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

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

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

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

Bryn Mawr College
(Name of Institution)

is seeking (Check one): ___ Initial Accreditation  X Reaffirmation of Accreditation

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

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

[Signature]
(Chief Executive Officer)

[Signature]
(Chair, Board of Trustees or Directors)

13 Feb '10
(Date)

17 Feb 2010
(Date)
Executive Summary

Bryn Mawr College is a private liberal arts college for women located in Lower Merion Township, 11 miles west of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Founded in 1885, Bryn Mawr was the first college in the United States to offer women both undergraduate education and graduate instruction for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in a range of fields and remains the only predominantly women’s college offering a wide range of graduate programs. The graduate programs became coeducational in 1931. In 1915, Bryn Mawr became the first college to offer a Ph.D. in social work.

Today, nearly 1300 undergraduate women and 400 graduate students come each year from around the world to take advantage of the College’s rich curricular and co-curricular offerings, to study with leading scholars, and to conduct advanced research. Our student-to-faculty ratio of 8:1 close working relationships between faculty and students, and encourages development of critical, creative, and independent habits of thought and expression vital to success in life and work.

As a community, we are deeply committed to self-reflection and improvement, and many important changes and developments have been implemented since the College’s previous decennial accreditation review. Our current Middle States review offers a timely occasion to reflect on these developments, take stock of where we are and look to the future. Given the scope of the changes and developments, Bryn Mawr chose the comprehensive model for our present self-study. However, we organize our self-study around specific topics related to our current assessment and planning. In addition to showing that we meet the Commission’s 14 Standards of Excellence in higher education, we aimed to conduct a self-study that would deepen institutional self-understanding, motivate and serve as a valuable tool for institutional planning, change, and growth, and help to create a common vision of the College’s future.

We also aimed to involve all constituencies from the College community in the self-study process, for we want our report to present (to the extent possible) an honest, complete, and collectively agreed upon view of the College as we near the end of the first decade of the 21st Century. The self-study process was discussed at meetings of all major campus groups, the report itself was written on the basis of reports from multi-constituent working groups, and drafts of the report were available to the whole community (in both paper and electronic formats) for feedback.

We believe the result is a report that conveys the distinctive character of Bryn Mawr College and rightly celebrates our accomplishments, while taking a properly critical perspective on ourselves as an institution: we face up to the challenges ahead, and outline the work that remains to be done. We also believe the report establishes compliance with MSCHE’s 14 standards for accreditation.
One result of organizing our self-study around ongoing assessment and planning efforts is that the standards are not addressed in a discrete, sequential fashion in our report. Analysis of one topic invariably brought in discussion and analysis of others. Consequently, discussion of each standard is dispersed throughout the report. Chapters, even sections, cover many standards, supplementing and supporting discussion in other chapters and sections. Some standards receive discussion in almost every chapter. While we believe this is a characteristically “Bryn Mawr” approach to a project, we recognize that it presents certain challenges to a reader looking for evidence of compliance with the Commission’s standards. As such, we have included a number of aides to guide readers to portions of the text addressing the individual standards.

