may reduce the number of distinct courses that departments have to offer, which in turn may reduce the need to hire part-time faculty. Enrollment in other classes taught by full-time faculty should be expected to increase as a result of this decrease in the number of sections and courses taught by part-time faculty. Closer monitoring and control of non-instructional assignments for administrative or quasi-administrative work will also reduce reliance on part-time faculty to replace full-time faculty in the classroom. For these reasons, the ratio of part-time faculty as measured for collective bargaining purposes will likely remain somewhere between 15% and 18%.

Faculty workload is determined through the collective bargaining process and without a change at that level, it is likely that most faculty will continue to teach four courses each semester. The Academic Plan calls for departments to conduct curriculum review partly to promote four-year graduation rates but also to ensure that course assignments and the number of preparations for each faculty member are at a level that supports faculty members’ expertise and research and creative endeavors. Advising loads and
responsibilities should become more manageable as responsibility for advising undeclared students shifts to professional advisors. Two departments are being funded in Summer 2010 to develop approaches to advising that increase student satisfaction and that may reduce the time required for advising.

As recommended by the Workload Working Group, the process for making non-instructional assignments will be increasingly transparent. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will continue to report to the Senate on all non-instructional assignments, a practice initiated in AY 2009-2010.

Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity. Support for faculty research and creative work and for professional development will remain at current levels or will increase slightly. Recommendations for awards of contractually negotiated pools of funds will continue to be made by faculty committees. Some faculty will continue to find that the University cannot fund all travel requests. In AY 2010-2011 academic departments will be encouraged to use department funds to support faculty travel when it involves accompanying undergraduate students who are making presentations or performances. This funding can be approved even while the ban on travel using state funds remains in place and should allow some additional faculty travel. The number of credits awarded for Research Reassigned time will not rise to a level that would allow support for all faculty members who submit requests. A faculty committee will continue to review and recommend awards of research reassigned time and sabbaticals. The Center for Educational Excellence and the Center for Instructional Technology will continue to provide a range of workshops and other programs to promote teaching excellence and innovation. Since 2007 more sabbatic leaves have been awarded than required. This should result in a moderate decline in the backlog of applicants.

Faculty are expected to become increasingly involved in the pursuit of external funding. As called for in the Academic Plan, a half-time grant writer will be hired with the primary responsibility of assisting faculty in preparation of grant proposals. Eastern will maintain its membership in the AASCU Grants Resource Center with the Office of Academic Affairs resuming its prior role as one of the official contacts. The Center for Educational Excellence will play an increased role in providing support for faculty in pursuit of grants, fellowships, faculty exchange opportunities, etc.

Policies, procedures and standards for promotion, tenure and renewal are not anticipated to change although the Senate Personnel Policies Committee may try to clarify policies and expectations related to service.

Faculty salaries at Eastern will increase at a rate determined through collective bargaining. Average salaries will be determined by negotiated increases, the stability of faculty at different ranks, the balance between retirements and new hires, and the salaries of new hires. Minimum and maximum salaries at each level are determined by the collective bargaining agreement.

Institutional Effectiveness

The adequacy of Eastern’s faculty numbers is assessed through comparisons of student/faculty ratios, part-time/full-time ratios and course loads to those at other COPLAC schools. Assessment of the effectiveness of the faculty as scholars, artists, and teachers is accomplished through promotion, tenure and renewal processes and reporting on scholarly and creative activity. Other measures of faculty adequacy and effectiveness are retention and graduation rates. Department chairs and faculty are playing an increased role in monitoring and responding at the department and program level to these rates which have been institutional priorities through the strategic planning process.
Standard Six: Students

Description

Admissions. Eastern is a mid-sized university, with a total enrollment of approximately 5,400 students. Undergraduates represent 93.5% of the University’s total enrollment (with 6.5% graduate enrollment). Nearly all (94.5%) of Eastern’s students are matriculated and pursuing degrees. The majority of the University’s students (78.9%) are enrolled full-time, though Eastern also offers students the option to pursue part-time programs of study and life-long learning opportunities.

Eastern has implemented a holistic program of enrollment management. Enrollment goals (including a ten-year forecast) are established by Eastern’s Enrollment Planning Committee and are aligned with targets set at the Connecticut State University System level. Established goals are vetted through the Enrollment Management Committee, which is chaired by the Director of Admissions and Enrollment Management and is composed of members representing units/areas directly related to recruiting and retaining students. The Enrollment Management Committee meets five times each year and works collaboratively to ensure that necessary initiatives and efforts are coordinated to realize enrollment goals. The trend for applications for admission as well as the number of newly enrolled students has been positive and in keeping with goals set by the Enrollment Planning Committee supported by the Enrollment Management Committee. The Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management staff includes the director, two associate directors, two assistant directors, one counselor, three full-time clerical staff and eight part-time student workers.

In keeping with Eastern’s Mission and its Affirmative Action Policy, the admission program is designed to ensure that the new student population is ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse. Eastern does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, gender, religion, economic background, sexual orientation, demographics, or physical or learning challenges in its admission decision process. The Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management is responsible for implementing a comprehensive recruitment plan which includes initiatives to attract students from varying geographic regions and cultural backgrounds, and who have a range of talents and abilities that will enrich the University community.

The University’s recruiting plan has allowed Eastern to attract a student population that is ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse. As a public university dedicated to serving the people of Connecticut, it is fitting that 92 percent of the University’s students are Connecticut residents, representing 165 of the state’s 169 towns in 2009. The remainder of the University’s students come to Eastern from 24 states and 48 countries. Sixteen percent of the University’s students belong to racial or ethnic minorities. Fully half of the students enrolled identify themselves as the first in their family to attend college. The gender mix (55 percent female, 45 percent male) continues to follow national trends, with slightly more women than men applying to and enrolling in the University.

The University’s admission program is designed to ensure access and to provide opportunity to interested students. Eastern encourages all interested students to apply for admission and evaluates all completed applications under a standard set of criteria. Admission decisions are based on an assessment of academic preparation and readiness coupled with a sense of each student’s interest in attending Eastern as an institution of first choice, as demonstrated in an essay or interview. The application process, including criteria for admission, is described fully and clearly in the Viewbook and the University catalog, as well as on the University’s website. Students may apply for full- or part-time admission using a paper application or online via the website. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis for two semesters per year (Fall/September and Spring/January). The application process is generally completed within two weeks of the time an applicant submits all materials for evaluation.
The Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management is responsible for recruiting full-time undergraduate students and for making admission decisions for all matriculating full-time and part-time undergraduate students. The Admissions Committee is composed of admissions professionals. In reaching its decisions, the Committee focuses on each applicant’s academic preparation and college readiness, as evidenced by completion of a challenging college preparation curriculum, by rank in senior class, and by standardized test scores (SAT or ACT). (International students who apply for admission—whether undergraduate or graduate—must demonstrate their proficiency in English, by achieving a minimum TOEFL score of 550 on the paper version, 213 on the computer-based test, or 79 on the internet-based test.) The Admissions Committee’s preliminary evaluation of applicants is administered consistently using well-defined admission guidelines (see Admissions Guidelines 2009). High school class standing and standardized test scores are weighted at 40% each, with the remaining 20% determined by subjective factors, including performance in college preparation courses, grade point average, rigor of high school, extracurricular activities demonstrating leadership, life experiences, and a personal interview, when appropriate. Applicants rated 7-10 are deemed “excellent,” applicants rated 4-6 are “good,” and applicants rated 0-3 are “fair.” Students in rating categories 1–10 are admitted to Eastern.

The School of Continuing Education is responsible for part-time undergraduate enrollment (students enrolled for fewer than 12 credit hours per semester). The SCE recruits and enrolls part-time students in matriculated, non-matriculated, and non-credit status. The admissions criteria for part-time students are the same as for full-time applicants, though additional factors such as employment history and professional training are also taken into account for adult applicants. The School of Continuing Education staff includes a dean, associate dean, assistant dean, program assistant, professional development coordinator, two full time clerical staff, five university assistants, and five part-time student workers.

The Graduate School recruits and makes admission decisions for all full and part-time students interested in pursuing a Master’s degree or other graduate work at Eastern. The Graduate School staff consists of the Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies (who also covers undergraduate programs), two full time clerical staff, and one part-time student worker. The dean’s staff also includes an unfilled associate dean position whose work has been distributed to faculty in the school who receive course release time.

Eastern offers two conditional admission options designed to extend an opportunity to enroll to students who may or may not meet the University’s usual admissions standards, but who the University nonetheless believes demonstrate promise and could succeed at Eastern, given the chance.

1. The Summer Transition at Eastern Program/Contract Admissions Program (STEP/CAP) is a one-year academic support program with a required six-week summer session focusing on skills building in English and Mathematics. Applicants are selected based on a thorough review of high school records and assessment of college readiness via an interview.

2. The Summer Proof of Ability Option (SPOA) provides students who are not eligible for standard full-time admission with an opportunity to prove their ability to be successful as full-time matriculated students. These students begin their academic careers in June; if they earn grades of “C” or higher in their Summer course work, they may enroll part-time for the Fall semester. Maintaining grades of “C” or higher in the Fall semester makes these students eligible for full-time status in the Spring semester.

Retention and Graduation. As a public university, Eastern is committed to making a liberal arts education accessible to Connecticut students. Eastern’s ambition to be a university of first choice is not
bound up with notions of exclusivity; rather, the University seeks to *include* interested students and then provide them with the support that they need to succeed.

All students identified with deficiencies in math and writing are enrolled in developmental coursework during their first semester. Students with disabilities or impairments (whether physical, cognitive, or psychological) that could affect their academic performance can work with the Office of AccessAbility Services to identify reasonable accommodations and to develop an appropriate support plan. Faculty and staff who suspect that a student may have an undiagnosed impairment may refer students to AccessAbility Services for information on assessment of possible learning disabilities.

With help from a 2007-2008 Nellie Mae Foundation Project Compass planning grant, a team of faculty, staff, and administrators conducted statistical analyses to develop a profile of students at risk of withdrawing from the University during their first year at Eastern. An automated data transfer from Admissions applications was developed to populate a logistic regression model that is now able to predict students at risk of leaving Eastern by the end of their first year. This logistic regression model is now being used to evaluate which students need more intensive academic advising and four-year academic planning help from their start at Eastern. This effort is part of the Student Success and Enrollment Management initiatives of Eastern’s new Strategic Plan 2008-2013.

As part of the Student Success initiatives in the Strategic Plan, academic support services have been centralized in an Academic Services Center in the Library. This initiative served to promote student success by consolidating the services offered by a number of previously disjointed and scattered offices in one location at the center of campus, and substantially expanded the number of hours per week services are available, as well. All students now have access to centralized advising and free tutoring in mathematics, writing, and other disciplines. Project Compass funding was used, in part, to help establish a centralized Academic Services Center (ASC), with a new Mathematics Achievement Center, a new Writing Center, centralized General Tutoring and the Advising Center. Funding from a Title III grant also supported the ASC beginning in AY 2009-2010.

Eastern has begun a number of initiatives to help first-year students in their transition to college work. With the implementation of the new targeted first-year advising program, described in the Student Success initiatives of Eastern’s new Strategic Plan, all first-year students are to be provided comprehensive advising and four-year academic planning counseling by Student Development Specialists at the Advising Center. Students are assigned a faculty advisor when they declare a major, so a student who enters his or her first year with a declared major would have access to two advisors. The University provides enhanced advising services for STEP/CAP students in their first year to ensure that they are meeting university requirements. First-year students also enroll in the First Year Program, which promotes the development of close bonds with a small learning community through the Fall semester clusters (in which small groups of students take two or three courses together); the peer mentors assigned to the first-year clusters are able to offer new students additional guidance as they begin their college careers. In their second semester, students enroll in a small interdisciplinary colloquium (LAP 130), which fosters further connections with a small group of students and close contact with a faculty member. Beginning in Fall 2010, every first year student will participate in the first year program.

Eastern also provides additional supports for student athletes. In appropriate semesters, student athletes are given preference for early registration. Their academic performance is monitored by the Athletics department, which also provides academic advising over and above that which athletes receive from their faculty advisors. Student athletes earning grades below a “C” can be assigned mandatory study hall hours, which are monitored by the Athletics department. Data has been collected regarding the six-year and four-year graduation rates, first- and second-year retention rates, and average GPA for first-year and
second-year student athletes as compared to non-athletes beginning with the 1995 cohorts. In every category, student athletes graduate, are retained, and have GPA’s higher than the general student body.

Continuing students at risk for dismissal based on poor academic performance are subject to review by the Advisement Center and Dean’s Offices. At this stage, individual student academic performance is considered. In cases where significant progress has been made toward reaching good academic standing (e.g. an improved GPA, even if the cumulative GPA is below acceptable standards), a decision to permit an additional probationary semester may be granted.

**Student Services.** In addition to the services dedicated to promoting students’ academic success, noted above, Eastern provides a range of services to support students in their lives outside of the classroom. In keeping with its mission as Connecticut’s public liberal arts university, Eastern offers a broad and deep array of student services to meet the needs of its increasingly residential student population. The primary function of the Division of Student Affairs is to advance the mission of the University through programs that embody Eastern’s Core Values. The Division’s offices have established learning outcomes, core value plans, and operating plans aligning their work with the University Strategic Plan. Job descriptions for all professional staff who work with students are developed with reference to CSU-SUOAF and CSU-AAUP collective bargaining agreements and in accordance with procedures developed by the Council on Employee Relations. The Office of Human Resources and the Office of Equity and Diversity assure that applicants meet the minimum requirements as required by the job description and ensure that the search processes are conducted in accordance with EEOC guidelines.

In order to prepare incoming students for the transition to college life, all new first-year students are required to attend Student Orientation, Advisement and Registration (SOAR) during the summer before their first semester. SOAR is an overnight program designed to introduce incoming students to life on campus, to help them meet other incoming students, and to complete registration for Fall semester courses. Students attend a number of information sessions and there is a parent program as well. Eastern also hosts a Fall Welcome Weekend for incoming students. Welcome Weekend is a one and one half day program that takes place the weekend students move onto campus, and is a continuation of the Orientation experience. The Welcome Weekend includes workshops and networking events as well as evening activities for students. While these orientation activities are required of new first-time students, transfer students are also invited to participate. A second advisement, registration, and orientation program is offered in January to accommodate new transfer students and students being readmitted to the University.

Students’ physical and emotional needs are served through many programs and offices on campus. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), the Office of Wellness Promotion, AccessAbility Services, Health Services, Residential Life, the Interfaith Campus Ministry, The Office of Judicial Affairs, the Women’s Center, the Intercultural Center, the Center for Community Engagement, the Veterans Center, student clubs and a host of intramural and campus wide wellness programs engage students in making responsible decisions, and/or keep them connected to the broader university community. The University has made a number of adjustments in the location and delivery of services in recent years. Since the last accreditation report Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) were strengthened and moved to a stand-alone building in 2006 in order to provide greater confidentiality for students. The Office of Substance Abuse Prevention changed its name and focus to the Office of Wellness Promotion to better reflect the programmatic nature of the services provided, and moved from Health Services to Wood Support Services Center. At the same time, the Office of Judicial Affairs and the Center for Community Engagement moved to the same area as Wellness Promotion to create a link between the offices.
The Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs Office works to assist students by reducing or removing financial barriers that would otherwise prevent them from attending college. The staff of the Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs Office is committed to serving students who, due to financial limitations, would otherwise be unable to attend college. The office administers federal, state and institutional student aid programs with assistance offered to students in the form of grants, loans, student employment, scholarships and VA benefits.

Student safety is a high priority at Eastern. Residence halls may only be accessed using key fobs, and comprehensive video surveillance of entrances to buildings, lobbies, the parking garage, and exterior areas provides added security. Eastern’s police force is professionally certified and operates 24 hours a day. The Department of Public Safety utilizes a community policing model, which ensures that students get to know and learn from officers through residence hall programs, campus-wide sponsored events, bike patrols and foot patrols. Students may request an escort from all points on campus; emergency phones are directly linked to the Police Department and are tested regularly. A shuttle service operates from 10 am to 11 pm during the week and with limited hours on the weekends. Crime statistics are posted on the University website and are available in printed form throughout campus. A state-of-the-art voluntary emergency alert system was implemented in Fall 2008 that allows community members to receive alerts in the medium of their choice—cell phone, e-mail, text message, or home phone.

With 62% of the University’s full-time undergraduate students living on campus in 2009 (including 90% of the first-year class), a high-quality residential environment has become an essential element of Eastern’s public liberal arts mission. The Housing and Residential Life program is an integral partner in the University’s effort to provide a positive educational experience that fosters the retention and graduation of students. Housing and Residential Life services provide a nurturing, safe, enriching environment that fosters lifelong learning and allows students to grow intellectually and socially. Students are exposed to an interactive living-learning experience that provides hands-on opportunities to interact with others in residential communities designed to make their college experience meaningful. Resident Assistants are expected to develop educational, social and community service programs tailored to specific student learning outcomes. More than 935 programs are developed through these requirements each year. Programs offered by Residential Life include the SWEEP Retention Initiative, Dean’s Cup, and Weekend Programming (FAD).

Eastern has been able to make substantial investments over the last 15 years in order to make its facilities more comfortable and attractive for students. The extensively renovated 90,000 square foot Student Center reopened in Fall 2007, and offers a fitness center, a theater, a large multipurpose room, a food court, the campus bookstore, programming space, and offices for student groups and staff. The Women’s Center and Intercultural Center were incorporated into the Student Center for better accessibility and increased student involvement. A process for phasing in wireless internet access in all residence halls was begun in Fall 2009 and completed in the spring 2010. Basic cable for TV is available free of charge in all residence halls, and residence hall internet service will be greatly enhanced and eventually bundled with the basic cable. This outsourcing of internet service will greatly reduce the strain on the university network while providing enhanced services to students. Further discussion of the University’s facilities and technological infrastructure can be found under Standard Eight.

Culture and Arts are an important part of students’ educational experiences, and the campus hosts events throughout the year to expose students to many facets of art, music, theater, history, politics, literature, and culture. The Arts and Lecture Series and the University Hour series present fascinating and provocative lecturers, speakers, and performers that expand students’ horizons. Individual academic departments also sponsor frequent speakers and performances. The University’s Akus Gallery presents the work of emerging and established artists, and collects and preserves artwork and related materials relevant to the permanent collection and exhibition programming. Eastern’s Performing Arts Department
sponsors performances by University students and faculty as well as by local performers, including the Willimantic Orchestra. Students can learn more about upcoming events through the comprehensive university calendar.

The Department of Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation offers programs and facilities that emphasize the development of diversity, leadership, physical fitness, personal wellness and widespread preparation—all of which contribute to the overall educational experience and total development of the individual. The Department of Athletics developed a six-year strategic plan in 2002 and evaluates its offerings and programs through its annual report to the President. Student athletes are provided a means for evaluating the coaching staff, administration and support staff, facilities, schedules and amenities provided. As a member of the NCAA (Division III), each year Eastern submits an Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) report and a financial aid report, and also certifies the eligibility of each of its student athletes.