We provide two main methods of indicating where standards are discussed, an “in-text method” and a “table-based method”. The first—the in-text method—indicates on a chapter-by-chapter and section-by-section basis which standards are addressed. Standards receiving greatest attention in each chapter are presented, in bold, just below the individual chapter titles, like so:

```
5

Graduate Education
Standard 8 • Standard 9 • Standard 11
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Section-by-section indicators are given in rounded brackets at the beginning of the relevant section, in the margins. These indicators are physically aligned with the section’s title. For example, the standards addressed in section 6.2.4(i) are indicated like this:

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6.2.4 Connecting to Work and Service
(i) Civic Engagement

Fostering civic engagement is a core aspect of Bryn Mawr’s mission. Indeed, our mission
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Standards are symbolized with ‘S’ followed by the number of the standard. We list all of the standards addressed in the relevant section, even though some standards might receive more attention than others. The order of the symbols gives a rough indication of the degree to which the standard is a focus of the section. When standards are given roughly equal treatment in a section, we list the standards by number, from smallest to largest.
Also, we separately list the standards addressed by sub-section—or whatever unit of the text is smallest (a “unit of text” being anything listed in the table of contents). For instance, if section 6.2 has sub-sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2, we separately indicate all of the standards addressed in each sub-section, rather than listing all of the standards discussed in the whole of section 6.2 at beginning of 6.2. This practice allows us to give quite specific guidance to parts of the text that address particular standards.

The second method—the table-based method—uses a set of tables to indicate the sections of each chapter wherein a given standard is addressed. These tables are gathered in a companion to this report: A Guide to the Standards in Bryn Mawr College’s Self-Study Report. The Guide includes both a general table (Table 1), which uses a system of bullets to indicate the extent to which each standard is a focus of each chapter, and a detailed table (Table 2), which specifies every section (or sub-section) in which a standard is discussed. The general table also provides a visual sense of the approach we have taken in our self-study—the way in which documentation of compliance with each standard is shared by multiple chapters in the report is immediately visually evident.

It is worth noting that the table-based method and the in-text method provide the same information, though in different ways. Each has its strengths, and will be preferred depending on one’s approach to reading the document. The table-based method, for instance, might be more helpful if you want to quickly find portions of the text devoted to a particular standard. The in-text method, on the other hand, gives a better sense of the richness of the text and the way in which each section is relevant to many standards at once.

We conclude this Executive Summary with a brief synopsis of each chapter of the report and a note about the appendices.

Chapter 1 (Introduction) focuses on Bryn Mawr College’s mission and goals, provides a general overview of the College, and describes a number of the important developments since our previous Middle States decennial reaccreditation review. This provides a glimpse of some of the topics that receive sustained analysis in later chapters (such as the work of the College’s recent Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources and the continuing work of the Curricular Renewal Working Group). The chapter concludes with a detailed description of our self-study process.

In chapter 2 (Governance and Strategic Planning), we discuss the College’s important transition to a system of shared governance, and outline the roles of the College’s major constituencies within that system. We then present a select analysis of some of the most important strategic planning processes to occur at the College since our previous self-study, including the work of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources. The discussion of these efforts illustrates the effectiveness of our system of shared governance in helping the College set and accomplish its goals. The chapter ends with
both an appraisal of our progress and a set of recommendations for moving forward, as do all of the chapters of the report.

Chapter 3 (Undergraduate Curriculum) provides an overview of Bryn Mawr’s current curriculum, including reviews of both our general education program and our educational offerings for majors and minors. We argue that our current curriculum satisfies Middle States standards 11 and 12. Nevertheless, following upon the heels of the work of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources, the College has decided that it is time for a comprehensive review, and refresh, of our undergraduate curriculum. The ongoing work of the group leading this review—the Curricular Renewal Working Group—is detailed in the second half of this chapter. Many of the recommendations offered at the end of chapter 3 stem from this group’s work.

In chapter 4 (Faculty), we examine the group primarily responsible for carrying out and implementing the curriculum—the College’s Faculty. The overall make-up of the Faculty is described, as are policies for appointment, review, and promotion. Key issues here are integrity and the extent to which the Faculty reflects the mission of the College. We then describe the main responsibilities of a member of Bryn Mawr’s Faculty and the process by which we evaluate the Faculty’s performance in carrying them out. While we identify several areas for improvement, we argue that on the whole the Faculty excels in supporting the College’s mission.

Chapter 5 (Graduate Education) is something of a self-study in miniature, insofar as it deals with all aspects of graduate education at Bryn Mawr College. One of the key issues here concerns the proper role of graduate education at an institution that is, by its own description, primarily an undergraduate school for women. Along with providing a general assessment of our graduate schools’ success in meeting most Middle States standards, we discuss the ways in which graduate programs can both benefit and benefit from interaction with the College’s various undergraduate programs.