Currently, there are 61 clubs recognized by Eastern’s Student Government Association and registered with the Office of Student Activities. These organizations fall into every category of interest, from religious (Hillel and 180 Christian Fellowship), to academic (Honors and Education Club), to cultural (Unity Group and West Indian Society), to service (People Helping People). Some 26% of the full-time student body belongs to one or more club. Clubs and organizations are supported financially from the student fee, which is distributed by the Student Government Association as well as through their own fundraising efforts. The average GPA of students participating in club and organizations is 3.01 compared to 2.86 for non-participants. Groups receive support from a program advisor in the Student Activities Office.

The University presents students with numerous leadership opportunities (both voluntary and paid). Students fill a number of positions in which they provide leadership to their peers, including Resident Assistants in the dormitories, Student Orientation Counselors in the Summer orientation program, First Year Program Peer Mentors, Admissions Student Ambassadors, and Peer Advisors for Student Success (PASS). Students also serve in Student Government and a number of campus committees (including the Campus Activity Board and the Student Athlete Advisory Council), lead a variety of clubs organizations, and organize a range of community service programs. The Office of Student Activities organizes several programs to help students explore and develop their leadership potential. The Club and Organization series is made up of four sessions per semester and focuses on enhancing leadership abilities in the context of running an organization. Pathways to Leadership is a three-tiered program designed to encourage students to explore their individual leadership development potential. Students engage in a series of sessions throughout the academic year that enhance their Liberal Arts experience by exploring topics in line with the University’s Core Values. The LEAD to Succeed series is open to all students and includes four sessions each semester on topics such as Communication, Personal Goals, Leadership styles and Public Speaking.

Offices across campus work to help students position themselves to move successfully into a career upon graduation. The Office of Career Services offers several programs and resources to actively engage students and alumni in the lifelong process of career development by promoting self-awareness, career exploration and experiential learning. The University’s Strategic Plan calls for the development of a Liberal Arts Work! Initiative, in which all students will complete a structured pre-professional experience prior to graduation. With more than 50% of Eastern students being in the first generation of the family to attend college, the Liberal Arts Work program is intended to help students develop professional skills, understand career options and develop ambitious goals. When fully implemented, students will be able to complete the requirement through a variety of credit bearing and non-credit bearing experiences. The Advising Center staff and faculty advisors connect students to other services that may be useful in developing their career path, including the Career Services office, the Intercultural Center, the Women’s
Center and the Office of AccessAbility. Finally, the Alumni Affairs office helps coordinate panels of visiting alumni who speak to students about what steps they took to develop their career paths and give advice on developing successful career trajectories.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities.** Student rights and responsibilities are established in the Student Code of Conduct and Statement of Judicial Procedures. The Code of Conduct is reviewed and updated every three years and applies to all institutions in the CSU system. Student conduct violations are administered fairly and consistently in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The Code is found in the Student Handbook and is accessible on the University’s website in a knowledge based searchable format.

Eastern respects students’ right to privacy with respect to personal information contained in educational records. Record retention and disposition is controlled by Office of the Public Records Administrator and Connecticut Statute. Student educational records may only be disposed of following receipt of approval from the Office of the Public Records Administrator. Policies regarding disclosure of student records are outlined in the Student Handbook. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, each student has the right to inspect and review his or her educational record. The Student Handbook outlines the procedure for inspection and review and explains where those records can be found. A student who believes that his or her educational records are inaccurate or misleading may request through a hearing procedure that the University amend the record. Students who believe that their privacy rights have been infringed may lodge a complaint to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act Office.

Members of the Eastern community enjoy comprehensive complaint and appeal rights. Students’ complaint and appeal rights are outlined in the Student Handbook. In addition to the rights guaranteed under FERPA (detailed above), a student may appeal for a change in a final grade, may appeal the outcome of a judicial hearing or a finding of academic misconduct, and may appeal academic dismissal. Beyond the strictly academic sphere, Eastern offers mechanisms for students to appeal assessed fees and fines and to file complaints of harassment, discrimination, racism and acts of intolerance, and sexual misconduct or assault.

The University takes several steps to ensure that students are made aware of their rights and responsibilities under the Code of Conduct. All students received electronic notification via University e-mail annually informing them that the student handbook can be found on the University website. Student Orientation Counselors focus on expectations and procedures during the summer orientation program and Residence Life and other Student Affairs staff continue the dialog with mandatory residence life meetings throughout the academic year. Grievance procedures in cases of sexual harassment and discrimination are outlined in the Office of Equity and Diversity website and can be found in the Student Handbook.

**Appraisal**

**Admissions.** Eastern’s reputation and designation as the state’s public liberal arts university has become increasingly recognized and understood by students, parents, high school personnel, and the general public. The University is committed to providing access and opportunity to prospective students who demonstrate that they are prepared and ready for college and who view Eastern as their university of choice.

The number of applications, offers of admission, and enrollment yield rates for full-time undergraduate students have all increased in recent years as indicated in the Standard 6 Data First forms; part-time undergraduate and graduate enrollments have been less stable but continue to be essential elements of the holistic enrollment management program. Embracing the holistic enrollment management program has helped focus initiatives and resources and has allowed for more effective budget planning. Eastern’s
2008-2013 Strategic Plan and revised mission focus on providing access to a diverse group of learners, and helping students graduate in a timely fashion with appropriate support services. In many ways, the Strategic Plan reaffirms and extends Eastern’s long-time commitment to educational accessibility for all qualified students. With the support of the Connecticut Department of Higher Education’s Connecticut College Access and Success program (ConnCAS), Eastern’s STEP/CAP program has been working for more than 20 years to help minority, low-income, and first-generation students meet the University’s admission requirements through a summer transition program offering intensive preparation in mathematics and writing. STEP/CAP and SPOA (another special admission program) have yielded some success in breaking down barriers to admission.

**Retention and Graduation.** Eastern has made progress in improving retention and graduation rates, though there continue to be areas of concern, particularly for minority students. Eastern participated in the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange’s (CSRDE) 2009-2010 survey. Eastern’s first- to second-year retention rate for all students in the 2008 cohort was 78%, better than the 74.2% average for schools in Eastern’s selectivity group (“moderately selective”), and a bit better than the 77% average for COPLAC institutions (see Nash Report draft in the electronic workroom). While Eastern’s retention rate for African-American students (92%) was considerably above the CSRDE average (71.3%), the University noted with concern that the retention rate for Hispanic students at Eastern (69%) was below the CSRDE average of 75.6% for the 2008 cohort. Historical data for the past six years suggest that the first- to second-year retention rate for all minority students has generally been in line with that for white students—somewhat lower in some years, and somewhat higher in others. Year-to-year fluctuations likely reflect small numbers in some cohorts.

**Retention Rates of First-Time, Full-Time Degree-Seeking Freshman Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry Cohort</th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian-American</th>
<th>Native-American</th>
<th>Minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2005</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2003</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2002</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eastern monitors graduation rates closely. Here too, the University is somewhat ahead of its peers, but is not yet where it would like to be. Data from the 2009-2010 CSRDE survey of moderately selective schools show that Eastern’s four-year and six-year graduation rates are higher than average overall, and also higher than average for Black students, but lag behind for Hispanic students. The overall four-year graduation rate for the 2005 cohort in the CSRDE survey was 22.2%, while Eastern’s figure was 31%. Eastern’s six-year graduation rate for the 2003 cohort, using CSRDE calculations, was 50% for all students (compared to a CSRDE average of 47%), 39% for Black students (compared to a CSRDE average 35.4%), and 39% for Hispanics (compared to a CSRDE average of 42.4%).

When comparing its graduation rates to those of the COPLAC institutions it considers its closest peers (rather than to the larger group of all “moderately selective” schools represented in the CSRDE survey), Eastern sees room for improvement. While the University was a bit above average in most measures in the CSRDE survey, its 51% six-year graduation rate compares less favorably to the COPLAC average of 54% and to the 57% achieved by Keene State University, which Eastern considers one of its “benchmark” schools.
The tables below provide historic six- and four-year graduation rates using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) calculations. The accompanying charts display the six- and four-year graduation rates for Black and Hispanic students relative to White students and to the overall cohort of students (Asian-American and Native American students have been excluded from the charts because there were frequently not enough of these students to provide meaningful figures). Though there is considerable fluctuation from year to year, four- and six-year graduation rates are rising, on the whole. Those rates are not as high as the University would like to see them, however, and gaps persist between graduation rates (particularly four-year graduation rates) for Black and Hispanic students and for their White peers.

### Six-Year Graduation Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Entry/Graduation</th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian-American</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>Minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2003 / Graduation in 2009</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2002 / Graduation in 2008</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2001 / Graduation in 2007</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2000 / Graduation in 2006</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1999 / Graduation in 2005</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1998 / Graduation in 2004</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1997 / Graduation in 2003</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1996 / Graduation in 2002</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1995 / Graduation in 2001</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Four-Year Graduation Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Entry/Graduation</th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian-American</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>Minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2005 / Graduation in 2009</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004 / Graduation in 2008</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2003 / Graduation in 2007</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2002 / Graduation in 2006</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2001 / Graduation in 2005</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2000 / Graduation in 2004</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1999 / Graduation in 2003</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1998 / Graduation in 2002</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1997 / Graduation in 2001</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>N ≤ 10</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eastern is pursuing a number of initiatives to raise retention and graduation rates, with an emphasis on increasing the four-year graduation rate. The comprehensive advising program, for instance—with dual advising during the first year and centralized advising for Undeclared majors from the Advising Center’s Student Development Specialists—will help to increase the retention rate between the first and second years. The Student Success and Enrollment Management initiatives of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, in conjunction with grant funding from the Nellie Mae Foundation and the new Title III program, are providing an effective framework for identifying students’ academic profiles and needs for support services. These initiatives position the University to pursue well-planned, regular, data-driven assessment and evaluation of its admissions procedures and its academic support services.

Eastern has begun to take a disciplined, increasingly data-driven approach to understanding the factors affecting student success. The University recently developed a new report that makes it possible to identify “risk assessment” rates for all course sections in every discipline, broken down by semester and by instructor. This report calculates the percentage of students earning grades of “D” or “F” or withdrawing from a course, and makes it possible both to compare the different sections of a course in a given term and to develop long-term comparisons of students’ performance in a given course. This report has already been used in combination with other data gathered as part of Project Compass to assess student performance in developmental Math and English composition courses.

The logistic regression model associated with the Project Compass grant initiative has provided a well-organized framework for evaluating how Eastern meets its students’ academic support services needs (see Project Compass logic model document). Faculty and staff working on the Project Compass grant initiative have met weekly to review the progress made in meeting student needs and in developing more effective ways to get students the academic support services they require. Eastern has a well-defined system of assessing student needs for support in mathematics and writing and for providing targeted advising to students most at risk of withdrawal during the first year. Eastern’s improved diagnostic techniques of predicting students at risk of withdrawal, Student Success initiatives in the new Strategic
Plan 2008-2013, and grant funding from the Nellie Mae Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education (Title III) will make it possible for all incoming students to get targeted, enhanced first-year advising, and necessary support services to develop their skills in Mathematics and writing. Increased Title III grant funding for career development and counseling will also engage students in experiential learning opportunities to focus their talents appropriately.

Even in its procedures for academic probation and dismissal, Eastern focuses on helping students improve their academic performance so that they can remain enrolled and successfully graduate. Students are not dismissed without a trial period to see if appropriate academic support strategies can help to improve the student’s performance. The University keeps longitudinal records for students placed on academic probation, and these data are used to evaluate the success or failure of support strategies. The fact that students can appeal a dismissal decision creates a further opportunity to refer them to appropriate support services or to develop strategies to improve their academic performance and increase their chances of graduating after being placed on probation.

**Student Services.** Eastern offers its students a wide range of services offering support and guidance in academics, career planning, personal growth, and technology. Student services are provided in a deliberate, comprehensive, and professional manner consistent with the University’s mission and with the needs and goals of the students. In addition to the services designed to foster students’ academic success, discussed above, the University provides a range of services to support students in their lives outside the classroom. Health services are accessible and comprehensive, and most are provided free of charge or at reduced cost to Eastern students; the staff is well-trained and well-suited to working with the student population.

All of the University’s Student Services initiatives are designed with an eye towards promoting Eastern’s mission as a public liberal arts university. Eastern’s programs and services are developed and evaluated with regard not simply to their inherent quality, but also to their capacity to promote student success, as measured by retention and graduation rates. Even ancillary support services and campus programming aim at making Eastern a place where students succeed and thrive. Eastern has established diversity goals, for instance, which provide a basis for evaluation as the University develops and pursues initiatives to enhance the educational experience for all students.

Eastern’s 2008-2013 Strategic Plan has provided the University with an opportunity to evaluate its current programs and services and to develop new ways of addressing student needs. The various Strategic Plan initiatives—which enhance the liberal arts experience, support exemplary academic programs, support a learning-centered campus, and provide institutional support—all have an impact on the delivery of student services. The University must exercise caution to ensure that new initiatives do not overtax offices whose staff are already stretched. Student support service offices must now connect their work to the Strategic Plan and determine what is no longer connected to the University’s vision and mission. Significant progress is being made towards periodic comprehensive assessment of all student service offices using established assessment tools. All but four offices have undergone a comprehensive Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) assessment, with the last four scheduled for the fall of 2010. Campus offices will consider the development of learning outcomes in accordance with CAS guidelines and/or the recommendations outlined in the American College Personnel Association’s *Learning Reconsidered 2.*

Student Services budgets have generally been maintained without large cuts, though individual offices face continuing strain due to extremely limited staffing. Career Services, Counseling and Psychological Services, Health Services, Financial Aid, and the Student Center/Student Activities Office are particularly affected in this respect. The state’s current hiring freeze has contributed to, but is not the sole cause of the staffing constraints.
After more than 20 years with the same director, the Office of Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs Office has experienced instability in leadership in the last four years. The office has, nevertheless, made significant strides in automating processes, reducing delays in financial aid awards, and improving communications. The switch to Direct Lending and a Banner upgrade have required significant staff time. The Office of Financial Aid will play an important role in the development of the University’s Enrollment Management Plan as awarding strategies affect Eastern’s enrollment, retention, and graduation goals.

Facilities for students have improved significantly, though challenges remain. While three new residence facilities in the past five years have greatly enhanced the residential experience, several aging facilities are in desperate need of renovation or replacement. In addition, a significant housing shortage is forecast. The Strategic Plan calls for an increase in the number of students who live on campus throughout their academic career at Eastern, but the current residence facilities will not support an increase—in the 2008-09 academic year, housing was at 104% of capacity. The Sports Center is also out of date and insufficient for the current needs of the students, and the University still lacks adequate large programming space. The Master Plan incorporates plans for addressing these facility needs. Despite these constraints, dedicated staff have still managed to provide high-quality services to the University’s students.

Athletic programs at Eastern—whether team sports, intramurals, or aspects of the wellness initiative—are coherent, ethical, and sound. Other co-curricular activities are accessible and comprehensive, though Eastern’s students are not currently taking full advantage of the opportunities that are available to them. There are numerous opportunities for students to become involved on campus, but the student club participation rate stands at 22%, and could be increased. The University calendar is full of events that are varied and engaging, and more than 1,500 student-led activities take place each academic year. The planning process for student groups could be streamlined and enhanced, however, to ensure a diverse spectrum of event offerings. Developing program planning models based on the Learning Reconsidered 2 learning outcomes would encourage a wider variety of student-led co-curricular activities and events and is in developmental stages in accordance with the strategic plan.

Eastern’s Summer orientation program provides information to help students with their transition to college. Beginning in 2009, while students continue to participate in Summer orientation, the Fall Welcome Weekend was changed to a one and one half day schedule, in keeping with national trends. Using small group sessions to deliver the same content that was previously being delivered to large groups has made for a more meaningful experience for our students. Students evaluate the Summer orientation program at the end of each session and have rated it highly, though evaluations have revealed certain blind spots in the University’s approach to student orientation. The overnight Summer program, for instance, while well-suited to residential students, has not served commuter students as well as it could. Similarly, transfer students and new students beginning in the Spring semester have indicated that they have received only limited information about the University and its services. In response to such concerns, Eastern offered a one-day transfer student orientation in the Summer of 2009. While the University could do more to orient transfer and commuter students, its Summer orientation and Welcome Weekend programs seem to do a good job of addressing the needs of first-time residential students, who have become an increasingly large percentage of the incoming student body.

Student Rights and Responsibilities. The Code of Conduct and Statement of Judicial Procedures is administered by the Office of Judicial Affairs, which is staffed by a University Judicial Officer. Students’ Constitutional rights are honored and protected through cautious administration of the Code as well as through training for Residence Life staff. The University Police are certified police officers who understand and protect students’ rights throughout the criminal and/or judicial process. Student
satisfaction with the judicial process is evidenced by the very small number of judicial appeals filed in any academic year. Over the past eight years, the University Judicial Officer has had primary responsibility for administration of the Student Code, delegated by the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Dean of Students or other staff members have served as appeals officers when necessary. Starting in the 2007-2008 academic year, Hall Directors were trained by the Judicial Officer to hear low-level, first-time offenses. An administrative assistant recently was assigned on a shared basis to the Office of Judicial Affairs. Most of the daily administrative tasks have been performed to date by student employees and the Judicial Officer. The Office of Judicial Affairs would benefit from a second staff member permanently assigned who would assist in the administration of the conduct cases. It is important to note that students have the option of choosing an informal or formal hearing and the vast majority chooses an informal hearing where they are empowered to participate in the resolution showing their confidence in the system.

**Projection**

**Admissions.** Eastern’s enrollment projections are realistic and attainable. The University forecasts that enrollment will remain stable, with a modest increase in full-time undergraduate enrollment through 2017 attributable to higher retention rates. While part-time and graduate enrollments will continue to be essential components of Eastern’s holistic enrollment management program, they are not expected to increase. Part-time undergraduate enrollment goals set by the Enrollment Planning Committee and supported by the Enrollment Management Committee will be realized through expanded online course offerings.

The University’s enrollment management strategies focus on identifying a desired enrollment profile and taking coordinated steps to achieving it. The Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management will continue its efforts to recruit and enroll a diverse body of students appropriate to Eastern’s mission as a public liberal arts university. These recruitment efforts will be aligned with a variety of strategies designed to foster students’ success, with an aim of improving retention and, consequently, graduation rates. As called for in the 2018-2013 Strategic Plan, Eastern will develop a strategic enrollment management plan that will focus on research and data-driven facts and outcome measures, including a regression analysis formula to develop customized admission profiles to attract students appropriate for the institution; embrace the core values and mission; rely on collaboration, cooperation, and assessment to guide planning and implementation; be rooted in coordinated support for its academic programs; involve strategic financial aid packaging focused on persistence and performance; and integrate residential life and student activities as part of the essential liberals arts experience framework.