Chapter 6 (Students) covers many aspects of student life at Bryn Mawr College, including admissions policies, retention data, and our strong set of student support services. One of the key issues addressed in this chapter is, not surprisingly, how the College can continue to enroll, support and retain the diverse, talented student body it enjoys in the current, difficult economic climate. We also discuss proposed modifications of the College’s advising system, modifications that would involve faculty members in the process to a significantly higher degree than is currently the case.

In chapter 7 (Assessment), we provide a comprehensive review of assessment practices at the College—pertaining to both the institution as a whole and those directed at student learning in particular. What emerges is a strong and ongoing culture of assessment at the institution, a culture in which assessment occurs at many levels, from the classroom to our educational programs to the task force structure we use in strategic planning. A key recommendation that emerges from this chapter, one that will
be important as the College moves forward, is that the College create and implement a standing committee to centralize and coordinate our numerous assessment efforts to even greater strategic advantage.

Our self-study report concludes with a brief summary of important results and central areas for future work.

Supporting documents referred to throughout the self-study report are available to the evaluation team in several ways. Most are available through our on-line, password-protected appendix at https://www.brynmawr.edu/middlestates2009. Documents are organized and titled according to the chapter in which they are first referenced. (For example, a document titled “Appendix 2.n” is first referenced in chapter 2 and will be found in the “Chapter 2” folder on the website. The numeral that occurs in place of “n” indicates that the document is the nth document to be referenced for the first time in that chapter.) Documents not available through the on-line appendix are either available via URLs provided in-text, or will be made available to the team members during their visit in a document room.

Key supporting documents are included in hardcopy appendices, mailed to team members with this report. With the exception of the team chair—who receives all key documents—each team member is receiving a set of supporting documents tailored to her or his focus in evaluating the College (the individual’s focus is determined by the Middle States standards assigned to him or her by the team chair).

Important reminder: some information contained in the supporting documents is confidential and is not to be shared or discussed with anyone outside the evaluation team.
Introduction
Standard 1

1.1 The Mission of Bryn Mawr College and the Concept of a Bryn Mawr Woman

The mission statement of Bryn Mawr College, written for the College’s 1998-99 decennial accreditation review and approved by the Board of Trustees in December 1998, reads as follows:

THE MISSION OF BRYN MAWR COLLEGE is to provide a rigorous education and to encourage the pursuit of knowledge as preparation for life and work. Bryn Mawr teaches and values critical, creative and independent habits of thought and expression in an undergraduate liberal arts curriculum for women and in coeducational graduate programs in arts and sciences and social work and social research. Bryn Mawr seeks to sustain a community diverse in nature and democratic in practice, for we believe that only through considering many perspectives do we gain a deeper understanding of each other and the world.

Since its founding in 1885, the College has maintained its character as a small residential community which fosters close working relationships between faculty and students. The faculty of teacher/scholars emphasizes learning through conversation and collaboration, primary reading, original research and experimentation. Our cooperative relationship with Haverford College enlarges the academic opportunities for students and their social community. Our active ties to Swarthmore College and the University of Pennsylvania, and the proximity of the city of Philadelphia further extend the opportunities available at Bryn Mawr.

Living and working together in a community based on mutual respect, personal integrity and the standards of a social and academic Honor Code, each generation of students experiments with creating and sustaining a self-governing society within the College. The academic and co-curricular experiences fostered by Bryn Mawr, both on campus and in the College’s wider setting, encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world.

Although it has been over 10 years since this mission statement was composed, it has been reviewed and affirmed twice recently—one during a meeting of the Board of Trustees in October of 2007 and again at a faculty retreat in November of 2007. The community has agreed that this mission statement continues to capture the overarching principles that guide Bryn Mawr today. These principles translate into goals that the College sets for itself and its students and which guide the College as it constantly assesses its ongoing enterprises and plans new ones.

Three central features of a Bryn Mawr education as outlined in the mission statement deserve emphasis here, insofar as they help capture the distinctive character of Bryn
Mawr College. First is the commitment to intellectual endeavor fostered by the faculty. Bryn Mawr’s faculty members pride themselves on being active and accomplished scholars as well as excellent teachers, and they seek to be role models for students as both. Bryn Mawr’s low student-to-faculty ratio allows most students to enroll in some small courses, where they become closely acquainted with their teachers as deeply engaged scholars while developing their own intellectual skills and interests.

The second noteworthy feature of a Bryn Mawr education is the College’s cultivation of its students’ sense of purpose in life through a system of self-governance that includes an academic and social honor code. Making students responsible for their own conduct and responsive to the conduct of others inspires self-awareness and self-scrutiny far more extensive than most students have experienced before coming to Bryn Mawr, and that few other colleges or universities, if any, can match. Many students cite self-governance or the honor code as a main reason they came to Bryn Mawr when they graduate.

The third special feature of a Bryn Mawr education is its emphasis on diversity, which enhances students’ awareness of the global community. The College signals its recognition and appreciation of diversity in many ways: its recruitment of diverse faculty, students, and staff, its varied curriculum, its promotion of educational experiences outside the classroom, and its facilitation of community service. This attention to the world beyond Bryn Mawr instills in many students the desire to serve individuals in need far beyond the College walls.

These features of a Bryn Mawr education, carried out in light of the College's mission statement, work together to promote in our students the unique set of qualities that distinguish the Bryn Mawr woman:

- an intense intellectual commitment;
- a purposeful vision of her life; and
- a desire to make a meaningful contribution to the world.

More than anything else, it is the aim of the College to help our students realize and develop their own distinctive qualities as they take on this rare combination of personal characteristics. All of the College’s activities are intended to further this aim, and are assessed in light of it.

1.2 Overview of the College

Bryn Mawr College is a private liberal arts college for women located in Lower Merion Township, 11 miles west of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The College was founded in 1885 by Dr. Joseph Taylor and other members of the Religious Society of Friends. Dr. Taylor’s mission was to create an institution that would enable “women to have all the
advantages of a college education which are so freely offered to young men”. Bryn Mawr was the first college in the United States to offer women both undergraduate education and graduate instruction for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in a range of fields and remains the only predominantly women’s college offering a wide range of graduate programs. The graduate programs became coeducational in 1931. In 1915, Bryn Mawr became the first college to offer a Ph.D. in social work. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education first accredited the College in 1921 and most recently reaffirmed that status in 2004.

Today, Bryn Mawr’s student body comprises 1,307 undergraduates and 464 graduate students. The College has 158 full-time continuing faculty members, giving it a student-to-faculty ratio of 8-to-1. Students come to Bryn Mawr from across the country and around the globe: in 2009, students from 44 states and 58 countries were enrolled. The College also aims to admit the most able students, regardless of their backgrounds or ability to pay. In 2009, 63 percent of students received some form of financial aid and as of December 31, 2009, the College’s discount rate was 43.2 percent.

The College offers a rich, four-year liberal arts curriculum. Students can choose majors from 36 areas of study, and choose minors from 38. The College also offers 8 interdepartmental concentrations. Students may also take advantage of the cooperative and consortial relationships Bryn Mawr maintains with Haverford College, Swarthmore College, and the University of Pennsylvania. The most important of these is with Haverford College. Bryn Mawr and Haverford together form a two-college community (the Bi-College Consortium) that makes available a wider, deeper range of academic and extra-curricular opportunities than either college could offer alone. Bryn Mawr and Haverford students may register for courses and may major at either institution. Bryn Mawr and Haverford are also part of the Tri-College Consortium, with Swarthmore College. Bryn Mawr students make extensive use of these consortial opportunities: averaging over yearly trends, about 97 percent of Bryn Mawr students register for at least one course at Haverford, Swarthmore, or Penn during their career at Bryn Mawr.

Central to a Bryn Mawr education is living and learning in a close-knit, supportive, and intellectually stimulating community. Ninety-five percent of undergraduate students live on the College’s beautiful 135-acre campus (home to 40 buildings, many in Collegiate Gothic architectural style), where they participate in a wide range of co-curricular activities, including the student self-governance association (the nation’s first when founded in 1892), more than 100 student-run clubs and organizations, and 12 Division III varsity athletic teams.

1.3 Bryn Mawr: The Past Eleven Years

As an institution, Bryn Mawr College is committed to self-reflection and planning. And while the processes of reflection, analysis, planning, and implementation, so
characteristic of the self-study process, are ongoing the College, the current Middle States review provides a welcome opportunity for deeper, synoptic reflection. Particularly so, in light of the numerous major changes and developments that have taken place at the College during the past 10+ years since our previous self-study. The most notable of these changes and developments merit summary here. Many of these are also detailed in the chapters that follow.

Under the leadership of our previous president, Nancy J. Vickers, the College embarked on a fund raising campaign—Challenging Women: Investing in the Future of Bryn Mawr—that tripled the goal of the previous campaign. At its conclusion, the campaign brought in $232,072,273. The College also nearly doubled its endowment under Vickers’ presidency (1997 – 2008).

In addition, under Vickers’ leadership and following its 1998 self-study, the College put forth its Plan for a New Century. (See Appendix 1.2) Approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees on March 4, 2000, the Plan has served as a roadmap and touchstone for the College’s planning efforts for the past near-decade. The Plan identified two broad areas of concentration for the College as it moved into the 21st Century: (1) innovation in teaching and research without significant expansion, and (2) recruitment and retention of the most qualified students. The Plan outlined several strategies for achieving these goals. The following paragraphs describe the strategies recommended in the Plan and highlight some of the goals that have already been achieved.

First, in accordance with the College’s mission statement, the Plan urged Bryn Mawr to prepare its students for life and work in the interdependent, global environment of the twenty-first century by building upon its strong tradition of excellence in language instruction, by enhancing attention to foreign cultures, by strengthening connections across appropriate existing departments and programs, and by expanding opportunities for students to work and study abroad during their years at Bryn Mawr. Towards these ends the College has:

- Established several new interdisciplinary programs, including a minor in International Studies, a concentration in Environmental Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, and Latin American, Latino, and Iberian People and Cultures;
- Transformed East Asian Studies from a program into a bi-college department (with Haverford);
- Established over a dozen international internships at thinly staffed institutions worldwide, including orphanages in Africa for children suffering from HIV/AIDS and schools in impoverished areas of Peru.

Second, the Plan called for Bryn Mawr to prepare its students to thrive in a time of rapid scientific growth and change by increasing support faculty and students interested in

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1 See http://www.brynmawr.edu/giving/campaignsuccess.html