**Retention and Graduation.** Increased academic support for students in first-year advising, as well as increased support available from the new Academic Services Center (which incorporates the Writing Center, the Math Achievement Center, Tutoring Services and Advising Services) should lead to an increase in first-year retention and ultimately in four-year and six-year graduation rates. Implementation of the Student Success initiatives of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan will address issues related to student retention and graduation, including the disparities between minority students and their White peers. Eastern intends to match the average rates for its peer institutions in COPLAC. The University aims to increase the overall first-year retention rate to 82% by 2015 while maintaining a retention rate for Black students that is at least equal to that for Whites; in the same period, Eastern aims to increase the retention rate for Hispanic students from 69% to 73%. Eastern’s overall six-year graduation rate is currently 51% which the University aims to increase to 53% by 2015, with projected six-year graduation rates for White, Black and Hispanic students to 54%, 46%, and 45%, respectively.

The Academic Deans and Academic Support Services administrators meet regularly as part of the Vice President of Academic Affairs’ direct reports team. These meetings provide ongoing opportunity to review policies and to facilitate new methods for streamlining the implementation of the University’s
Student Success initiatives, for ensuring consistent application of standards regarding continued academic standing, and for effectively communicating decisions about student status to students and their faculty advisors. The establishment of the Academic Services Center has centralized support for students facing academic probation or dismissal and has increased the efficiency of referrals to the University’s various academic support services (tutoring, counseling, AccessAbility services, etc.).

**Student Services.** The University will continue to provide a broad range of services to support students in their lives beyond the classroom. Further implementation of the Strategic Plan will ensure that co-curricular activities remain a focus of quality broad-based student learning. Many of the initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan incorporate out-of-classroom learning. The campus Master Plan calls for reconfiguring the main campus into a more pedestrian-friendly environment with a Fine Arts Instructional Center at the heart of the campus, along with a greatly enhanced Sports Center. Together with planned residential enhancements, these facilities will support the University’s liberal arts mission and provide for greater opportunities for co-curricular student engagement.

In the near term, the University will face challenges in some student services areas. Until new dormitories can be constructed, Eastern will need to develop strategies to accommodate increased enrollment with existing residential facilities; discussions are underway on this. The University will also need to create and fund more on-campus employment opportunities for deserving students. The Offices of Academic Affairs, University Advancement, and Admissions have been developing strategies to provide more of Eastern’s deserving students with four-year aid awards.

Many student services offices are currently stretched thin due to staffing limitations. While the state’s current hiring freeze is one factor in the strain that many offices feel, it is not the only one: all offices will have to consider which of their activities are most essential to the University’s mission and most in keeping with its core values. To that end, offices in the Division of Student Affairs began including program outcomes and learning outcomes in their planning documents beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year; these offices assess their effectiveness in achieving these outcomes using tools developed in the Summer of 2009. Such assessment will allow offices in the Division of Student Affairs to target their services most effectively given the resources they have. That said, in order to maintain student satisfaction with campus services, the students would clearly benefit from additional staff in some offices when circumstances permit; a staff member will be added to the Office of Judicial Affairs, for example, to ensure that the Student Code of Conduct can continue to be applied equitably.

Eastern will continue to streamline its Summer orientation program to include all of the information that was previously provided in the longer Fall Welcome Weekend. While the University’s incoming student body is increasingly composed of traditional college students (first-time, full-time undergraduates living on campus), commuter students, transfer students, and new students beginning in the Spring semester still represent a meaningful fraction of the student body; the University will seek to improve its orientation services for these students by developing and implementing a more focused approach to commuter and transfer students and one connected to best practices as identified by NODA, the National Orientation Directors Association.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Eastern assesses its Enrollment Management on an ongoing basis through analysis of success in achieving target goals for student admission, enrollment, retention and graduation. Student participation in and satisfaction with facilities, intercollegiate athletics, opportunities for leadership and participation, and residential life are evaluated through participation rates, surveys, and focus groups. The Division of Student Affairs has adopted and used CAS standards for assessment of program effectiveness.
Standard Seven: Library & Other Information Resources
J. Eugene Smith Library

Description

Mission
The J. Eugene Smith Library is Eastern Connecticut State University’s sole library, providing support for all areas of the University’s curriculum. In 2008, as part of its strategic planning process, the library adopted a new mission and vision statement, which aligns the library’s mission with Eastern’s identity as the state’s only public liberal arts university: “The J. Eugene Smith Library supports and enriches the university’s teaching, learning, research, and outreach objectives by providing services and resources that foster intellectual curiosity and integrity, promote critical inquiry, and encourage awareness of the world beyond the campus. [It provides] a welcoming and comfortable space for quiet study or collaborative efforts, and a professional staff to offer assistance and expertise.” The library’s Vision Statement affirms its commitment to supporting the University’s aim of becoming a public liberal arts college of first choice.

Facilities and Holdings
The library is located at the center of the University’s campus in a handsome 127,000 square foot building with seating for approximately 850 users. The library offers different kinds of spaces for varied uses. In addition to open study tables, the library has two large seminar rooms, five group study rooms, and 16 small (two-person) research carrels. Though not strictly part of the library proper, the University’s new Academic Services Center and a Café are also housed in the building, which encourages students to take advantage of available tutoring and advising services while also offering space for relaxation and socializing.

The library has a current collection of over 390,000 volumes in print, over 900 current print journal subscriptions, 963,000 microforms, 2,711 full-text electronic journals, and 120 electronic databases. All told, the library’s journal and database subscriptions provide users with access to over 41,000 unique journal titles. In addition to its own holdings, Eastern’s participation in a cooperative system with the three other Connecticut State University libraries and the State Library offers users convenient access to a combined total of some two million volumes. Through the shared CONSULS catalogue, users can request volumes from other system libraries, which are then delivered to Eastern’s library by a State courier, generally within three days. The library extends its patrons’ reach still further through its robust interlibrary loan department, which borrowed 4,301 items on its patrons’ behalf in FY09 while loaning 8,588 items to other libraries.

Leveraging Technology
The library has embraced advances in technology in ways that enhance the service it provides students, faculty, and members of the community. The library has, in the first instance, made significant investments in electronic resources, particularly databases and full-text electronic journals. Such resources represent 22% of the overall collections budget in FY2010, up from 12.8% so recently as FY2004. To help patrons more easily discover and access this wealth of material, the library has deployed Serial Solutions’ “Article Linker” software, which indexes all of the library’s varied journal holdings (both in print and electronic formats) and directs users to available holdings. This software has been integrated with many of the library’s research databases in ways that allow students and faculty to identify and locate articles in a single, seamless process—in the event that a patron seeks an article not held by the library, the system is even able to produce a filled-in interlibrary loan request form. The library’s interlibrary loan software (ILLiad) speeds and simplifies the interlibrary loan process for patrons, while also helping library staff to monitor copyright compliance with regard to the number and
frequency of requests for articles borrowed per journal title. All of these technological solutions serve to improve users’ experience at the library, and make it easier to find and/or borrow the materials they need.

In addition to its electronic holdings, the library works to provide the kinds of technological tools that students and faculty require from a modern academic library. The library provides electronic course reserve services, which some faculty opt to use in lieu of or in addition to the Blackboard VISTA course management system [see below]. Eighty computer workstations are available for student use, both individually and in group computer classroom spaces. Six additional workstations are available for members of the general public to use under guest accounts, which allow guests to use the machines for up to two hours per day. The library also provides wireless internet access throughout, allowing students and faculty to use their own laptop computers wherever they need them. Even in the face of recent budget uncertainties, the library made a point of acquiring two very expensive microform scanners (ca. $8,000 each) to replace aging conventional microform readers. These new scanners allow users to save digital copies of microforms owned by the library, which makes that material vastly more convenient to use.

Staffing and Information Literacy

The Library is staffed by twelve full-time and three part-time librarians, plus the Library Director; all of these librarians hold the MLS degree, and some have additional advanced degrees. The Library has 16 full-time support staff, who must meet State-mandated qualifications to hold their positions of Library Technical Assistant or Library Technician; the Library also employs two part-time University Assistants. A state hiring freeze has prevented the library from maintaining the level of staffing that it would like: one full-time and two part-time librarian positions are currently vacant, as are one full-time support position and two part-time University Assistant positions.

In addition to keeping the reference desk staffed 73 hours per week, the library provides information literacy instruction at a number of levels. Since the fall of 2005, all incoming first-year students have been required to attend a basic library orientation session, consisting of a half-hour presentation on the library’s web page and a 45-minute tour of the library’s various facilities. Additionally, the majority of first-year composition instructors invite a librarian to make a presentation on basic database searching, and most First Year Program classes also invite a librarian to present on library resources, with a research scavenger hunt relevant to the topic of the course. Librarians also provide instructional sessions for upper-division classes in various disciplines by request. A library instructional classroom with an instructor’s podium, projector, and 20 computer workstations, accommodates information literacy instruction sessions for most classes. An additional smaller classroom space with six computers serves primarily Education students and faculty.

Appraisal

The University places a high priority on the library, reflected by its placement at the center of the campus, and its attractive, well-maintained physical facility. Rising gate counts summarized in the Data First Forms indicate that the Library continues to be vital to students, faculty and community members. Two recent studies provide some insight into faculty and student perceptions of the library: a LibQual survey was conducted during spring, 2006, and in spring, 2010, library staff collaborated with a faculty member in the Psychology department who assigned his upper-level research class a project to conduct focus groups. Library staff are still analyzing the findings, but some preliminary remarks based on those studies are provided below.

Planning and Resources

The library actively seeks input from faculty and students in order to deliver the best service possible. Faculty input into decisions about collections purchases is solicited through a library liaison program. Each librarian is assigned one or more academic departments, and each department has a designated faculty member (the “collection builder”) who serves as the conduit for collection requests from that
department. This liaison/collection builder program provides a good conduit for back and forth communication between the library and academic departments. Though some departments are more active than others in making their needs known, the presence of a designated liaison librarian for each field ensures the collection is maintained appropriately, even if the department offers little input. Additionally, the library has a “Grant” program whereby faculty can request special purchases over and above their normal departmental allocation to support new curricular needs or to build the collection in areas that are under-resourced.

The library keeps detailed usage data on its electronic resources and records in-house use of all journals and microforms. The library also has a special use survey of its most expensive print journals to determine if the cost and the use warrant renewal of the annual subscriptions. Likewise, the Library sends lists of print journals by academic discipline to each academic department for review every year. Decisions concerning adding or dropping electronic resources are regularly vetted through the academic departments via the liaisons.

The University has consistently maintained its commitment to sustain Library collections and technology, though the current budget pressures felt by all departments on campus have not left the library untouched. Historically, the University has been able to provide an annual increase to the library’s collections budget in order to keep pace with cost increases from scholarly publishers, which are routinely greater than inflation in the broader economy. This level of funding has enabled the library to build its collections effectively and has supported the shift from print to electronic resources. In the year ending June 30, 2009, for instance, the Library had a collections budget of $1,010,234, which represented an increase of 27.6% over the previous five years. Such levels of commitment had enabled the Library to maintain a level of acquisitions that had not heretofore been significantly affected by economic inflation. While many libraries decrease their book budgets in order to sustain journal collections, the Smith Library acquired 4,526 paid monographs in FY2009, compared to 4,711 in FY2001. At the same time, the Library continued to sustain a relatively healthy proportion of the collections budget for books and A/V materials at 29% for the year ending June 2009, compared to 34% for the year ending June 2004. Unfortunately, such trends could not be sustained in the current fiscal climate. In FY2010, the University was unable to provide the customary inflationary adjustment and, indeed, was forced to cut the library’s collections budget by 2.5%. This cut has resulted in a structural deficit of about $75,000 for FY2010.

**Collections**

With these various mechanisms in place, the library collection is, at present, generally adequate to meet most of the needs of Eastern’s primarily undergraduate student body and to support the University’s curriculum. Still, “Information Control” was the area where users rated the library lowest in the 2006 LibQual survey. Even undergraduates found the library’s print and journal holdings to be short of what they desired—indeed, close to what they considered the minimum acceptable level for a university library. This relative discontent with the library’s holdings is perhaps a function of the increasingly sophisticated work that Eastern students are pursuing in their studies: as they take on more ambitious projects, more students begin to find themselves reaching for resources that are more likely to be found in a research library. These results notwithstanding, for undergraduates the library’s holdings fall within what LibQual calls the “zone of tolerance”: though short of what they would like to have, it is certainly within a realm that they consider acceptable.

Faculty members, predictably, are less satisfied by the state of the library’s holdings. For faculty members, the library’s print holdings, electronic holdings (e.g. databases), and journal holdings actually fall below the threshold of what they consider minimally acceptable. To a certain extent, faculty members’ appraisal of the library’s collections must be attributed to higher expectations of libraries arising from their experience at research libraries. Faculty members routinely identified “desired” levels
for library collections of 8.5 and higher on a 9-point scale, and their mean scores for what would be minimally acceptable never fell below 7.0.

Clearly, a library like Eastern’s is not in a position to support all faculty research needs, nor can the library meet students’ needs for advanced student projects in every field—very expensive specialized digital collections (e.g. EEBO, Compustat, etc.) are out of reach, for instance, and the library will never be able to provide the number of journal subscriptions that would be found at a research library. The library takes steps, however, to ensure that its collection is able to meet most of the university’s students’ needs most of the time. In Spring 2009, the Library used an electronic collection analysis tool called the Bowker Book Analysis System (based on Resources for College Libraries) to identify gaps in the collection. In consultation with faculty, a portion of the library collections budget was used to fill the gaps noted. Then too, the library has made a policy of paying for interlibrary loan requests for faculty and students to the extent that resources can sustain the requests: so far, they have.

Staffing
The 2006 LibQual survey shows that staff members are effective in administering the library’s services. In all categories, library users reported that library staff answered their expectations of service. Staff members were noted, in particular, for their readiness to respond to patron’s questions and their willingness to help. It is perhaps worth noting that, though they represented only a very small constituency in the survey, graduate students were especially positive in their assessments of the library’s staff, rating the “Affect of Service” as being near their ideal levels in numerous categories. Student participants in the 2010 focus groups confirmed the LibQual survey findings, noting, for example, that staff “were very helpful about specific questions and finding specific materials.” Though the library’s staff are doing a good job of serving the library’s patrons, the State of Connecticut’s hiring freeze has presented real challenges for staffing the library. As a result of several vacancies, in 2009-2010 the library reduced Reference services on Saturdays, eliminated Reference services for the 8:00 to 9:00am hour Monday through Friday, and added Technical Services librarians to the Reference desk coverage rotation. Staff have been stretched more thinly across all of the library’s operations and hours of operation will be reduced to 87 per week in 2010-2011.

Information Literacy
The Library has developed a comprehensive information literacy program, though some students do not participate in all program elements. While there is a “mandatory” library orientation for new students in the Fall, there are no “teeth” to the policy that would ensure compliance. The large majority of new students do participate in the Fall orientation, but the ability of some students to skip the session is a weakness. Of greater concern is the lack of full participation of all English 100 and 100P classes, as well as the uneven participation of students in the First Year Program. The choice of whether to invite a librarian to present to first-year classes is left to the individual instructor, and recent data indicate that 32% of the students enrolled in English 100 and 100P in the 2009-10 academic year did not receive a presentation from a librarian. Presumably, many of those instructors are offering students instruction on using research databases themselves, but the library staff cannot ensure the consistency of instruction for students in classes to which they are not invited. Further, the fact that relatively few upper-level classes in the majors have a library instruction session means that students may not be learning to use information resources pertinent to their discipline as fully as they could be.

Student participants in the spring, 2010, focus groups spoke highly of the library’s training sessions, but noted that, in some cases, they had received what they perceived to be redundant trainings when as many as three or four of their professors had scheduled library instruction sessions. On the other hand, some students also noted that they had difficulty retaining what they had learned in a one-hour session, and wondered about the possibility of a series of sessions, possibly offered each semester during the first and second years. At issue from the students’ perspective, then, is not the quality of library instruction, but
rather its timing and coordination, which are issues that would require more consistent engagement and cooperation across academic departments.

While the library has developed a range of information literacy training programs, the University has no systematic assessment program in place to determine whether students are receiving effective information literacy instruction. The Library currently uses the free TRAILS test, developed by Kent State University with funding from the IMLS, to assess the information literacy level of incoming first year students. It is clear from the results that there are gaps in incoming students’ readiness, even though the test is geared toward ninth graders. Many students do receive a broad array of instruction while at Eastern, but there is currently no program in place that determines whether all students are graduating with proficiency in use of information resources.

What evidence is available suggests that many students are not gaining the informational literacy skills the University would like for them to have by the time they graduate. Anecdotal comments from students in upper level courses who do come in for an information literacy session, for instance, reveals that many of them have little knowledge of the relevant databases in their field of study prior to the session. In Spring 2010, the Library tested 59 upper class students using the ILT test developed by Johns Hopkins University. (This test is more sophisticated than the TRAILS test and is more useful as a test for graduating seniors.) The median score was 65 on a test where 100 is the top possible score—more than 60% of the students in that small sample failed the test if one considers 70 a passing grade. It must be noted, however, that the students tested were those ineligible to take the Collegiate Learning Assessment test (CLA) in classes where the University was administering the CLA—the ILT was the alternative test administered so that all students in the participating classes would be tested. The 59 students who were tested, then, do not represent a true random sample. If their results are at all indicative, however, there is cause for concern that students are not graduating with satisfactory information literacy skills.

**Delivery of Services**

The library works to provide services to its users when and where they want them. Librarians provide online real-time chat reference service during the 73 hours per week that the Library Reference desk is staffed and an email reference service that answers questions within 24 hours during working days. The library has contracted for a 24/7 professionally-staffed reference service to take questions when the Reference desk is not staffed or is too busy to take the request. Students and faculty can access electronic resources remotely by authenticating through a proxy server, and the interlibrary loan service is likewise available remotely.

The library’s services extend as well to students who never set foot in the library building. Librarians provide information literacy instruction at satellite campus facilities by request. The library has partnered with EasternOnline to establish a librarian contact and liaison for distance learning, and has established a distance learning web page. Students enrolled in distance learning classes do not have to come to campus to obtain the ID card they need to access the library’s services. The fact that the CONSULS system allows patrons to retrieve books from whichever partner library is most convenient for them means that students in distance learning courses can avail themselves of nearly all of the library’s materials and services without ever visiting the Willimantic campus, if need be. The only aspect of remote service that is not fully available to off-campus students is delivery of interlibrary loan books from non-CSU libraries. The library currently has no provision for borrowing and then mailing the books obtained from other libraries to Eastern students who cannot come to campus. Thus far, there has been no call for such a service.