both disciplinary and interdisciplinary scientific studies, by continuing to encourage innovative teaching in the sciences, by expanding opportunities for undergraduate research in the sciences, and by continuing to reach out to the science and technology sector in the Philadelphia area to develop internships. Towards these ends the College has:

- Raised the dollar amount of the yearly major equipment budget for the sciences and mathematics;
- Established a computer science major, which in July 2006 received a Microsoft Research grant in to use robots in introductory courses, and has seen a steady increase in enrollment (at a time when women’s interest in computer science is on the decline nationally);
- Received a four-year, 1.2 million dollar Howard Hughes Medical Institute Grant for undergraduate science education in September 2008.

Third, the Plan urged Bryn Mawr to ensure that its students know how to use the technologies prevalent in research and everyday life and that they can learn and apply future technologies. Towards these ends the College has:

- Introduced several innovations in the library, including the merger of computing and library functions, an overhaul of College Collections, the integration of circulation and reference, and the digitization of visual resources;
- Created a “Tech Bar” in Canaday Library that brings together all of IS support services in one central location.

Fourth, the Plan encouraged Bryn Mawr to prepare its students for the challenge of leading and serving in diverse communities by expanding the opportunities for students to serve the community through study and work. Towards these ends the College has:

- Created the Praxis Program, an experiential, community-based learning program that combines classroom-based theory with practical experience, thereby building upon and enhancing the College’s strong tradition of community involvement and civic engagement;
- Instituted the Dean’s Leadership Retreat, specifically targeted at students holding leadership positions at the College who are interested in taking on a wide range of leadership roles;
- Expanded staff and programming in the Civic Engagement Office;
- Initiated the Social Justice Partnership Program (SJPP), which provides safe spaces, resources, and programming that allow students to explore issues of diversity.
Finally, the *Plan* urged Bryn Mawr to ensure that its humanities programs continue to thrive by encouraging interdisciplinary research and supporting the fine and performing arts. Towards these ends the College has:

- Renovated the Goodhart Auditorium and Performing Arts Building, adding a new 19 million dollar teaching theater;
- Launched the Film Studies Program to strengthen students’ opportunities for study of film as a medium to explore fields such as Art History, English, and Modern Languages; the College hired two tenure-track faculty, one in the English Department and one in the History of Art Department, to support this program;
- Increased number and range of creative writing courses;
- Collaborated with Headlong Dance Theater and Pig Iron Theater Company to form the Headlong Performance Institute, which offers a semester-long, off-campus program in the performing arts;
- Created a second dance studio in Denbigh Hall;
- Opened an informal studio space in Arnecliff for the student-run Art Club;
- Established the Graduate Group in Archaeology, Classics, and the History of Art;
- Made several new hires in College’s collections, including a curator and a collections manager for our art and artifacts collection.

To take fullest advantage of the accomplishments based on *The Plan for a New Century*, the College has over the past decade redoubled its efforts to recruit the most talented women to its undergraduate programs, to increase financial aid, to enhance campus diversity, to improve athletic programs and facilities, and to expand students’ social and cultural opportunities. Towards these ends the College has:

- Sought to increase the number of undergraduate applications (they have risen 40 percent over the past 10 years);
- Created a Coordinator of Summer Programs position; the person hired to this position administers summer grants for students participating in unpaid internships;
- Formed the Diversity Leadership Group to advise the President on issues of diversity, particularly in four areas: recruiting and retaining faculty, staff, and students from underrepresented groups; adding diversity to the curriculum; sustaining a campus climate supportive of diversity; and expanding College programs that foster and sustain diversity;
- Embarked on a mini-campaign, “Smart Women – Strong Women” to fundraise for a 7.5 million dollar renovation to Schwartz Gymnasium (construction is slated to begin in spring 2010).
To ensure the recruitment and retention of a faculty of excellent teacher-scholars, Bryn Mawr has sought to increase support for teaching and research. Towards these ends the College has:

- Launched the Teaching and Learning Initiative (TLI) to encourage reflection on the aims and methods of, and roles of faculty, students, and staff in, teaching and learning;
- Instituted more frequent sabbaticals for tenure-track faculty;
- Increased the funds available to support faculty professional travel;
- Increased the size of the Faculty by 26 (~20%).

To maintain staff commitment, quality, and effectiveness, Bryn Mawr has tried to enhance staff diversity, to foster a fair and respectful working environment, to improve training, and to ensure competitive salaries and benefits. Towards these ends the College has:

- Improved staff salaries relative to peer institutions;
- Adopted new search and hiring procedures to attract and recruit diverse candidates to open positions;
- Established the Empowering Learners Partnership program to provide opportunities for students and staff to reflect together on teaching and learning;
- Instituted a new evaluation process to foster staff development.

These achievements have enabled the College to better carry out its mission and accomplish its goals and have contributed to shaping the Bryn Mawr of today.

Perhaps the most significant development, one whose full impact is still unfolding and will help to shape the Bryn Mawr of the future, is the work of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources. Convened by the Board of Trustees in October of 2005, the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources was charged with assessing the College’s practices of resource allocation (both financial and personnel) and recommending changes that would allow the College to better support its mission and achieve its goals. The Task Force completed its work in September of 2008, and proposed a significant number of recommendations regarding enrollment management, facilities, administrative efficiencies, and the College’s academic model.

Among the Task Force’s major recommendations was that the College undertake a comprehensive curriculum review—the first since 1981. The Curricular Renewal Working Group was formed to undertake this review, and its work is in progress. The Group is evaluating a number of curricular topics, including internationalizing the curriculum, the status of interdisciplinary programs and their relations to established departments, the first year experience and the senior experience, the relationship between the undergraduate curriculum and the graduate programs, the status of
foreign language instruction, general education requirements for the A.B., the place and quality of writing instruction throughout the curriculum, A.B./M.A. Programs (including whether the College should establish additional Master’s Programs), areas of possible overlap between departments and programs, and the present and future forms of Bi-Co and Tri-Co cooperation. (The work of the Curricular Renewal Working Group is detailed in chapter 3.)

The Task Force further recommended that the College modestly increase enrollments, reduce faculty leave replacements, and render departments as “leave-proof” as possible when conducting faculty searches. (See chapter 6.)

The Task Force also offered a series of recommendations regarding graduate programs, including reducing the number of Ph.D.s awarded each year, restructuring graduate programs so that they are more deeply integrated with one another and with undergraduate programs, and phasing out programs not consistent with the Task Force’s proposed and Board-approved principles and practices of graduate education. The Task Force suggested that these changes would better reflect the College’s mission as a liberal arts college emphasizing undergraduate women’s education. (See chapter 5.)

Finally, the Task Force had significant success identifying the College’s financial pressure points and educating the community on financial issues and financial decision-making. In consultation with the Board’s Building and Grounds Committee, the Task Force endorsed the sale of the College’s Glenmede property, which was completed in December 2007 for 9 million dollars. The Task Force also recommended updating the campus master plan to aid long-term financial planning, especially regarding capital improvements. As a result, the Campus Facilities Planning Committee was re-established and has completed updating the master plan. (For further details on the work of the Task Force, see chapter 2.)

As the above summary shows, the decade since Bryn Mawr’s previous Middle States self-study has been a busy and productive one. The decade closed with two important administrative changes. In 2007, Kimberly Wright Cassidy became Provost, and immediately began planning for our current reaccreditation review. In 2008, Jane Dammen McAuliffe succeeded Nancy J. Vickers to become the College’s 8th president.

1.4 The Self-Study Process

Bryn Mawr’s current self-study process began in the fall of 2007, when Mark Freeman (Director of Institutional Research) and Kim Cassidy (Provost and Professor of Psychology) attended the MSCHE Self-Study Institute to gather information about conducting an institutional self-study. During the summer of 2008, Provost Cassidy convened the Self-Study Steering Committee, which included members from many
campus constituencies. (See Appendix 1.3 for membership.) The Committee was responsible for:

- determining the key issues to be considered during the self-study;
- determining the structure and composition of the working groups;
- developing research questions and assigning them to the appropriate working groups;
- setting the timeline for the self-study process;
- keeping the campus community informed as to the progress of the self-study;
- coordinating communication among the working groups;
- drafting, receiving feedback, revising, and finalizing the self-study report; and
- preparing for and hosting the external team visit.

Given the scope of the changes at the College over the past decade, the Steering Committee agreed that the most appropriate model for our self-study would be a version of MSCHE’s comprehensive model, with discussion of the standards grouped to better reflect the planning and assessment activities already underway at the College (see fig. 10 on p. 23 of the Commission’s handbook, *Self-Study: Creating a Useful Process and Report*). To carry out this decision, the Steering Committee formed five working groups, each assigned a central aspect of the College. The aspects (and working groups) were: governance and strategic planning (Working Group I), assessment (Working Group II), student life (Working Group III), the undergraduate curriculum (Working Group IV), and graduate education (Working Group V). Working Group II sent representatives to each of the other groups, since assessment occurs throughout the operation of the College and so would be a topic of each group’s report. Working group membership was settled in the fall of 2008, and included representatives from all major campus constituencies. (See Appendix 1.4 for working group membership and specific charges.) With the exception of Morgan Wallhagen (Assistant to the Provost for Middle States Accreditation and Co-chair of the Steering Committee), all members of the Steering Committee served on, or chaired, one the five working groups. Morgan Wallhagen coordinated and integrated the working groups’ efforts.

To guide the efforts of the working groups, and aiming to capitalize on the College’s ongoing planning and assessment efforts, the Steering Committee set the following goals for the self-study process:

- to evaluate the adequacy of the College’s mission, goals, educational programs, and resources, thereby deepening institutional self-understanding;
- to judge the progress made towards accomplishing major institutional goals;
- to spur institutional self-improvement, from administration to staff, faculty to students, programs to services;
- to produce a document that provides recommendations that aid institutional planning, change, and growth, and contributes to a shared vision of the
College’s future—one that reflects the ongoing nature of our current assessment activities and responses to them; and

• to document that Bryn Mawr meets the Commission’s 14 Standards of Excellence in higher education.

A further goal has been to involve all constituencies from the College community in the self-study process, for we want our report to present, as far as possible, an honest, complete, and collectively agreed upon view of the College at the end of the first decade of the 21st Century. This approach accords with one of the democratic principles celebrated in our mission statement: that it is only through considering many perspectives that we get a deeper understanding of complex phenomena.