**Physical Environment**

The Library is comfortable, well-maintained, and adequately sized for the student population. At peak times of the academic year all computers are in use, but even during exam periods, those arriving earlier
in the day have access to a computer. Respondents to the 2006 LibQual survey rated the library highly on its physical space. Undergraduate students rate the library especially highly, finding it an attractive place to study. The findings of the LibQual survey are borne out by responses to the 2010 focus groups. Fully 70% of the student participants reported visiting the library at least once a week, noting that the library is “peaceful and quiet and not with many distractions,” and that it is the place “You go … to get the job done.” Singled out for particular comment were the group study rooms, which were declared “genius.” While a few students expressed a desire for softer chairs, and some noted that the third-floor quiet study zone was not always as quiet as they’d like, the most common remarks about the library as a study space were a desire for an earlier opening time and a feeling that closing custodial procedures should wait until after the library was officially closed so that students didn’t feel as though they were being “chased out.”

On the whole, then, students would seem to find the library a congenial spot for study: if anything, they’d like to spend more time there.

Though faculty members’ responses to the LibQual survey indicate that they are generally content with the library’s facilities, more than 70% of 2010 faculty focus group members indicated that they did the majority of their library work online, perhaps visiting the library, as one respondent put it “several times during the semester.” Faculty member participants did note, however, that they feel it is important for their students to visit the library in order to get the full experience of research, and the vast majority (92.3%) said that they give their students assignments that require a visit to the library. On the whole, then, it would seem that, while professors do not see the library as a place to do their own work (preferring, presumably, to work in their own offices or at home), they do see the library as a valuable space for students.

Technological Infrastructure
Maintaining up-to-date computers and related hardware and software is critical for the smooth delivery of library services. In general, the library has been able to maintain a three-year replacement cycle for all of its public computers. Given financial circumstances during the last computer replacement cycle, however, many library staff machines were not replaced: while patrons consistently have access to modern, capable terminals (and, furthermore, that all terminals in use are under warranty), some staff machines are now five years old or older. While the library’s policies and practices on computer hardware are generally effective and have made serving patrons the highest priority, many of those older staff computers will need to be replaced soon.

Projection
Collections and Resources
While the library expects to maintain its relative priority in the overall scope of the University’s activities, the serious fiscal deficit projected for the State of Connecticut for the next two fiscal years is a source of concern. It is not yet clear whether the University will have the resources to sustain the level of commitment that has been funded in the past. The level of collections funding in the FY2010 budget, though diminished from what it had been in previous years, was still adequate to meet most of the needs of the University’s primarily undergraduate student body. Without adjustments to keep up with rising costs in the scholarly publishing market, however, the library will not be able to keep pace in its acquisitions. If the current financial climate forces collections funding to remain flat—or if it necessitates further cuts—then the library will have to make cuts based on usage and cost. The usage data that the library collects on journals and electronic collections will inform any decisions on cuts, as will discussions with academic departments. The library has already braced for the possibility of further cuts by asking departments to identify serials and database subscriptions to target for cancellation if necessary; departments were asked to identify cuts amounting to 10% of the cost for subscriptions associated with their disciplines.
Also of ongoing concern is the CSU System Office’s ability and willingness to sustain funding for shared CSU electronic resources and for ILS maintenance. Should this funding cease, the Library would have a very serious budget deficit to address. Likewise, the Library depends heavily on databases funded by the State iConn program, which was reduced and almost eliminated in the Connecticut State budget this year. If this program were to lose funding, the library would be challenged to sustain access to all of those resources.

**Staffing**

The State of Connecticut’s hiring freeze has already affected the library’s ability to deliver services, and promises to create further predicaments in the near-term future. The loss of another part-time staff person in the Spring of 2010, for example, means that the library will reduce operating hours for the 2010-11 academic year from 94 to 87 hours per week. Though staff have been stretched thin in all areas, the diminished number of librarian staff, in particular, will make it challenging to provide additional support for the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum’s integrated curricular element of information literacy if professors increase requests for instructional sessions.

**Information Literacy**

Implementing an assessment tool for a valid sample of graduating seniors would be a useful first step in identifying whether or not students are aware of the information resources available and know how to effectively use them. The ILT test that the library administered to a small, unscientific sampling of upper-level students would be a promising candidate, but the test is a costly one. Information literacy has been adopted as an element in the Liberal Arts Core curriculum, so the library, in collaboration with other academic units, will need to find a way to assess systematically students’ information literacy.

As an interim step, encouraging a greater level of collaboration between the new Writing Center (located in the Academic Services Center in the lower level of the library building) and the Library Reference librarians might help more students to seek information literacy assistance individually.

**Facilities**

The Library has the physical capacity to house 500,000 volumes. At present there is still room for growth, but a plan for off-site storage (if off-site storage is desired) or for regular weeding and discard needs to be established and funded to prepare for the day when the library reaches its capacity. Duplicate volumes are already in the process of being weeded, and many volumes of journals available through JSTOR will be removed in AY2010-11.

The group studies and research carrels need to have computers installed in order to make them more attractive for student use. The Library had hoped to use “roll-down” computers to install in the 16 research carrels when the last allotment of new computers was received, but other needs on campus precluded that from happening. The Library is planning to experiment with loaning laptops for use in the study rooms.

**Instructional Technology**

**Description**

Information Technology Services (ITS) supports the mission of the University by providing leadership in technology research and implementation. ITS provides a wide range of services to the campus community. This section addresses only those ITS services relating directly to instructional technology, information services, and academic planning. Other ITS functions—including basic IT infrastructure and classroom technology—are addressed under Standard 8 (Physical and Technological Resources).
The Information Technology initiative in Eastern’s 2008-13 Strategic Plan articulates the fundamental goals and assumptions of the University’s approach to Information Technology: “[The University] will provide faculty, students, and employees access to innovative technologies, platforms, resources, and state-of-the-art facilities, and facilitate University- and System-wide partnerships. Technology will not be regarded as a driving force, but rather the foundation that creates an environment which promotes learning, critical thinking, and engagement.” ITS seeks to provide students, faculty, and staff the tools they need to pursue the University’s academic mission, without allowing those tools to take precedence over the work they are meant to facilitate.

Eastern has chosen Blackboard VISTA as its course management system. VISTA is used, variously, as an adjunct to traditional “on the ground” classes; as a component in “hybrid” courses involving both in-person and online interaction; and as a vehicle for delivering courses entirely online. Incorporating VISTA into classes allows faculty members to deliver course material in new and flexible ways, and allows students who are accustomed to online environments to engage with their courses on their own schedules.

ITS provides all users with a number of communication and productivity tools to support academic work. In addition to email accounts and network-based storage, an institutional site license allows the University to provide students and employees with the Microsoft Office suite for home use. In the Summer of 2010, ITS will migrate a number of its offerings to Microsoft’s Live@edu platform. Live@edu will provide students with a portable email address that they can keep once they leave the University; 25GB of online storage for storing and archiving their coursework (far more than the University’s current network storage scheme allows); and a suite of cloud-based tools that will facilitate sharing and collaborating on documents, scheduling, and messaging.

The University supports academic departments in the delivery of departmental web pages, and also provides students and faculty with server space for the publication of personal web sites. A number of faculty use personal web pages in addition to (or instead of) VISTA for distributing materials to their students, as well as for maintaining their own scholarly presence on the web. A recent upgrade now allows faculty members to deploy not simply static HTML pages, but also more sophisticated database-driven web sites running on a LAMP (Linux/Apache/MySQL/PHP) stack. ITS also maintains a multi-user Movable Type installation to provide blogging services to faculty and other campus offices—a number of departments and centers have begun to take advantage of this capacity in order to communicate their latest news to students and the public.

All of the University’s technologies are accessible to students and faculty wherever they may be. All computers on the campus network can access email, network storage, and library resources; these resources are also available from off campus via web authentication.

**Staffing, Training, and Support**

ITS has an organizational structure of 40 staff members, ten student workers, three University Assistants, and three student trainees. The State of Connecticut’s hiring freeze has left some positions vacant, such that ITS currently has 35 members in various support positions. ITS has several staff members dedicated to providing training to the campus community on technology equipment and software. Incoming students receive training on a number of systems during new student orientation, for instance, and one team—the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT)—offers classes on new software for faculty and students throughout the year. CIT also assists faculty members with the instructional design and the implementation of courses using Blackboard VISTA.

**Facilities**
ITS maintains a number of different spaces where students and faculty can access the University’s technological tools, both in classroom settings and independently. Classrooms are universally equipped with technology with the minimum in any classroom including internet connectivity, an LCD projector, sound system, digital camera, VCR/DVD player, and lectern with controls. All of the University’s academic classrooms meet this standard. In addition to the eighty workstations in the library, most of the residence halls offer PC/study lounges, and students have access, as well, to an open computer lab on the fourth floor of Webb Hall, which provides more than 100 PC and Macintosh workstations, as well as laser printers and scanners. A number of computer lab-style classrooms are available in the several academic buildings for use in classroom sessions. Some of these classrooms are primarily dedicated to particular disciplinary uses (as is the case with the English Writing Lab in Webb Hall and the Macintosh Graphic Arts Lab in Shafer Hall), while others accommodate multiple disciplines, both with commonly-used productivity software and with specialized applications for use in computer programming, mathematical analysis and visualization, and other fields. Moreover, students and faculty can connect their own computers to the campus network via wireless access points throughout the University’s academic core—the library, Webb Hall, the Science building, and the Student Center. ITS is in the process of extending wireless access to the residence halls, as well.

Policies
A college campus is not simply a workplace for students, but also a second home. As such, the lines between academic and recreational use of technology are not always sharp ones—students play games, chat, and spend time on social networks, even as they also access library resources or collaborate on projects using Blackboard VISTA. While the University offers students ample network capacity for recreational uses, ITS maintains clear policies outlining the appropriate use of technology on campus. These policies are published in the student handbook, but students are briefed on University policies during new student orientation and are, additionally, reminded of those policies each time they connect to the campus network. ITS maintains a web site that explaining the consequences of downloading copyrighted material and directing students to legal outlets for obtaining digital music and videos. As a further precaution, the University’s firewall and packet shaper are configured to prohibit P2P traffic.

IT in Academic Planning and Administration
Eastern uses Sungard’s Banner enterprise resource planning (ERP) platform for a variety of administrative purposes, including course scheduling and enrollment management. Students can register for classes and monitor their progress towards their degrees using the eWeb portal. The same portal provides faculty with an overview of enrollment in their courses and allows for electronic submission of midterm and final grades; eWeb serves as a tool for academic advising, as well, allowing faculty members to examine student transcripts, analyze students’ completion of degree requirements, and view available courses in the upcoming term. With programming assistance from ITS staff, departments and offices across the university rely on Banner to generate reports for use in analyzing and assessing programs. Banner provides insight into enrollment patterns, patterns of student performance, etc. and so helps the University both plan its course offerings and identify potential pressure points in the curriculum. In addition to the data provided by Banner, ITS provides survey tools powered by SelectSurvey that allow offices and groups to gather information on an ad hoc basis for use in decision making.

Appraisal
Planning and Resources
The University and the CSU System office are working hard to leverage every technology dollar to maximize services to students and staff. ITS actively seeks input from the University community in planning and evaluating IT services. ITS holds open meetings with users on campus to determine the adequacy of their services and infrastructure, and the CIO and Directors meet regularly with key stakeholders to maintain dialogue regarding plans and programmatic changes. Only recently, the
University Senate created an Information Technology Committee to advise the CIO in planning, administering, and evaluating programs and services. The University’s 2008-13 Strategic Plan included a comprehensive review of the University’s IT needs and led to a plan for targeting the future growth of the University’s IT capacity.

Use of Instructional Technology
The technological tools that ITS provides are used by many faculty to enhance their courses, but those tools could be exploited still more fully and more widely. Naturally, faculty members have differing levels of comfort and facility with computers and other technology: some leverage many different tools that VISTA provides, some use only a few, and some make no use of VISTA at all. Of course, VISTA is only a tool for the work of teaching and learning—it doesn’t represent a one-size-fits-all solution for every course—but it is a powerful tool, and one whose potential more faculty would do well to explore. Increasingly, students arrive at Eastern well-versed in the web and accustomed to seeking out and interacting with information in a variety of ways and on their own schedules. Confining the presentation and discussion of course materials to the set periods of class meetings risks missing out on the opportunity to engage students’ attention and interest in ways that come naturally to them.

The team at the Center for Instructional Technology provides training and support to faculty members seeking to move their course materials into a digital environment, but that team can find itself overwhelmed by requests for assistance with routine issues of VISTA course creation and set-up in the weeks before the start of each term. Though ITS offers a number of trainings throughout the year, attendance at those trainings is relatively sparse; it seems likely that this training is not reaching those faculty members most in need of basic skills.

Training, Support, and Staffing
Of course, it is not only the faculty who have varying levels of comfort and skill in using technology. Contrary to the popular image of a generation of “digital natives,” not all students arrive at Eastern equally conversant with computers. Even among students who are comfortable with computers, a lifetime of web surfing and instant messaging does not always translate into facility with the kinds of systems they will be asked to use as part of their studies. Students, too, require support and training if the University is to ensure that they have the skills that will be required of them as they enter upon careers in the twenty-first century. Results from two years of assessment of technological skills of entering students indicated that the majority needed additional skill in only one area, the use of electronic databases to manage data.

ITS has adapted to the best of its ability to the staffing challenges presented by the State’s hiring freeze. The ITS organizational structure was modified in 2008 to respond to changing demands for services. This realignment of staff and functions allowed ITS to support a growing academic mission without additional staff. In early 2009, library computer and media support staff were moved into ITS support services to better serve faculty and students utilizing the technically complex Library systems architecture.

Policies and Security
ITS is constantly reviewing and enhancing its policies and adding equipment to protect sensitive data and critical applications. Network access is reviewed semi-annually. The University restructured ITS to create an Information Security Officer to monitor the security of the University’s technologies. Security briefings are conducted around campus to keep staff up-to-date on the latest threats and security measures.

Facilities and Resources
The University provides appropriate computer hardware and software to students, faculty, and staff. Computing resources are accessible across the campus, and ITS offers training and support in the use of available technologies.

ITS requires a more formal assessment tool to determine the quality of its services and make adjustments to increase effectiveness. Although good information is obtained from meetings with faculty and staff and the analysis of the Helpdesk, a formal survey would provide more concrete feedback to allow appropriate adjustments.

**Projection**

The Information Technology initiative of the 2008-13 Strategic Plan lays out the directions for growth and development for the University’s IT capacities.

ITS will develop a more robust University portal for students, faculty, and staff by better leveraging capacities that the University already has. Currently, Eastern has a license for Sungard’s Luminis communications platform, which integrates with both the Banner ERP and the Blackboard VISTA course management system. To date, the University has not exploited Luminis sufficiently. Together, these systems will provide an integrated digital environment for all campus business: students can register for classes, review their schedule, see upcoming calendar events, and pay their bills all in one place; faculty can see all of their classes at a glance, share materials with the students in particular sections, post announcements, and moderate chats; all community members will be able to use the portal for posting announcements and sharing materials for collaborative work.

As technology becomes ever more central to the University’s operations and its academic programs, training for faculty, staff, and students will grow increasingly important. ITS will conduct open forums with various groups to determine the greatest areas of need, and will tailor trainings to meet the community’s requirements. Technology training will need to become available on an on-demand basis.

In order to better support users on campus, ITS will improve its methods of gathering data and feedback about support needs. Efforts to analyze data from ITS’s Helpdesk provide a model for mining available usage data in order to evaluate how technology is being used on campus and to assess the effectiveness of different solutions. Additionally, however, ITS will use currently-available tools to develop a more formal survey system to provide better feedback and more consistent data.

Provided that: 1) ITS staffing remains stable; 2) planned strategic projects are completed; and 3) proposed changes to ITS budgetary formulas agreed upon by Eastern and the CSU System office take effect, ITS will continue to be well-positioned to support the University’s academic mission and its administrative operations.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

The adequacy and appropriateness of Library and Information resources are assessed through surveys, focus groups and analysis of usage data. Adjustments are made in response to findings as resources allow. Additional information that will help in aligning resources with student and faculty needs will be obtained from further evaluation of students’ information literacy and from a survey tool designed to assess faculty, student, and staff satisfaction with ITS programs and services.
**Standard Eight: Physical and Technological Resources**

**Description**

The physical resources of Eastern Connecticut State University include land, buildings, major equipment and infrastructure. The 182-acre campus encompasses more than 50 administrative, instructional and residential buildings containing 1,323,139 assignable square feet. The Office of Facilities Management and Planning and the Office of Information Technology Services oversee Eastern’s physical and technological resources, respectively.

*Scope and Adequacy: Physical Resources*

The campus has grown significantly in the last decade, from 1,205,391 GSF in 2001 to 2,003,742 GSF in 2009. Buildings added to the campus include the Administration Building, a 714-car parking garage, three residence halls, the Child and Family Development Resource Center, the Student Center Addition, the Science Building and the Public Safety Building. Eastern also teaches courses in a high school in Vernon, in a shared building in Groton, at the U.S. Navy’s Submarine Base in Groton, and in Jamaica. Facilities for these courses meet all applicable building codes and instructional needs. Management, maintenance and operation of facilities is conducted by Eastern employees. Staffing in the 12 areas comprising the Office of Facilities Management and Planning is currently 115 employees.

A classroom study completed in 2002 evaluated the existing condition of classrooms as well as the size and number of classrooms. Based on that study and input from faculty, a prioritized list of classroom improvements was created. Minor capital funds were identified over a period of time to bring the deficient classrooms up to standard. General-purpose classroom furniture for new and renovated classrooms across campus includes tables and chairs that are movable (rather than tablet arm chairs) to enable flexible seating arrangements to accommodate several teaching methods. Space that is specific to a given discipline is classified as a laboratory in the inventory and is assigned to a specific department rather than being available for all disciplines. Special allocations of this sort ensure that the space supports the teaching methods appropriate to each discipline.

In 2004, the Goddard 100 renovation was completed, and additional classrooms were created in Goddard and Winthrop Halls as space became available upon completion of the new Science Building. These developments notwithstanding, the Program for the campus Master Plan confirmed the need for additional classroom space.

*Scope and Adequacy: Technological Resources*

Information Technology Services hosts a robust network infrastructure to support the University’s academic and administrative missions. The network is defined by firewalls, packet-shapers, wireless access points, power generation equipment, and a large number of distribution closets. The University is designing and constructing new primary and backup data centers to support a growing demand for technology and to enhance security. A redundant fiber loop was installed in the Spring of 2010 to provide a backup connectivity to the Internet.

Classroom technology is impressive, with a minimally-equipped classroom featuring internet connectivity, an LCD projector, sound system, digital camera, VCR/DVD player, and lectern with controls. All of the University’s academic classrooms meet this standard. ITS provides training and posts instructions for use of equipment in multimedia classrooms. Nine computer classrooms allow instruction using specialized software requested by instructors. The ITS FAQ page provides guidance and answers questions on a range of topics.
Technological resource planning is based on a defined replacement cycle. Faculty and computer lab systems are replaced every 3-4 years, with replaced machines redeployed elsewhere on campus to fill less technologically demanding functions. Classroom technology is replaced every 4-6 years based on use and application changes. Infrastructure upgrades and changes are completed based on criteria from the System Office and the University’s long term Physical & Technology Master Plans.

As part of Eastern’s Information Technology Services department, Media Services provides a broad variety of media-related services to the Eastern community. These services are defined in two primary service areas: Media Technology Support and Multimedia Production. Media Services provides comprehensive technical support services to the ECSU community, including audio-visual equipment services, multimedia projection system support, systems design, and consultation. Media Services staff also design, develop, and distribute many types of media materials for ESCU administrative units, students, faculty, and University affiliates.

ITS provides support for and training on a range of administrative and instructional applications including Knowledgebase, eWeb, Online Courses and BlackBoard Vista, email, VPN, eBanner, eReports, Surveys, Web development, Adobe Connect. An ITS unit, the Center for Instructional Technology, supports the application and integration of technology across the curriculum and provides essential support services for the use of technology in teaching, learning and research. Support is available for research and implementation of emerging technologies, purchasing quotes, student IT orientation, website development, CD/DVD development software distribution, online courses, technology documentation, web development and surveys, online calendars, instructional computer classroom support, campus-wide IT training. Additional information is available for Banner and eWeb users.

Compliance and sustainability: Physical Resources
All Facilities are built and renovated in accordance with State Building and Fire Codes and in keeping with ADA regulations. The Connecticut Department of Public Works project manuals for self-administered projects requires a certificate of code compliance that must be signed by the designer and the contractor ensuring that the renovation or construction was done in compliance with all building codes. In addition, all projects completed with CSUS 2020 funds—regardless of the size or complexity—are inspected by the Office of the State Building Inspector and by the State Fire Marshal. Annual inspections are conducted by the State Fire Marshal’s office to ensure that buildings are brought up to current code. These annual inspections have typically identified only minor violations (e.g. fire doors propped open, or equipment stored in stairwells by building occupants); such violations have been addressed right away, either by simply informing occupants of the problems or through the work order system.

All buildings have electronic access and most classrooms have trilogy locks to ensure the security of the assets. Electronic access allows the University to track who is entering the building.

LEED certification for renovations and new construction ensures that the buildings are being designed in the most appropriate manner for a healthful environment. Three recently-constructed residence halls received LEED certification, and the validation process is underway for the Science Building, which was designed to LEED Silver standards. In 2007, the University instituted green cleaning, which provides a healthy environment for building occupants and protects custodians from harsh chemicals. Eastern’s Recycling Program is undergoing change to be consistent with single stream recycling. A map showing the locations of recycling containers is located on the facilities web page at http://www.easternct.edu/facilities/recycling.htm. Eastern hosts an Institute for Sustainable Energy that provides information on energy alternatives and sustainability to users and providers of energy. It has provided assistance to Eastern in implementation of strategies to conserve energy on campus.
Planning: Physical Resources
The University uses the Strategic Plan to drive funding and allocation of resources for facilities and technology in keeping with the institution’s mission and priorities. The Connecticut State University System (CSUS) periodically revises and updates the Comprehensive Campus Master Plans for the four universities. Eastern’s physical resources were evaluated in the development of the 2009 Master Plan. Phase I of the Master Plan includes the Program for the Master Plan, which estimates the square footage required for each space type by department, based on contact hours and projected program growth. The Master Plan creates a solution for the identified space needs. The plan took into account academic needs, building use, efficient use of program space, land use (such as vehicle circulation, parking, pedestrian circulation, and open space use), residential life (including student recreation), and administrative needs. Master Plan projects are prioritized based on need, and recommendations reflect an analysis of Eastern’s mission, priorities and objectives.

Technological resources
Various committees on campus review strategies for budget and resource allocation during normal planning and implementation cycles. In the Spring 2009, at the request of Eastern’s CIO and with the agreement of the Senate President, the Instructional Technology Advisory Committee (which was not a Senate committee) was replaced by the Instructional Technology Committee, which reports to the Senate and provides guidance to ITS on planning and resource allocation. An Information Technology Plan was one of the 18 initiatives in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan; that Plan was approved in the Spring of 2009.

Integrity and security: Technological resources
ECSU takes seriously its legal and ethical obligations to protect its computer systems, its institutional data, and the personal information of its students and employees. ITS devotes significant resources to matters of reliability and security. Two full-time staff members hold GIAC Security Essentials Certification. ITS developed an Incident Response Procedure in 2002 that provides a framework for an orderly response to events that threaten the security or operation of our computer resources. Policies related to reliability, security, and integrity of systems and data are listed at the ITS Policies web page.

Physical access to critical computer systems, network components and data storage is tightly controlled. A review of employees with access to these secure areas is performed on a semi-annual basis and rights are modified accordingly. Power protection (UPS) systems are employed to minimize the effect of power fluctuations on our critical systems. To the extent our resources allow, redundant systems are installed to promote reliability in case of component failure. Two new and fully redundant data centers are under construction to improve security and network performance.

ITS maintains three hardware firewalls on the Local Area Network, as well as software-based firewalls on desktop computers. A perimeter firewall between the ECSU LAN and the CSU WAN/Internet protect internal computers from external threats. The perimeter firewall is a Juniper product purchased under the direction of the System Office in Hartford. A pair of Sonic Wall anti-spam filtering systems weeds out a majority of the incoming email spam. Internally, access to network resources is protected by access control lists, group membership assignment, and other methods. ITS maintains a two-layered defense against rogue systems and users by using Access Control Lists and the Reject_Anonymous registry setting. Strong password policies help to protect our technology accounts and the resources they use.

Access to Banner systems and our enterprise data store is controlled by role assignments and a strict approval process; access is reviewed semi-annually. Instances of direct access to the data store are logged and monitored. Banner users are required to sign a confidentiality agreement that stresses the importance of protecting institutional data. A Banner access audit is performed annually for full-time staff and semi-annually for part-time and student employees. Training on our legal obligations under FERPA, GLB and
other such legislation is provided to employees with access to protected information. All ITS employees must sign an employee confidentiality agreement.

ITS uses Windows Active Directory to force all desktop firewalls to be active, using a common configuration. Anti-virus software is installed on all servers and desktop computers on the campus domains; this software is automatically updated on a regular basis. The release of software security patches is closely monitored, tested, and distributed on a timely basis. The University employs a comprehensive data security policy for portable media devices and standard protocols for acceptable use of technology equipment. Staff and faculty are trained on information security through hour-long briefings, held at the department level by ITS security officers.

**Appraisal**

*Scope and Adequacy: Physical Resources*

Construction projects undertaken between 2001 and 2008 addressed shortages of classroom space, science laboratory facilities, residence capacity, and parking, and created significant new amenities for the entire community in the Student Center. The second garage project currently underway will further alleviate parking shortages. A new softball facility to replace the softball field that was formerly at the site of the second parking garage will be completed when approved bond funds are released.

The adequacy of Eastern’s physical resources was recently evaluated in the 2009 Master Plan. Several of the remaining inadequacies identified in that plan will be addressed through the [CSUS 2020 program](#). In addition to the renovation of Goddard Hall and the Communications building and additions and renovations to the Sports Center, the CSUS 2020 program will fund the construction of additional residence halls and a new Fine Arts Instructional Center. Current facilities for the Visual and Performing Arts Departments are inadequate in terms of square footage, ventilation, and lighting which adversely affects program offerings.

CSU BOT resolutions [01-53](#) and [04-54](#) require that Eastern’s construction projects comply with design guidelines and are reviewed by a design committee. These resolutions have contributed to an effective and coordinated development of the physical campus. Eastern’s facilities are well maintained, with preventive maintenance done during the summer in residence halls and at the change of season for all buildings. While facilities continue to be well-maintained, the operating budget for the physical plant has dropped from $2.06 per square foot in 2001 to $1.29 per square foot in 2009.

*Scope and Adequacy: Technological Resources*

Eastern’s network has seen important improvements recently with newly-installed firewalls and the deployment of a redundant fiber optic loop to ensure Internet connectivity. Eastern is being used as the pilot campus for a VoIP system that the CSU System is developing. Planning for this new system drew attention to shortcomings with a number of telecommunications closets across campus: currently, a number of nodes on the network do not have the power generation, UPS, and cooling capabilities necessary to support the proposed system. Those capacities will be added prior to the deployment of the VoIP technology.

Campus classrooms provide a strong technology footprint for learning and communicating academic programs to students. The campus has been slow in deploying wireless technology, but the wireless project has gained momentum recently with a footprint of access points throughout the academic and administrative core; the University has begun deploying wireless to the residence halls, as well. The University has increased its bandwidth by 50% to support student recreational and academic uses on campus. This is typical of most institutions today, where students use massive amounts of bandwidth for recreational purposes.
Compliance and Sustainability: Physical Resources
Existing policies and practices ensure that Eastern’s facilities are safe and secure and that the campus environment is healthful. A recent audit of campus security conducted by the CSU System Office was positive and annual inspections by the State Fire Marshal have resulted in only minor findings. Both the practice of using green cleaning materials and the development of energy efficient buildings contribute to the sustainability of the campus.

Planning: Physical Resources
Eastern is effective at evaluating its physical resources and planning for their best use and future growth. The Master Plan and Strategic Plan processes serve to lay out a guiding vision for the campus. Ongoing monitoring of classroom use and assessment of the adequacy of residential space both help the University to meet its enrollment goals. The newly created Space Committee ensures that the assignment of space on campus is informed by input from all constituencies and responds to the needs and priorities of the University as a whole. The committee considers the space needs identified in the Program for the Master Plan when evaluating space requests.

Deferred maintenance of Eastern’s facilities is minimized through the annual minor capital program which allows the University to address routine maintenance of buildings that extends the useful life and effectiveness of the building systems. The use of dedicated funds to address larger needs—such as that for a new Fine Arts Instructional Center—can be sporadic due to shortfalls in state appropriation from the Bond Commission.

Planning: Technological Resources
The Information Technology Plan requires ongoing monitoring for the adequacy of technological resources to ensure that academic and administrative needs are met. CSU Trustees have designated a set funding level for classroom technology for refreshing faculty and computer lab machines. In years when the funding has been cut due to shortfalls in state revenue, schedules for updating machines are modified. Still, most faculty and staff enjoy an appropriate and capable suite of hardware and software in their offices and classrooms.

Integrity and Security: Technological Resources
The University is constantly enhancing policies and adding equipment to protect sensitive data and critical applications. The University restructured ITS to create an Information Security Officer to monitor the security of the institution’s technologies. Network access is reviewed semi-annually, and security briefings are conducted around campus to keep staff up to date on the latest threats and security measures.

At the end of each calendar year, ITS produces a summary incident report that assesses the impact of events related to network security and identifies vulnerabilities to be addressed. A number of complex vulnerabilities that have been areas of concern are being addressed aggressively by the construction of the new data centers, with their redundant cooling, UPS, and power generation capacities; the upgrades that will take place as part of the VoIP pilot program will similarly improve the capacity of data across campus. The deployment of new, more powerful firewalls has allowed the University to increase bandwidth for students in the residence halls and academic buildings. Funding has been adequate to maintain core IT services, both hardware and software for staff and students.

Projection

Scope and Adequacy: Physical Resources
Classroom space will continue to improve over time through the University’s physical and technology planning efforts. All new classrooms are designed in compliance with the classroom design standards established following the 2002 evaluation of classroom space and include a standard technology package.
as well as flexible furniture. As space and funding become available, the University will expand available classroom space in an effort to achieve optimum levels. Renovations of Goddard Hall and the Communication Building scheduled for 2014 will help to address the need for additional classroom space. The Fine Arts Instructional Facility will provide a badly-needed upgrade to the classroom, studio, and performance space needs in the Visual and Performing Arts, and will also make way for new uses of Shafer Hall. Design work on the Fine Arts Instructional Facility was scheduled to begin in the summer of 2010, but has been delayed while awaiting the arrival of CSUS 2020 funding. If that funding is not delayed for too long, construction could start as early as Fall 2012. The Master Plan update includes provisions for a Technology/Classroom building that will allow the University to close any gap between the amount of available classroom space and the levels called for in the Program for the Master Plan; this building is estimated to be constructed in 2021.

Scope and Adequacy: Technological Resources
Although the University’s Master Plan does not directly address some of the shortfalls in the technological infrastructure, the Facilities Department, System Office and ITS are working through various avenues to correct shortfalls in the technology base. Through CSUS 2020, bond funding is available to close the internet loop on campus and provide a second entry point for internet services. The System Office has released additional funding for firewall upgrades through a collaborative distributive model, where ITS staff at the four CSU campuses collaborate on a solution and the System Office provides funding and contract guidance.

As buildings are built and renovated on campus, the Master Plan and Minor Capitol Funds will provide some relief for infrastructure shortfalls in data closets, power generation, and wireless technology. This process has begun with the assessment of the data closets in preparation for deploying VoIP system. The Communication Building data center replacement project has been designed and funded and is under construction. This has been a priority project for Facilities, ITS, and the University. The data center will consist of two separate centers, one housed on the fifth floor of the Science Building will be funded with the remaining project money from the building telecom fund. This center will act as the primary data center, while the current data center in the Communication Building will act as the backup.

Classroom technology is generously funded per the CSU Bond Fund at $139,500 annually. The University has adequate technology fees to augment this fund if necessary to maintain current classroom technology to ensure the core teaching mission. ITS is working with Fiscal Affairs to allocate more of the technology fee to the acquisition and maintenance of student and academic related technologies. This is the result of a collaborative and well planned technology effort by the two offices. In addition, CSUS 2020 will provide consistent funding for the University. From CSU 2020 funds the University has leveraged its investment and used infrastructure Bond Funds to correct the deficiencies in the Data Center, telecommunications closets, and student network.

Compliance and Sustainability: Physical Resources
Eastern will continue its policy of strict compliance with applicable codes and guidelines and will maintain its emphasis on conservation and sustainability. LEED certification and other green building methods will continue to be used and will result in environmentally appropriate buildings. While LEED certification (and other alternative certifications like it) continues to cost approximately one million dollars for major construction projects, verifying that the University’s buildings meet these high standards supports Eastern’s core values and mission.

Planning: Physical Resources
Together, Eastern’s 2009 Master Plan, the 2008-13 Strategic Plan, and CSUS 2020 provide a framework for planning enhancements to the campus. Circumstances may at times dictate some temporary departures from the timelines identified in those plans: some projects contingent upon CSUS 2020
funding may have to be delayed, while others may be moved ahead. Construction of residence halls, for
instance, is funded through CHEFA Bonds that do not require Bond Commission action, meaning that
some residence hall projects may begin earlier than anticipated.

Planning: Technological Resources
The planning and resource allocation process and the Strategic Plan provide sound guidance to the CIO
and ITS staff in the prioritization of projects, funding, and use of equipment. Though there are shortfalls
in identifying specific ITS infrastructure requirements in the Physical Master Plan, the Director of
Facilities is working to add critical infrastructure requirements into ongoing Facilities Plans and future
expansion. A prime example of this is the design and development of a new Data Center to support the
campus infrastructure. The ITS components of the University’s Strategic Plan clearly outline the
directions that technology will take on Eastern’s campus over the next 5 years. The creation of a Senate
committee on ITS matters will ensure that important steps and investments are thoroughly vetted,
increasing the transparency of technological decision-making and helping ITS managers to determine
priorities for resource allocation. Recent increases in enrollment have increased funding generated by the
student technology fee. These funds will ensure that technological resources at Eastern are adequate and
modern even if state funding for higher education decreases.

Integrity and Security: Technological Resources
Based on its assessments each calendar year, ITS makes operational and procedural changes to increase
the effectiveness of policies and procedures designed to ensure the integrity of systems and data. An
example of this process is the University’s policy on securing sensitive data and software controls. ITS
provides continuous improvement of services to ensure system availability and data integrity. The CSU
System has selected products from Juniper Networks to replace systems from Check Point Software
Technologies, and new Juniper border firewalls were purchased in FY 2009. These new firewalls have
sufficient capacity to support higher Internet connection speeds and have dedicated Intrusion Detection
Service solutions built in.

Eastern is currently building new server rooms with backup power generation, suitable UPS, and proper
cooling. This project began during FY 2010 with funding from the state bond commission. Eastern ITS
is, moreover, in the middle of a server virtualization project that will reduce server room environmental
needs and decrease server replacement costs. ITS is working on a project to enable software-based
firewalls on all servers as well as desktop computers. ITS hopes to add to this remote functionality for all
members of the campus community by deploying Luminis as a communications portal. This web based
tool will complement the existing services universally available to the institution.

Institutional Effectiveness
Eastern’s physical resources have been evaluated through the Master Plan and Strategic Plan processes
and have improved significantly over the last ten years through construction and renovation. Though
there are deficiencies in instructional facilities for the arts and in the Sports Center and shortages of
student housing, the campus otherwise offers students and faculty member’s physical and technological
resources commensurate with the University’s mission. The operating budget for the physical plant has
not kept pace with the physical growth of the campus, however, dropping from $2.06 per square foot in
2001 to $1.29 per square foot in 2009.

Technological resources available to students, faculty, and administration support their needs. ITS offers
high levels of service, training, and support for administrative and instructional functions. ITS is
implementing a set of assessment strategies based on the Information Technology plan that was
developed as part of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan. Deficiencies related to desirable redundancies and
back-up systems are being addressed.
Standard Nine: Financial Resources

Description

Eastern Connecticut State University, one of the four institutions in the Connecticut State University System, manages its financial resources with well-structured accounting and financial reporting systems consistent with the financial and budget requirements established by the CSU Board of Trustees. The University and the CSU System utilize SunGard’s BANNER integrated systems for managing accounting, budgeting, accounts payable and receivable, purchasing and fixed assets. Payroll and human resources programs are managed on the State Comptroller’s Core-CT system and posted via general ledger to the BANNER System. These sets of fiscal functions are integrated with related functions in BANNER’s student module for academic support, admissions, financial aid, and student support services.

A single Operating Fund is employed for the management of the primary University revenues and expenditures. It receives the state's appropriation; tuition payments and fees from all students; continuing education fees; payments for housing, food service, and other auxiliary services; grants and contracts; and interest earnings and miscellaneous receipts. Certain specified resources are managed in an Institutional General Welfare Fund and a Student Activity Fund. The latter is an agency fund. A Bond and Interagency Fund is used for management of funding for capital projects and other minor special projects. The University manages its own check writing for all nonpayroll accounts. The state comptroller handles the check writing for the Bond and Interagency Fund accounts and payroll.