Towards this end, all members of the College community were invited to informational sessions about the self-study process. Provost Cassidy presented on aspects of the self-study process with the senior administrative staff, including the Director of Human Resources, Director of Athletics, Director of the Hepburn Center, Dean of Graduate Arts & Sciences, Director of Social Work, Director of Alumnae Association, Director of Public Affairs, Director of Facilities, Director of the Diversity Leadership Group, Faculty Diversity Liaison, Director of Intercultural Affairs, Controller, and Equal Employment Officer. She also discussed the accreditation process and reported progress to the President’s Cabinet, including the Chief Financial Officer, Dean of Admissions, and Chief Information Officer. Additional discussions of the process occurred at several general faculty meetings, two Board of Trustees meetings, and at a meeting of Alumnae Volunteers.

The College’s self-study design was written by the Steering Committee co-chairs, and revised in light of feedback from members of the Steering Committee, working groups and our MSCHE liaisons (Linda Suskie and Mary Ellen Petrisko), during the fall 2008. Our MSCHE liaisons approved the design in mid-December 2008.

During the spring and early summer of 2009, the Steering Committee met approximately once per month as the working groups drafted reports on their assigned topics and research questions. At those meetings, members reviewed progress on the drafts, discussed issues that arose while drafting, and provided feedback on outlines and drafts of reports.

During the late summer and early fall of 2009, a draft of the self-study report was assembled from the working groups’ reports, edited, and then distributed electronically and in hard copy to each of the College’s constituencies for feedback. The first significant draft was presented to the Board of Trustees in mid-September, and discussed and approved at the Board’s October meeting. The steering committee revised the draft in light of comments and suggestions received, and sent the resulting draft to the Chair of the College’s evaluation team in mid-November. Campus-wide discussions of the draft, seeking input from administrators, faculty members, staff, and
students followed in December. Again, copies were made available in both paper and electronic forms. Members of the Self-Study Steering Committee attended meetings with faculty, staff, administrators, and students—both graduate students and undergraduates—to hear feedback. The Steering Committee also invited feedback via email from all community members. Comments from the community and our evaluation team's Chair were incorporated and the final draft was sent to the evaluation team on March 1, 2010.
Chapter 1 described Bryn Mawr College’s mission, the set of principles that inspires and guides operations across the institution. The present chapter considers the primary means by which that mission is realized and thereby shapes the institution: governance and strategic planning. Through strong leadership and equitable delegation of responsibility, Bryn Mawr’s system of shared governance helps the College accomplish its mission and goals effectively and efficiently. Complementing the College’s system of shared governance, a task force-based system of strategic planning allows for effective prioritization of goals, mission-driven use of resources, and steady improvement of programs and services. Together, these systems of shared governance and strategic planning allow the College to implement the innovations necessary to continually improve the institution and provide students with the best opportunities for learning and success.

2.1 Governance

Since its previous Middle States Accreditation in 1998-99, the College has undergone significant changes in its governance structure. Among the most important of those changes has been the adoption of a system of shared governance. The seeds of this change can be found in the College’s previous Middle States Self-Study Report (1998) in the section on governance. That section describes how each of the major College constituencies (trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students) governed themselves, and outlined new committees that provided the foundation for multi-constituency shared governance. In April 1997, the General Faculty authorized the formation of a Transition Committee on Faculty Governance and the 1998 Self-Study Report observed that, “the moment seemed opportune for the faculty to reexamine both the ways in which it conducts its business and its general role in the decision-making of the College”. In October 2003 a Task Force consisting of trustees, administrators, and faculty members began revising the Plan of Governance to establish a system of shared governance at the College. As a part of the College’s transition to a system of shared governance, the College also increased the role of its Board of Trustees as a resource in strategic planning, and, more generally, sought to ensure that difficult choices required to balance the College’s mission and its resources would be made cooperatively by all College constituencies. This change clearly reflects the vision presented in the College’s mission of a democratic community.
This section highlights some of the ways this system of shared governance was established and describes the roles of various constituents—trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students—within this governance system.

2.1.1 Changes in Board Governance

In 2001, at the urging of then newly elected Chair of the Board of Trustees Sally Zeckhauser and then-President Nancy Vickers, and in response to concerns of board members that the College was not taking full advantage of their abilities and resources, the Board embarked on a detailed and wide-ranging self-assessment, greater than any that had been carried out in the past. An Ad Hoc Committee on Board Governance was formed to conduct this review. Chaired by Margaret Morrow and comprising seven trustees and one trustee emerita, the committee created a questionnaire sent to all board members and special representatives to the Board of Trustees. The committee compiled the responses in order to ascertain areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the way the Board of Trustees then operated. The Board also heard a presentation by Richard Chait (Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education) and took part in a retreat he facilitated, during which he presented his model depicting how the Board of Trustees can and should serve as a valuable strategic resource for the College. The ad hoc committee—with the assistance of the College administrators, faculty members, and staff—then scrutinized the ways in which the Board interacted with other constituencies of the Bryn Mawr community.