The University organizes the fiscal functions of accounting and financial reporting, cash management, and payroll function under the university controller, overseen by the associate vice president and managed within the area of the vice president for finance and administration. The associate vice president for finance and administration prepares annual budget and Spending Plan documents, performs budget monitoring, and provides budget support services.

Appraisal

Financial Stability

The University works diligently to achieve and maintain its financial stability. In FY 09, both full-time enrollment and housing occupancy reached record levels. At year end, a positive operating budget was achieved, and net income of $1.2 million was generated from operations and non-operating sources. The University continues adherence to its FY09 spending controls with equal discipline in FY 10. While the University’s updated Spending Plan forecasted solid revenue and expense budgeting through the end of the year, in fact last quarter estimates show that the University’s fund balances will fall well within the limits for fund balances as set by the CSU Board of Trustees. The CSU Board requires each university to maintain an unrestricted fund balance at between 5 percent and 7 percent of a university’s total budgeted educational and general expenditures and auxiliary services expenditures for the current fiscal year. Guidelines are also established for plant fund reserves. Eastern’s FY 10’s planned transfers to reserves will consist of: an unrestricted contribution to reserves; a set-aside for debt service pre-financing; upcoming increases for state-negotiated wage rates for FY 12; and a contribution to a plant fund reserve. In addition, a positive net income is also anticipated.

Since the University’s last re-accreditation in 2000, the CSUS Board of Trustees has made significant strides in making substantive changes to its distribution methodology for budgeting the annual state allocation to the four universities. In each case, the funding refinements have particularly benefitted Eastern and the next smallest university.
For FY 06, the Board amended the distribution formula by making a slight increase to the Institutional Base portion of the formula and guaranteed that any “new facility” allocation by the state for O&M for newly-constructed administrative and academic buildings would be budgeted in perpetuity to the university where the new buildings were located.

In its next subsequent resolutions to further amend the funding methodology again with particular benefit to Eastern and Western, the other small university, the Board again increased the amounts for off-the-top equal shares to cover common overhead expenses for Institutional Base allocations; and more important, the Board changed its practice of assessing cost sharing of System Office and system-wide expenses, whereby now the shares are based on each university’s proportion of the System’s full-time equivalent of full-time students. Prior practice was that each university bore one-fourth of the costs.

In another major initiative beginning in FY 10, the System re-calculated how best to assess each university for annual debt service expenses for certain residence halls and garages built in the most recent years. In the new methodology, CSUS now pays a portion of the debt service from a system-wide CHEFA financing reserve, leaving each university to pay only 80 percent of their prior CHEFA debt service share. For Eastern, savings began in FY 10 with a $1.150 million reduction, to be followed at an approximate level of $1.0 million in each following year.

Eastern relies on a combination of state support, tuition revenue, and mandated fees for its Education and General budget in the General Fund. These revenue sources provide primary support for instruction and academic support, along with student services, operation of most plant functions, and other institutional overheads. Eastern’s total campus budget also incorporates auxiliary enterprises and restricted funds. Operating incomes from the auxiliary enterprises, net after transfers to plant reserves, are devoted to funding academic and support programs. The same is true of the major sources of income in the Other Revenue category (includes grants, commissions, and interest income).

Tuition rates at all levels and the University Fee rate are set identically for all four institutions by the CSUS Board of Trustees. The Board also sets other rates, differing slightly from one institution to another, for the University General Fee, extension fees (part-time rates for summer and intersession courses), and housing and board fees. The current cost for Eastern’s tuition and mandatory fees is $7,813 for a Connecticut resident taking undergraduate courses on a full-time basis. The cost is $17,505 for an undergraduate from out-of-state.

| Table I: Revenue Profiles (FY 1999 through FY 2009) |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1999 | 2004 | 2009 |
| State Appropriations | $22,993,596 | 49.89% | $31,754,823 | 32.15% | $41,022,565 | 35.83% |
| Tuition & Fees | 13,800,132 | 29.94% | 25,142,337 | 25.45% | 35,616,783 | 31.11% |
| Auxiliary Revenues | 7,617,665 | 16.53% | 13,136,050 | 13.30% | 21,843,671 | 19.08% |
| Other | 1,677,526 | 3.64% | 28,750,804 | 29.10% | 16,011,799 | 13.98% |
| | 46,088,919 | 100.00% | 98,784,014 | 100.00% | 114,494,818 | 100.00% |

Connecticut’s annual appropriation to the CSUS is allocated at the System level. Some funds are specially designated, such as those for legislatively-mandated programs, operation of new facilities, and a common amount of Institutional Base funds for each university to cover administrative costs they all share. However, the largest portion of the state’s allocation is divided based on each university’s proportion of the full-time equivalent of all full-time students in the CSUS.
Eastern Connecticut State University’s total operating revenues, combined along with the state allocation and private and federal grants, increased in the decade from FY 99 through FY 09 by almost 250 percent, from $46.1 million to $114.5 million. Though the state portion of this total revenue increased over the decade, it did so at a slightly slower rate of growth. The state portion of total revenues dropped from 50 percent to 36 percent by FY 09. Its portion of Eastern’s total revenues dropped primarily because Eastern’s Housing revenues increased markedly as several new residence halls were opened during this period.

Over the decade, enrollment headcounts increased by 12.5 percent. More significant is that credit hours increased by 25 percent, primarily due to the fact that full-time students were becoming predominant, increasing from 69 percent to 79 percent while part-time counts were decreasing from 31 percent to 21 percent of the student population. The shifts in headcounts are significant: by the end of FY 09, 91 percent of all credit hours were being generated by full-time students, the population for which state funds are allotted. By FY 09, Eastern’s record levels of FTE counts of full-time students generated $41.02 million in state funds.

To accommodate this consistent and compelling growth in its full-time student population, Eastern expanded its housing inventory. Within the seven-year period from fall 1998 through fall 2006, Eastern built 550 beds for first-year undergraduates and 640 for upperclassmen. In FY 09, Eastern generated net earnings of $4.75 million from Housing and the Meal Plan programs. Their net incomes are channeled to support academic, institutional, and student support programs. In the current year, the net income figure is anticipated to jump to $6.33 million. Part of the increase relates to the current over-demand for Housing and part to a recent System-wide initiative to absorb 20 percent of Housing debt obligations from a CSU set-aside debt reserve fund.

Table II shows the levels of University spending in FY 09 as contrasted with spending in FY 99. By IPEDS categories, spending for Instruction, Research, Public Service, and Academic Support grew from $20.39 million by a 103 percent increase to $41.47 million in FY 09. In this last decade, the University added 800,000 gross square feet in new facilities, a 200 percent increase in its plant investment that has significantly transformed the campus. Academic programs and library services have particularly been enhanced by the opening of the new J. Eugene Smith Library and classroom training room in FY 99, the opening of the academic wing of the Margaret S. Wilson Child and Family Development Resource Complex, and completion of the new 173,000 square foot Science Building for start of the fall 2008 semester.
<table>
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<th>1999 %</th>
<th>2009 Amount</th>
<th>2009 %</th>
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<td>100.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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Beginning in Fiscal Year 2009, the severity of the state’s revenue shortfalls prompted the Governor to institute two budget rescissions, impose out-of-state travel restrictions, declare a hiring freeze, create a retirement incentive program, and order cuts in vehicle fleet sizes and printing programs. While the hiring freeze precluded the University from filling a number of non-teaching positions, the University has been able to hire full-time and adjunct faculty as necessary. It should be noted that new full-time faculty appointments are primarily being made on a temporary basis until the state’s economy recovers and budgetary constraints are lifted.

**Spending Plan**

The University maintains its resources focused on the institution’s mission. CSUS’s mandated tuition and fees, housing rates, and board charges have been established assertively each year. Eastern’s operating incomes from auxiliary enterprises, net after transfers to plant reserves, are entirely budgeted to support the academic and support programs. The same is true of the major sources of income in the Other Revenue category (including commissions, indirect costs, interest income, etc.).

The Connecticut State University System Board of Trustees establishes guidelines and the timetable for the Spending Plan methodology. A tuition and fee exercise begins almost a year before the July 1 start up each fiscal year. While the System establishes general guidelines, each university submits its own rate increase requests for its housing and food service programs for resident students; the extension fee requests for Continuing Education intersession and summer courses; and also for the University General Fee which supports such programs as various Student Services, shuttle bus, intercollegiate and intramurals, and a number of related ancillary programs.

In the Board-directed Spending Plan process, each university provides a narrative account on the status of achievement of its vital goals. Prepared by members of the President’s executive staff, the narrative addresses institutional effectiveness in each area and identifies adjustments in spending priorities. The Board of Trustees approves the universities’ spending plans following the enactment of a state budget by the General Assembly. In the course of a budget year, the System staff prepares an analysis on a quarterly basis of expenditures at each university. At mid-year, each university documents its current spending patterns and trends and compares them with actual expenditures in the prior year. Changes in the Spending Plan require Board approval.
Budget Process
By the date of initiation of each new budget year, the University has established guidelines for spending policies, mostly related to an inflation factor, or for a standard reduction, depending on the positive or negative changes in the size of the state appropriation or tuition and fee rate increases being anticipated. The university provides each senior manager and director with a base-line allocation for each account in his/her responsibility area. These managers recommend shifts in their base-line allocations for operating expenses and part-time staff, recommend new initiatives and identify additional funding needs, and prioritize equipment requests. Vice presidents and the chief information officer conduct internal budget reviews with their respective directors, prior to their submitting their budget recommendations to the Budget Office and the President. In turn, the President conducts hearings with each vice president to review their requests, goal-achievement schedules, new enrollment initiatives, and the University’s contingency account before finalizing the University’s full budget. Significant grant funds and some re-assigned University funds are designated to fund Strategic Plan initiatives that are prioritized for each year’s implementation in phased or sequential order.

The University Senate is briefed regularly about the institution’s budget status by both the President and the Vice President for Finance and Administration. There is a separate Senate Budget and Resource Allocation Committee. Since Fiscal Year 2009, an Ad Hoc Budget Advisory Committee, created by the President to solicit input from representatives from each labor union and by constituencies, has joined with the President and budget managers to communicate to the University community about budget challenges and savings initiatives. The Committee has helped initiate measures to counterbalance the rescissions and restrictions imposed by the state and to propose curbs to spending wherever practical and prudent.

The state’s Board of Governors’ policy is that a minimum of 15 percent of an institution’s tuition receipts be devoted to financial aid. It has been Eastern’s practice to exceed this level of support. In FY 10, the University funds 17.3 percent of its tuition receipts to the financial aid budget and plans to fund the same level of support in FY 11. The CSU Board of Trustees requires documentation of these aid allocations in each CSUS university’s annual and mid-year Spending Plan filings. Financial aid formulations and program descriptions are well documented and monitored.

Planning for capital projects is guided by the CSU System Office. Projects to be financed by the Connecticut general obligation bonds are presently prioritized in a 2020 Capital Budget Plan. Financing for residence halls, student centers and dining halls is managed through the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority bonding. CSUS periodically solicits universities’ requests for major and minor projects of these types as it periodically updates its Five-Year Capital Project lists. In recent years, certain housing projects and student-funded garages have been separately financed by each university that declared compelling need for such projects. On campus, the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Office of Facilities Management and Planning provide staff assistance to the President in the development of the University’s capital project requests in accordance with the outline prescribed by the Master Plan updated in October 2008.

Financial Management and Reporting
Eastern’s BANNER integrated information system operates at the most current level of upgrade. Fiscal Affairs manages its financial application to provide oversight and compliance enhancement in accounting, payables, receivables, travel, payroll, budgeting, grants management, and financial aid. In purchasing, on-line requisitions accelerate typical processing of orders. In budgeting, directors use on-line account information to verify expenditures, encumbrances, and budget balances; and to view monthly spending summaries. The Budget Office operates an expenditure reporting and variance
recognition process, to notify fiscal managers of potential budget problems in their accounts and require a plan for correcting a potential overdraft.

The University employs supplemental software systems to manage students’ retail purchases in food services, laundry, bookstore, copying, vending, and off-campus merchant programs. Beginning in FY 11, the University is planning to upgrade its software license in order to provide on-line billings and refunds on student accounts.

**Fundraising Efforts**

The ECSU Foundation, Inc. was incorporated in 1971 as a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization. The audited financial statements ending June 30, 2009, showed total net assets of $13,970,360, compared to total net assets of $14,866,363 at the close of FY 2008. FY 09 assets designated to the Foundation included temporarily restricted net assets of $3,912,955; permanently restricted net assets of $11,253,649; and total unrestricted net assets of ($1,196,244). Total funds raised by the ECSU Foundation during FY 09 were $2,183,346. The annual fund over the same period was $1,330,940.

Fundraising costs are charged to support expense on the statement of activities. There is no charge back to the foundation for services provided by the university, except for an annual rental fee for space. These service arrangements are defined in the Agreement between the Board of Trustees and the ECSU Foundation, Inc. in 1989, Board resolution #93-81. Trust Company of Connecticut provides investment services for the foundation. Bank of America and the Savings Institute Bank & Trust Company also provide banking services to the foundation. The foundation’s auditors follow current FASB guidelines 116 and 117. As required by the Board of Trustees, the foundation is audited annually.

In FY09, the foundation distributed $254,550 to the University, the majority for student support for academic scholarships and standard annual support for the President’s discretion. In FY10, 268 students have been notified of their award amounts from the $330,000 scholarship program established for upcoming FY 11; this award surpasses the $300,000 mark for the first time ever. Nearly 80 percent of the applicants received an award. Also, in FY09, the foundation’s largest fundraising event, the annual Golf Tournament at Lake of Isles in North Stonington, raised $83,200.

The Alumni Association operates as a separately incorporated entity, with oversight by a Board of Directors, and a treasury that is maintained separately from the University and the ECSU Foundation. Primary sources of revenue include royalties and fees from contractual agreements with affinity partners (Bank of America and Liberty Mutual Insurance), and direct payments from the ECSU Foundation itself. Since 2003, the Alumni Association no longer has direct fundraising responsibilities; that is the primary function of the Development Office. Major annual expenses include those for alumni reunions (300 guests annually at all events), alumni receptions and networking events (500 guests annually at all events), and for production and distribution of the annual commencement DVD to approximately 500 seniors each year. The Alumni Association is committed to engaging more alumni to become involved with the university, through making gifts to the annual fund, through providing experiential learning opportunities for students, or through social and professional networking among alumni.

**Audits**

A number of agencies and firms are employed to perform the audit function. PricewaterhouseCoopers prepares CSUS’s annual financial audit in accordance with established standards, audits the internal control structure and security measures in information technology systems, prepares the annual financial statements, and recommends procedural improvements in its Management Letter. The President’s staff reviews the Management Letter, and the auditor’s recommendations are implemented as appropriate. The State Auditors of Public Accounts routinely audit program operations, financial aid, and intercollegiate athletics.
The CSUS internal audit unit appraises CSUS activities at the behest of the Board of Trustees and its executive and audit committees in fulfilling the Board’s fiduciary responsibilities. Internal Audit aims to review financial and operating activities at the universities, analyzes their internal controls and procedures, and recommends corrective measures to administrators and operating managers. The Board hires a private, independent firm to audit all expenditures by the System and the universities for project and equipment spending authorized under the CSUS 2020 legislation, which will fund $950 million over a ten-year period for classroom and related plant improvements. The ECSU Foundation, Inc. separately hires a private, independent accounting firm to audit and render an opinion on the Foundation’s finances.

Projection

Eastern anticipates that in the immediate future, significant positive shifts will continue to occur in its revenue base. Concerning any refinements to the System’s methodology for allocating the state’s funding allotment, there appears to be a growing System-level acknowledgement that periodic adjustments to the Institutional Facilities Base will continue to be made so the smaller universities can offset a greater measure of their diseconomies of scale. The Base’s definition includes administrative, overhead, academic and student support programs, athletic management, and plant O&M obligations that are common fixed costs, no matter what a university’s enrollment is. Currently, the formula provides each university the same amount, $6.6 million, as an off-the-top Base allocation before the balance of state funds is apportioned on the basis of FTE of full-time students. Eastern anticipates future Board actions to increase the Institutional Base to an anticipated higher target will provide it with compounding financial benefits in each subsequent annual allocation of the state funds.

CSUS’s reductions in assessment for CHEFA debt service created significant savings for Eastern initially in FY 10 and is forecasted to continue in all future budgets. The annual savings of approximately $1.0 million will help Eastern to absorb some portion of project financing if new and replacement housing can be built to accommodate the growing enrollments of first-year and transfer students in the years ahead.

Housing and co-related auxiliary enterprises will continue to generate notable net incomes that Eastern will devote to help fund its core academic missions. These net incomes are projected to increase at a quickening pace now that debt assessments for the most recent housing project are guaranteed to remain constant hereafter.

On the expenditure side, until the state’s economy rebounds and state allocations for the CSUS are restored to their prior levels, Eastern expects to continue its hiring freeze on most vacant positions. However, faculty hires, both full-time and adjunct, will continue at required pace, to insure that course scheduling and availability of supplemental course sections meet the demands of anticipated enrollment levels. Moreover, Eastern will continue to maintain consistent budget constraints on its operating expenses, service contracts, and energy consumption in order to absorb its share of current state budget cuts and to achieve its set-asides and increased reserves in both FY 10 and FY 11.

As it improves its economizing and budgeting restraints, Eastern is making earnest efforts to insure its future operating budgets remain in check. Resultant savings from these measures will enable Eastern to continue developing important reserves in both the current fund and the plant fund, sufficient in contingency to offset unforeseeable circumstances that could occur. These contingency funds will be particularly important if the state further cuts allocations to its higher education components in the next biennial budget to begin in FY 12.

Institutional Effectiveness

To safeguard University financial stability and insure that its financial processes are conducted with high standards of integrity, Eastern employs appropriate internal controls to record, monitor, and report all
financial processing. They are designed to insure the institution’s compliance with state and federal laws, regulations established by the state’s enforcement agencies, financial policies established by the CSUS’s Board of Trustees, and GASB-established accounting standards. The University’s senior executives are required to file an annual Statement of Financial Interests with the state’s Board of Ethics. All audits are conducted by agencies external to Eastern: PricewaterhouseCoopers, the state’s Auditors of Public Accounts, an independent firm for the CSUS’s 2020 Capital Budgets, and the CSUS Board of Trustees’ Office of Internal Audit.

Eastern’s financial reports, spending plans, and capital projects’ budgets are regularly reviewed by Eastern’s financial managers with the System Office’s finance staff and the Board of Trustees’ committees overseeing these respective areas of financial responsibility. The University’s managers and executives collaborate to insure corrective actions are initiated when deficiencies are noted and when new software upgrades can be introduced internally to enhance financial systems.
Standard Ten: Public Disclosure

Description

Communications and Dissemination Information
Eastern Connecticut State University is committed to ensuring that students, prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, public officials, taxpayers, and other University constituencies have complete, accurate and up-to-date information about the university’s educational programs, activities, and services. The University believes its mission as a public liberal arts university brings with it a responsibility to meet the educational needs of students from diverse backgrounds and to apprise the public of its programs, services, and activities. As a public institution funded in part by state tax revenues, Eastern feels obliged as well to account for its use of public funds. Through public disclosure, Eastern fosters community awareness of its values, mission, and commitment to Connecticut residents, as well as of its value as an educational resource for students of all ages and backgrounds.

The names and positions of administrative officers are included in the catalog, President’s Annual Report, Student Handbook, and the University website. The members of the Board of Trustees are listed in the catalog and in the President’s Annual Report. Contact information for general and specific inquiries can be found throughout Eastern’s website. General phone/web information about the University also can be found in all publications and advertisements. The University complies with all reasonable requests for publications and information within its governing guidelines. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research and the Office of University Relations cooperate in complying with appropriate requests for information.

All of Eastern’s printed materials and electronic media, as well as the University website and other communications reflect the University’s liberal arts mission, authorized by the CSU Board in 1998. Revised in Spring 2007 as part of the University’s strategic planning process, the University’s mission statement reflects Eastern’s role as Connecticut’s public liberal arts university. The revised mission is included in the 2008–13 Strategic Plan and on the University’s website (abridged mission statement). Communications also demonstrate the University’s commitment to diversity, and its pledge to provide truthful, complete information to the public.

Public information materials produced by the University routinely include information concerning the University’s academic programs, admissions procedures, expected educational outcomes, student tuition/fee information, degree requirements, contact information for offices and departments, student rights and responsibilities, and other mission-critical information. In all of its print, video, audio, and electronic media, the University strives for accuracy, transparency, and integrity. Ensuring that information is accurate and current is a collaborative effort of the Office of University Relations; the Office of Planning and Institutional Research; and client offices such as the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management; the Schools of Arts and Sciences, Education and Professional Studies, and Continuing Education; the President’s Office; and others. Indicative of Eastern’s commitment to providing information is the fact that it was an early adopter of the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait.

The current catalog, published in August 2008, spans the two-year period 2008–10. (A new online catalog will be published in June 2010.) The catalog contains educational objectives and expected educational outcomes, along with requirements, procedures, and policies related to admissions and transfer of credits. It contains student fees, charges, and refund policies for both graduate and undergraduate students; information on withdrawal from the institution or individual classes; academic programs and courses currently offered; academic policies and procedures; requirements for degrees and other forms of academic recognition; requirements for graduation; and a current list of faculty indicating departmental or program affiliation, degrees held, and granting institutions. A two-year course
projection in the catalog indicates the semester in which listed courses are available. This course grid is
in direct response to NEASC concerns expressed in the 2000 Self-Study report that some courses
advertised in the catalog had not been offered for two or three years. Departments update these course
projections each time the catalog is revised.

As a resource for current students, the catalog is supplemented by documents like the Student Handbook
and Housing Handbook, which detail important policies and services affecting students’ academic and
personal lives. The Student Handbook includes the academic calendar, contact information on offices
and services available to students, academic standards and procedures, attendance policy, student
conduct policy, the academic grievance procedure, and contact information for academic departments.
The handbook also outlines students’ rights and responsibilities, and the institution’s policy and
procedures in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The catalog and
the Student Handbook present the university’s programs, services, and policies in such a way that
students can make informed decisions about their academic plans. In addition to outlining ground rules
for dorm life, the Housing Handbook provides students with practical information about life on campus
and in Willimantic, and also reminds students of an array of support services available to help them
succeed at Eastern.

The University creates a range of publications to provide information to specific groups, such as
prospective first-time undergraduates, transfer students, international students, nontraditional students,
athletes, and parents. Along with information about the University’s overall academic programs, these
publications include information of particular interest to the targeted population. The Viewbook
provides prospective undergraduate students with information regarding the size and characteristics
of the student body, the campus setting, physical resources, tuition and fees, academic support services, and
co-curricular and nonacademic opportunities. Similar information is provided in condensed form in the
Admissions “Search Piece.” The pocket-sized University Guide (“Fast Facts”) booklet offers a concise
overview of university demographics, budget, facilities, accreditation and other information. Other
Eastern publications that are produced to assist University constituencies include media guides for the
University’s 17 varsity sports teams, the Visitors Guide, “Eastern Returns,” EASTERN Magazine
(the alumni magazine), the Faculty Handbook, Crime Statistics and other Campus Police publications,
and the library newsletter. Care is taken to ensure that each publication appeals to its audience, and that all
information is accurate, and presented clearly.

Increasingly, Eastern uses its website to provide comprehensive, up-to-date information at the University.
All major publications (including all of those mentioned above) are now accessible on the website in
PDF format. The entire website was redesigned in 2006–07, with a common architecture and
navigational hierarchy, as well as easily accessible links to calendars, course information, and other
important, student-centered data. The website also contains information on admissions procedures,
tuition, and fees, as well as current information for each academic department, support service, and
administrative office. Online applications and online registration, virtual tours, and an online
faculty/staff newsletter are other enhancements to Eastern’s website. Overall, the website is designed for
user convenience. In addition to prominent locations for popular information (calendar, schedule of
classes, admissions, etc.) and the common template, key constituencies have their own portals, i.e.
Current Students (“MyECSU”), Faculty/Staff, Prospective Students, etc. In addition, the Office of
Planning and Institutional Research (PIR) website also provides demographic information on Eastern’s
student body.

Eastern’s goals for students are published in print and/or online in the form of broad statements, such as
those at the Admissions web page and in more detail related to the goals of the Liberal Arts Core and for
specific majors. Information on retention, graduation, and other measures of student success is available
at the Office of Planning and Institutional Research web site in a number of reports (for example, this
report on One, Two, and Three Year Retention Rates, in the Common Data Sets, and in the Voluntary System of Accountability College Portrait. Information on the total cost of education is available at the Office of Planning and Institutional Research website via the Common Data Set as is information on student indebtedness.

Academic department pages all have the same organization, including faculty/staff information (including part-time faculty), information on all majors/programs of study, and links to current course descriptions from the Banner system. This web-enabling of Banner data allows for the same course/program data that is found in print publications to be accessed on the web. Users can see which faculty members are teaching what classes each semester, and current enrollment levels in real time. Archival data for past semesters is also available online.

Accountability and Transparency
Statements that appear in University publications and other documents disseminated by the Office of University Relations are derived from information provided a number of departments in the University, including the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Admissions, and others. Accurate and explicitly worded statements about the University’s current accredited status are contained on the University’s website and in the University catalog. Publications are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Care is taken to ensure that all information in each publication is complete, accurate, and current. The website is also reviewed frequently for currency of data and information. Publications produced independently of the Office of University Relations may or may not have valid documentation available. Eastern is implementing procedures for complying with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) requirement that a list of all required and recommended books and other course materials for all classes offered at the institution be posted.

Appraisal
The University has made a number of improvements related to public disclosure since the 2000 reaccreditation report. These include providing contact information for part-time faculty on academic department web pages, adding information on sabbaticals on websites, adding names of Board of Trustees members on the President’s Annual Reports and expanding Eastern’s website content.

Communications and Dissemination of Information
The catalog, Student Handbook, Viewbook, search piece, targeted admissions publications, continuing education and graduate course schedules, President’s Annual Report, EASTERN (the alumni magazine), print ads, videos, and other major publications are comprehensive and carefully written, and are designed to ensure that target audiences are provided with complete, easy-to-read information. These documents are updated on a regular basis and reviewed carefully for accuracy. Input from faculty, staff, students, and persons outside the University community helps to ensure that information is complete and accurate. To further promote accuracy and consistency, the Office of Planning and Institutional Research is consulted on a regular basis for current statistics about the University and its students.

The Office of University Relations works closely with other University units to maintain consistent style, messages, and accuracy of information in Eastern publications. In order to promote more consistent visual/graphic and written standards, the Office of University Relations has published a Written Style Guide and a Graphic Standards Manual and posted both to the office’s web pages. In addition, briefings on the two resources have occurred with all academic chairs and with administrative departments. While most publications are routed through the Office of University Relations, some departments produce publications independently. In these instances, the accuracy and timeliness of information cannot always be confirmed. The University also provides server space for faculty members’ own personal pages, whose contents and design are the purview of individual faculty.
The Office of University Relations also administers the University’s media relations function through the office’s public relations staff, and has extensive contacts with local, statewide, regional, and national news media, including print, radio, and television news outlets. The Office of University Relations strives to ensure that the University mission is reflected in its communications with the press. The office also maintains an online Media Guide, which features potential University experts in a variety of subjects.

Producing the University catalog is a cooperative effort, led by the Office of Academic Affairs, with input, updating, and review by all deans, department chairs, and administrative offices of the University. Ten years ago, in consideration of cost efficiencies, the University instituted a two-year publication cycle for the catalog, which had previously been printed annually. The catalog includes a two-year projection for planning student schedules, and some majors show the full four-year sequence. For the most part, courses listed in the catalog are being taught within the covered two- and four-year periods. Of 176 active undergraduate courses not offered in the 2006–08 period but listed in the 2008–10 catalog, 62 are being offered over the 2008–10 period, 21 are being offered by arrangement, and 62 are offered as needed. Only 13 of 176 are not currently planned to be offered over the next two years. On the graduate level, of 41 similar courses, five are being offered, eight others are being offered by arrangement, and 28 can be offered as needed. Course schedules, produced three times a year by the School of Continuing Education and Office of Graduate Programs in cooperation with the Registrar’s Office, also contain current information about new programs and tuition.

The Viewbook, produced by the Office of University Relations in conjunction with the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management, with input from other university units, includes current information for prospective undergraduates. The University established a four-year design cycle for the Viewbook in 1996, wherein the second through fourth years of the cycle used the same design introduced in year one, with copy/photo updates. Due to budget constraints, the most recent viewbook was used for six years rather than the desired four, but a new Viewbook is currently being designed and will be available for Fall 2010.

Inevitably, print production schedules sometimes result in out-of-date information appearing in print publications. Several publications (including the catalog and the alumni directory) were being reprinted at the time the University’s mission statement was being revised, for instance, and will include the new statement in their next editions. The new mission statement is found on the University’s web site, however, which is symptomatic of the ways that the web site has increasingly become the most current and accurate source of up-to-date information about Eastern—a fact that students, faculty, and the general public have largely come to take for granted.

Information that changes during the catalog’s two-year production cycle, for instance, is easily updated on the University’s website, avoiding the need for mid-cycle printed inserts. Information about noncredit programs is updated regularly at the School of Continuing Education web site, and the online course schedule reflects the most current and accurate information about sections being offered. Likewise, each academic department’s website features detailed information on the majors offered by that department, including the courses required for the major and any preferred course sequence, along with links to the course description and the semester course schedule databases found in Banner. Department web sites also include contact information for all faculty members (including part-time and temporary faculty, who are not routinely listed in print publications) and current information concerning faculty on sabbatical or other leave.

In recognition of the ways that students, faculty, and the public have come increasingly to turn to the University’s web site as a source of current information, the catalog for AY 2010-11 will be published in its entirety online, with sections (including those on Academic Policies and Procedures) distributed in
print. Archived copies of catalogs back to 2002 are currently available online and this procedure for providing access to prior catalogs will continue. Similarly, as of the 2009-10 academic year, the Student Handbook is available online only. Compiled and updated by the Division of Student Affairs, the Student Handbook is both a contract with students and an information resource about activities, services, policies, and responsibilities. More and more, students turn instinctively to the University’s web site for such information, obviating the need for a print publication.

Although the University’s web site is extensive in content and recognized by students and others as fairly easy to navigate, some web pages on Eastern’s site are not updated as frequently as would be ideal. To address the NEASC 2000 visiting team’s recommendation to hire a full-time webmaster, the Office of University Relations hired two part-time web designers to assist in migrating the University’s web site to its new design template. In addition, website maintenance is supported by staff from ITS, Continuing Education, Admissions and other departments and offices. Rather than purchase a proprietary Content Management System (CMS), Eastern developed its own solution and has a standard template that includes locked content areas, along with areas on each page that can be populated and updated by staff who do not need a high degree of technical training. In this way, after the Office of University Relations designs each site, departments can maintain their own pages. Since 2006, more than 60 departments have been upgraded to the new template. Existing staffing is challenged to keep up with the ongoing demand for new content and new webpage designs, and even more so with the demand for newer technologies that are becoming increasingly common online (such as RSS feeds, podcasts, streaming video, and integration with social networks like Facebook and Twitter). Though some of these more dynamic features have begun to filter into the sites of various departments and centers, the University’s web site does not incorporate new technologies of this sort as fully as it could.

The Media Services Department assists university departments in producing videos and other media presentations to promote their programs and services, and has recently created an extensive digital warehouse of streaming videos (student creativity, events, performances, promotions). Another vehicle used to communicate information about the University is Eastern’s cable TV station, Channel 22. Several student-run television programs highlight campus news, and can be viewed on the Charter cable system in the local service area. Media Services also maintains an iTunes site.

Accountability and Transparency
The Office of Planning and Institutional Research (PIR) offers the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) each spring to freshmen and seniors; senior data is included on the College Portrait Voluntary System of Accountability website. Systematic assessment of academic programs is conducted through the Academic Program Review Committee and the University Assessment Committee. Data indicating the achievement of mission-critical institutional goals, including retention and graduation rates, can be found on the Office of Planning and Institutional Research website, as well as on the Voluntary System of Accountability website.

The University makes every effort to respond in a timely manner to reasonable requests for publications and for information, within the limitations of the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which prohibits releasing student records without student consent. Because Eastern is a public institution, much of the information about the university is available through Freedom of Information statutes. The most recent audited financial statements can be obtained through the University's Office of Administration and Finance, the Connecticut State University System Office, and the Office of the State Auditors. Budget information is also found on the Office of Fiscal Affairs website.

The University indicates in its catalog and other recruitment materials that it is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Major university publications undergo regular revision.
The catalog, reviewed by every department on campus, is updated every two years. The Student Handbook, Housing Handbook, view book, search piece, graduate and continuing education course schedules are updated yearly. The President’s Annual Report of Donors produced by the Office of Institutional Advancement, and the President’s Annual Report, which is based on each department's annual report, are new each year. In addition, the University maintains frequent, ongoing communications with alumni through the Office of Alumni Affairs, which uses its website, events, and the alumni magazine — EASTERN — to stay in contact with alumni.

Request for Comment
In the spirit of open communications and full public disclosure, and in keeping with NEASC policy, a request for third-party comment regarding Eastern Connecticut State University’s 2010 Self-Study and the upcoming fall 2010 NEASC Site Visit is being published in several local newspapers, in the campus newspaper, and in Eastern’s alumni magazine.

Projection
Communications and Dissemination of Information
Visual, print, and audio materials contain information about the institution that is complete, accurate, and clear. Although the two-year cycle of the catalog has resulted in problems with the timeliness of some information, other publications, produced more often, provide current information for students. The online catalog will be updated annually beginning in Fall 2010, alleviating many of the difficulties created by the comparative “slowness” of print publication.

The University’s web site will never displace printed materials entirely from Eastern’s communications, of course. Historically, Eastern’s Viewbook has been redesigned every four years, but current budget constraints have forced the University to extend the Viewbook’s production cycle to six years. As soon as fiscal circumstances permit, the University hopes to return to four-year cycle. While the Viewbook’s primary audience—high school seniors—rolls over each year, secondary audiences such as guidance counselors may not give Eastern’s Viewbook as much attention as they do to publications from institutions that update their designs more frequently, which could compromise the University’s ability to attract prospective students. Keeping the design of its print publications fresh, then, is an important part of the University’s efforts to communicate key messages and information to its core constituencies.

Though print publications will continue to play an important part in the University’s communication efforts, it is clear that Eastern’s web site, if properly maintained, can be positioned as the most current, accurate source of information about Eastern. The University’s web site has made great strides in the past decade, with a great deal of information now available online that wasn’t before, including informative descriptions Eastern’s programs and facilities, its demographics, and the co-curricular and nonacademic opportunities it offers students (e.g. student clubs), as well as all of the information students need to contact their professors, whether full-time or part-time faculty. To better ensure consistency, accuracy, and completeness on the University’s website, however, Eastern hopes to hire a full-time webmaster in the Office of University Relations when fiscal circumstances permit.

Accountability and Transparency
The University will continue to comply with all reasonable requests for publications and information about itself, including its most recent audited financial statements. The university will also continue to be accurate and explicit in regard to its accreditation status. Indeed, Eastern has plans to expand its transparency in such matters. The University’s accreditation status will be added to more publications, including the Student Handbook and the Viewbook, and to more web pages. One strategy under consideration would create a new “About Eastern” page on the web site to present in one place information about Eastern’s accreditation status (using an official, NEASC-approved statement), its mission and core values, and recent awards and recognitions. The University also plans to include the
new mission statement in the next editions of the Alumni Directory, Catalog and Student Handbook, as well as on the back of business cards.

In addition to the Voluntary System of Accountability College Portrait, other repositories of Eastern information include the Banner system, as well as the Planning and Institutional Research website, which maintains two years of College Portrait data and three (soon to be four) years of Common Data Set reports. Each year, accountability reports are provided to the Connecticut State University System Office, the Connecticut Department of Higher Education, and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Additional information that could be added to the University’s key data set includes NSSE reports, full-time equivalencies, etc. As the repository for university information, the Office of Planning and Institutional Research already includes a Request for Service on its website (http://www.easternct.edu/pir). Additional information on cost of education will be provided via a cost calculator that will be posted at the web site of the Office of Financial Aid once a final determination is made about which calculator to use and what figures should be standardized across the CSU campuses.

To enhance reliability of published information, documentation for all statements about achievements of students and faculty should be forwarded to the Office of University Relations, with a courtesy copy to the Office of Institutional Planning and Research, which is the primary source for nonfinancial statistical information for the campus. A new web site has been created that will provide information on faculty publications, presentations, and grants. This will updated semi-annually if not more frequently. The Library, Office of University Relations and Vice President of Academic Affairs will consider the purchase of digital repository software that could be used to provide this information. Information on textbooks has been posted as required by the 2008 HEOA.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Eastern Connecticut State University continues to enhance its communications to its various constituencies and the general public. In particular, it is working to leverage the currency and convenience of the internet to distribute and share important information about the University. In all its communications, Eastern seeks to provide accurate, consistent information on a timely basis and its success in doing so is evaluated through a number of formal and informal processes. The effectiveness of the online student handbook and course catalog will be assessed in 2010-2011.
Standard Eleven: Integrity

Description

Ethical Standards in Management

As a public institution of higher education, Eastern Connecticut State University is bound in the management of its affairs and dealings with students, faculty, staff, external agencies and organizations, and the general public by state and federal statutes. Connecticut General Statutes CGS 1-83 (Ethics Statute) and the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act inform Eastern’s management and administration, and the University is bound, as well, by the provisions of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The Connecticut State University Ethics Statement was developed pursuant to Section 1-83 of the Connecticut General Statutes and is included in the Faculty Handbook.

Workshops for faculty and staff on compliance with FERPA and the state Ethics Statute are conducted periodically by the Executive Vice President. Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act training is required of all staff members with access to student banking and credit card information, including staff in Financial Aid, Admissions, Accounts Payable, the Bursar’s office, Accounting, the Office of the Controller, Card Services, Information Technology, Institutional Advancement, Payroll, Purchasing, Fiscal Affairs, the Registrar’s office, and the offices of the Vice President of Finance and Administration and of the Executive Vice President. Compliance is monitored by the Office of Human Resources. A Financial Aid Code of Conduct was approved by the CSU BOT in 2007.

Standards of conduct in research are overseen by the university’s Research Advisory Council (Committee on the use of Humans Subjects in Research). Together with the Grants Officer, the Council enforces the University’s Policy on Responsible Conduct of Research. In April 2008 a Policy And Procedures For Review Of Alleged Misconduct In Research And Other Scholarly And Creative Activities was passed by the University Senate to ensure that faculty members have a set of clear guidelines for behavior. The Conflict of Interest (Financial Disclosure) Policy, posted at the Grants Office web site, addresses potential financial conflicts. The Office of Fiscal Affairs Accounting and Grants Unit oversees all grant transactions with the goal of “maintaining the integrity of the University's financial data by assuring transactions are processed and recorded properly, efficiently and in accordance with state-mandated guidelines and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).”

Oversight of Board of Trustee Guidelines on Faculty Consulting is by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Reports on compliance are reviewed by state auditors. Faculty are reminded annually about the need to comply with BOT policies on Faculty Consulting and Faculty-Authored Materials. An appointed committee oversees compliance with BOT policies on Faculty-Directed Materials.

Fair and Equitable Relations with Constituencies

Collective bargaining agreements inform the administration of its ethical obligations to faculty and staff.

The University Catalog describes standards for admission, details educational policies and procedures, and outlines students’ rights under the Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The catalog is supplemented by Eastern's Student Handbook, which details the requirements, policies, regulations and procedures that govern Eastern’s relations with students, consistent with FERPA and the CSU Code of Conduct. The Handbook has links to Judicial Policies and Information, the Policy on Academic Misconduct, and the Policy on Appeal by a Student for a Change in a Final Grade.

Eastern’s library staff maintains a web page related to academic honesty, which students are introduced to during Information Literacy sessions. The library’s web site contains links to information about Copyright and Avoiding Plagiarism and includes a page entitled Plagiarism: A Guide for ECSU Students and Faculty. Guidelines in all of these documents ensure that educational policies and procedures are equitably applied to all students.
Free Pursuit and Dissemination of Knowledge
CSU-AAUP (Article 4.2) and State University Organization of Administrative Faculty (SUOAF) (Article 8) collective bargaining agreements include articles that protect academic freedom. The Faculty Handbook notes that questions of intellectual property in inventions and marketable discoveries are governed by CGS 10a-98 through CGS 10a-98f, except as provided by BOT/CSU/AAUP Agreement, Article 10.15 and Appendix E.

The Connecticut State University Student Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook states that, like other academic institutions, “[CSU campuses] exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students and the general well-being of society. In line with this purpose, the university has the duty to protect the freedoms of inquiry and expression and furthermore has the responsibility to encourage all of its members in developing a capacity for critical judgment in their sustained and independent search for truth.”

Charter and Accreditation
Eastern’s academic programs are accredited by the Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education according to Connecticut General Statue 10a-3 Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Learning. Page 8 of the Eastern Catalog states that Eastern is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Nondiscriminatory Policies and Diversity
Eastern Connecticut State University adheres to all federal, state, and CSU policies related to affirmative action, equity and diversity, and non-discrimination. Eastern is committed to educational access, at a reasonable cost, for all students with academic potential. The University’s catalog affirms Eastern’s resolve to foster diversity in the student body and in the University’s faculty and staff, as outlined in the Compliance Statement and the CSU Pluralism Statement.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Enrollment Management and the Graduate Division attempt to ensure that the student population is ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse. Efforts to promote diversity include the Dual Enrollment Initiative, the STEP-CAP program, and Targeted Academic Advising; designated personnel are assigned to provide services to first-generation college students, students from low-income families, and students of color. Several organizations exist on campus to foster an atmosphere that respects and supports people of diverse characteristics and backgrounds. These include the Women’s Center, the Intercultural Center, the West Indian Club, Abigayle, the Pride Room and others.

The Office of Equity and Diversity advises the President and the University community on hiring procedures, affirmative action planning, civil rights, and equity policies. This office is responsible for ensuring the University’s compliance with all federal and state laws, including Title VII and Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, state employment and affirmative action laws (including regulations outlined in CGS Secs. 46a-68-31 to 46a-68-74), the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Family and Medical Leave Act. As a unit of the Connecticut State University system, Eastern also enforces the CSU Policy Regarding Racism and Acts of Intolerance. The Office of Equity and Diversity provides monitoring and programming to ensure compliance with all applicable policies by all University personnel.

The Director of Equity and Diversity serves as the University’s affirmative action officer, coordinates training sessions on diversity and sexual harassment, provides affirmative action guidelines, and serves as campus coordinator for the Americans with Disabilities Act.
The University prepares an annual affirmative action plan that describes its goals and related procedures for hiring and advancement. The Director of Equity and Diversity serves on the president's staff and informs the staff and all other University officials of affirmative action goals and developments in affirmative action law. The office ensures through its Procedures for Conducting Affirmative Action Searches that all searches are conducted in a manner consistent with institutional goals of equity and diversity and in compliance with legal mandates.

The Office of Equity and Diversity contracts with consultants to provide training on sexual harassment prevention for University staff and students and for investigating complaints of sexual harassment and discrimination. Eastern's policy on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment is published in the Faculty Handbook and the Employee Handbook, and the Office advises complainants that they also have a right to file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, or any other agency that enforces laws concerning discrimination in employment. The Student Handbook explains that claims of discrimination or harassment by students will be investigated by the Office of Student Affairs according to the Guidelines for Student Rights and Responsibilities as outlined in the Student Handbook.

The Director of Equity and Diversity serves as campus coordinator for the Americans with Disabilities Act. Eastern’s Guidelines for Reasonable Accommodations for People with Disabilities is posted at the Office of Equity and Diversity web site. The office advises staff with disabilities, maintains files on staff, makes recommendations for accommodations for employees when necessary, and handles complaints from students and employees. Provision of these services for students is coordinated by the Director of Accessibility Services. The Office of Accessibility Services produces a Faculty Handbook that serves as a guide for providing accommodations. ECSU complies with the Family and Medical Leave Act and informs its employees of their rights under that act via the Employee Handbook.

For the last two years the Office of Equity and Diversity has led in the administration of a campus climate survey and development of a Comprehensive Diversity Plan, one of 18 initiatives approved as part of the 2008-2013 University Strategic Plan. The first step in implementation of the plan was the creation of a Diversity Council. This was accomplished in Spring 2010. The Council will begin work in Fall 2010.

Complaints and Grievance Procedures
Procedures for the fair resolution of complaints and grievances are described in the Student Handbook for students and the collective bargaining agreements for employees, respectively. The University has in place the necessary mechanisms to implement these procedures. Mechanisms include hearing officers for student appeals, relevant senate committees, and other processes required by collective bargaining agreements.

The Student Handbook includes information on the Campus Parking Appeal Board, Instructional Rights and Responsibilities, Procedures for Students with Disabilities to Appeal for Modifications to Eastern’s Academic Requirements, procedures related to charges of Academic Misconduct and Policy on Appeal by a Student for a Change in a Final Grade. Each employee bargaining unit’s collective bargaining agreement outlines its own procedures; procedures for SUOAF and AAUP employees are outlined in Articles 21 and 15, respectively, of those units’ agreements.

Conferences, Workshops and Institutes
Eastern sponsors a number of conferences and arranges for use of facilities by external groups. Conferences are sponsored by an on-campus organization with the approval of the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of Academic Affairs. External groups such as Girls State, Boys State and the
Advanced Placement Institute are allowed access to facilities when their needs can be met. These arrangements are evaluated and then conducted through the School of Continuing Education.

Assessment of Ethical Policies and Procedures
Periodic assessment of the university's ethical policies and the mechanisms by which they are enforced occurs through several mechanisms, including negotiation of collective bargaining agreements, resolution of grievances filed under those agreements, ongoing senate committee reviews, and widespread participation in the University Senate, including membership from administrative and teaching faculty, students, and administration. Eastern updates its policies and procedures in response to changes in state statutes, Board of Trustees resolutions, and CSU policies.

Appraisal

Ethical Standards in Management
Governing statutes, regulations, collective bargaining agreements, and BOT policies support a culture of high expectations for integrity and ethical behavior. Audit findings in all areas have been favorable and complaints related to unethical behavior rare.

The Research Advisory Council (Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research; CUHSR) has played an important role in promoting ethical standards in research by faculty and students. Guidelines for ethical research have been developed, and a clear and timely process has been implemented to ensure that all appropriate safeguards are in place to protect human and animal subjects. Members of the Research Advisory Council are appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who acts as the president's designee in all matters of academic research on campus. The CUHSR carefully reviews protocol applications with approximately 80% being approved as submitted; the balance are returned to applicants with guidelines for revision of the proposed protocol.

In response to a finding in 2006 that personnel being charged to a grant were not meeting requirements for time and effort, the Office of Fiscal Affairs, the Grants Office, the Executive Vice President, and the Office of Academic Affairs closely monitor grant transactions and salary charges.

Fair and Equitable Relations with Constituencies
Eastern’s policies and procedures are applied equitably and provide adequate guidance for faculty and staff in dealings with students. Policies related to academic honesty are currently being reviewed to ensure that students have adequate opportunity for appeal. The University responds to formal and informal appeals quickly. The policy on refunds following medical withdrawal were reviewed and revised recently in response to a complaint. Policies on course repeats for graduate students are currently under review. Recent changes in housing assignment policies, procedures for advisement, and academic misconduct procedures have been implemented to ensure fairness.

Questions about intellectual property in the context of online courses continue. A system-level committee is addressing this issue.

Free Pursuit and Dissemination of Knowledge
As noted in the Faculty Chapter, Eastern has had no case of a violation of academic freedom upheld by grievance in the last ten years.

Charter and Accreditation
Eastern continues to be subject to Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education requirements for all academic programs.
**Nondiscriminatory Policies and Diversity**

Policies and procedures in place at Eastern effectively support a commitment to advancing social justice and equity by exercising affirmative action to remove all discriminatory barriers to equal employment opportunity, admissions, and upward mobility. This commitment is evident in the inclusion of the [Comprehensive Diversity Plan](#) as one of 18 initiatives in the strategic plan. A campus climate survey was conducted in 2008-2009 with [initial results](#) pointing to generally favorable assessments on three statements: “Eastern is a diverse community;” “The leadership at Eastern fosters respect for diversity on campus;” and “The climate in the classroom/work environment is accepting of who I am.” Additional evidence of the commitment to equity and diversity is the level of diversity in faculty and administration as detailed in Tables 10a through 10d in the [State of Connecticut’s Strategic Plan to Ensure Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Connecticut Public Higher Education 2009](#). Chapter 5 notes that Eastern leads its COPLAC peers in the diversity of its faculty.

Eastern’s commitment to the goal of ensuring that all students can enjoy full participation in our community life and learning has been accomplished through providing access and reasonable accommodations as appropriate through the [Office of AccessAbility Services](#) (OAS). The office is well-staffed and can quickly respond to most student needs.

Eastern’s policy of no tolerance for sexual harassment, sexual assault, or violence in the workplace is effectively communicated to the community through campus publications, as well as through collaborative efforts of the Eastern Campus Police, the Office of Equity and Diversity, and the Office of Student Affairs. The Office of Equity and Diversity, in collaboration with the Women’s Center and the Office of Human Resources, conducts or sponsors related workshops for faculty and staff. Shortages in staffing, however, have prevented these offices from offering workshops on sexual harassment as often as planned.

A continuing commitment to equity and diversity at Eastern requires ongoing enforcement of policies and procedures, as well as community engagement through programs and community activities. Support for Eastern’s commitment includes programs supported by the Housing Office, Office of Student Affairs, and the faculty. The Unity Center (which had coordinated programs throughout the year on topics concerning ethnicity, race, and gender orientation operating out of a house on High Street) was reconfigured into an Intercultural Center and relocated to the Student Center. This move has increased the visibility of the Center, which has become a hub of activity for all students, in particular students of color and international students. The University Hour program has been used to offer programs that celebrate the diversity of the campus and society. Similarly, academic departments and administrative units sponsor a number of innovative programs and activities that take into account Eastern’s diverse campus. Eastern’s activities to promote and celebrate diversity range from the annual Ella T. Grasso Distinguished Service Award and the Martin Luther King Jr. Award to the weekly Thursday night dinner offered by Psychology professor Margaret Letterman. What started as a small event for students in the Organization for Latin American Students has become a standing-room only tradition for many students, faculty, and staff. Academic programs are, moreover, encouraged to incorporate diverse perspectives in courses and programs.

**Complaints and Grievance Procedures**

The process for the resolution of grievances brought by employees is standardized through collective bargaining agreements. Grievances are rare and are generally settled at low levels. Students have not expressed widespread concern or dissatisfaction with policies and procedures.

Where concerns are raised, Eastern attempts to be responsive. While Eastern has widely disseminated policies related to student appeals of grades, misconduct (including academic misconduct), and appeal of
misconduct charges, recent incidents across the four CSU campuses have spurred an attempt to refine the policies. Eastern does not have a designated ombudsman position, and students have reported difficulty in getting guidance on how to proceed when they have a complaint. This has been ameliorated with the filling of the vacant Dean of Students position. Existing policies are adhered to closely and procedures are implemented consistently according to published guidelines, but students express the need for more support and guidance in how to initiate procedures. The CSU BOT has recommended revisions to the Code of Conduct and that changes in Academic Misconduct procedures be considered. System-wide proposals are being developed. A key recommendation is to allow student appeal on limited ground of an academic misconduct charge that is upheld by the Academic Misconduct Committee. The appeal would be considered by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The proposed changes will be considered in Fall 2010.

University policies are generally available on the Eastern Web site with a diminishing number available in print format.

Confereaces, Workshops and Institutes
With limited facilities for conferences and institutes, Eastern is limited to bringing to campus events that will draw up to only about 150 participants. These have included CSU conferences on assessment, research, and computing. Summer institutes sponsored by external groups have been managed effectively.

Assessment of Ethical Policies and Procedures
Audits, compliance reviews, and records of grievance and appeal procedures indicate that existing procedures for evaluation, dissemination and enforcement of ethical policies and procedures are adequate.

Projection

Ethical Standards in Management
Policies and statutes regulating ethical behavior will continue to be enforced with increased training offered by the Office of the Executive Vice President, the Office of Human Resources, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. In 2008, plans were developed for incorporating this training into orientations for new faculty and staff to which current employees would be invited. Two workshops were offered, but current limits on hiring have curtailed offerings of orientations. As hiring increases, orientations will be more frequent. In the meantime, workshops and training opportunities will be offered to current employees.

Ethical conduct in research is increasingly important as both faculty and students increase activity in this area. Demands on CUHSR will increase. In light of this, the chair of the committee has been awarded reassigned time for this role and it is projected that this practice will continue. The role of the Grants Officer and the Office of Fiscal Affairs in ensuring compliance with requirements of grants will expand and additional staffing in the Grants Office will be needed to support increased grant activity.

Fair and Equitable Relations with Constituencies
Eastern’s Academic Misconduct Policy will be reviewed and revised before January 2011 by the University Senate. A revised CSU Code of Conduct for Students will be adopted in Fall 2010. In the near future the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs and of Student Affairs will develop a proposal for creation of an ombudsman position, although this has been addressed through the re-filling of the vacant Dean of Students position.

No changes related to faculty or staff are anticipated other than those that result from changes in collective bargaining agreements.
Free Pursuit and Dissemination of Knowledge
Eastern will continue to maintain conditions that promote free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. As noted in the chapter on Faculty, Eastern has a record of protecting and promoting faculty members’ academic freedom.

Charter and Accreditation
Eastern will continue to obtain approval for new or significantly modified academic programs from the Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education.

Nondiscriminatory Policies and Diversity
Although Eastern has been successful in attracting and retaining a diverse faculty and staff, recruiting and employment practices will need to change to ensure that these successes are maintained. Streamlined procedures for faculty hiring have been implemented to reduce the chance that attractive hires are lost due to time lags. These procedures will be continually monitored and revised. This concern is reflected in the Academic Plan.

Similarly, creative strategies for attracting a diverse student body will be implemented by the Office of Admissions. These will include expansion of the Dual Enrollment Initiative as resources allow and continuing the STEP-CAP program. Student Affairs will continue to support clubs, organizations, and activities that engage all students, but particularly students of color. The Academic Services Center, the Intercultural Center, and the deans will enhance their collaborations to ensure that gaps in retention and graduation rates across ethnic and racial groups decrease. Strategies to accomplish this goal are outlined in the draft Nash report, available in the workroom in Folder 11. Finally, implementation of the approved Diversity Plan will support development of curriculum, procedures, and a culture that promote diversity.

Complaints and Grievance Procedures
As noted above, changes in the Academic Misconduct Policy and changes in the Student Code of Conduct are anticipated. These policies and all other policies will continue to be enforced fairly and equitably. Grievance procedures in collective bargaining agreements are not likely to be revised.

Conferences, Workshops and Institutes
Staff shortages and space constraints will limit Eastern’s sponsorship of large on-campus events. While the University will continue to invite CSU conferences to campus, it is unlikely that additional scholarly conferences can be accommodated during the academic year. Summer workshops and institutions will continue to be carefully screened and managed by the School of Continuing Education to ensure that appropriate services and facilities can be provided.

Assessment of Ethical Policies and Procedures
New information technologies will enable Eastern to publish, update, and disseminate information more widely and to specific groups. Maintaining accurate information and removing dated material from Web pages is an ongoing challenge. Guidelines and procedures regarding plagiarism and ethical use of intellectual property in online courses will be evaluated by a new Online Learning Committee.

Institutional Effectiveness
Eastern operates within a framework of federal and state statutes, Board resolutions, collective bargaining agreements, and University policies that promote high ethical standards. The campus has a culture of strict compliance with regulations and a history of dealing fairly and equitably with all constituencies. Policies and procedures are modified as needed.