Based on the information gathered, the Committee recommended a number of changes in board governance, which the trustees adopted. In general, these recommendations called for streamlining the Board’s structure of standing committees and provided for the establishment of task forces that would be charged with a particular issue, write reports with recommendations, and disband once their charges had been fulfilled. The committee recommended that the task forces include representatives of administration, faculty, students, alumnae, staff and/or community leaders, as well as trustees. The Board of Trustees retained standing committees charged with specific tasks or those that address the board’s fiduciary obligations, including: the Executive Committee, the Committee on Trustees, the Development Committee and the Bryn Mawr-Haverford Two-College Joint Council, the Finance Committee (with its Budget and Investment Policy Subcommittees), the Audit Committee, the College Benefits Committee, the Committee on Investment Responsibilities, the Building and Grounds Committee, and the Campus Landscape Committee. Since these changes in board governance were adopted, the trustees established the following task forces, which have fulfilled their charge: the Task Force on College Governance (disbanded 2005), the Task Force on Business Practices, Budgeting and Finance (disbanded 2004), the Task Force on Enhancing the Competitive Position of the College (disbanded 2004), the Task Force on Optimal Undergraduate Enrollment (disbanded 2006), the Task Force on Self-

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1 See Appendix 2.1 for a detailed presentation of these recommendations.
Governance and Supporting Student Life (disbanded 2006), and the Task Force on Balancing the College’s Mission and Resources and its two subcommittees on Graduate Education (disbanded 2008). In the 2009-10 academic year the Board reconstituted the Task Force on Enhancing the Competitive Position of the College and the Task Force on Alumnae Engagement.

To streamline the Board’s operations and focus it on strategic issues, the Board established a consent agenda, implemented an annual distribution of a dashboard of key indicators, and enlarged its executive sessions. The Board also reduced its number of annual meetings from four to three, with the possibility of a retreat on a focused topic every other year. In addition, the term of a trustee was reduced from six years to five, with an optional renewal for a second term.

2.1.2 The Task Force on College Governance and the Development of the College’s Plan of Governance

One of the task forces the Board of Trustees established as a consequence of its new streamlined structure was the Task Force on College Governance. This task force was charged with revising the College’s governance system, which resulted in the shared governance model described in this section. The task force included seven trustees, four members of the administration, and nine members of the faculty. This task force was formed in part in response to the dismissal of some staff members in the summer of 2003 due to the College’s constrained economic circumstances and the sense of some faculty members that they had not been consulted when staff reductions were being considered.

On the basis of the previous Plan of Government, the task force drafted a revised Plan of Governance and presented it to the faculty. The Faculty rejected the draft and returned it to the task force, in part because the faculty members on the task force were perceived as having been selected by the President and the Administration rather than having been elected by the Faculty. The Faculty then selected four faculty members to revise the Plan of Governance prepared by the task force. They substantially revised the draft and then worked with the original task force to produce the final Plan of Governance (Appendix 2.2; hereafter often called simply “the Plan”).

The Plan was based on the following understanding of shared governance. First, decisions affecting all members of the Bryn Mawr community should be made by groups in which all constituencies are represented. But, since not every decision affects the whole community, each constituency should be able to develop plans for dealing with its own issues independently of the other constituencies. For instance, just as the Board of Trustees had developed its own internal governance structure, so should the Faculty be able to develop its own plan for dealing with issues that concern only the Faculty. Likewise for other constituencies. For this reason, the Plan covers only those areas
where the authority, responsibility, and interests of the Trustees, the Administration, the Faculty, and the Students or Staff intersect.

The *Plan* also established a mechanism whereby constituencies elect their own members to task forces and committees. This assures, as far as possible, that the views of each constituency are fairly represented in decisions affecting them. This mechanism addresses the Faculty’s concern, noted above, that it be responsible for selecting its own representatives to task forces and committees. (See Appendix 2.2, esp. Article III, Section 4.)

In preparing the *Plan*, the task force needed to address a number of other difficult topics. Of particular importance was confidentiality, especially in light of the then recent staff layoffs. The administration had expressed concern about disclosing sensitive information to committees without the promise that their members would keep it confidential, but other representatives maintained that they had no right to withhold information from other members of their constituencies. In the end, the task force determined that the institution should be committed to overall transparency except in those circumstances where confidentiality is deemed appropriate or necessary. (See Appendix 2.2, Article I, Section 4.) For example, members of the Campus Facilities Planning Committee might be asked to hold information about a major gift in confidence until the donor was comfortable with its public release. The benefits of this understanding have become particularly apparent in this time of financial stringency. When the need for budgetary cutbacks and the measures to be taken in response to that need were discussed with the academic community, the constituencies worked together to find reasonable compromises in proposed cutbacks.

The task force also defined more precisely the nature and scope of certain committees. For example, it initially proposed a committee to be specifically responsible for agendas, budgets, and committees, but eventually decided that the responsibilities of the existing Committee on Academic Priorities should be enlarged to include consideration of such issues in light of the complex set of faculty needs and requests.

A detailed protocol for the hiring and removal of faculty originally was not included in the *Plan of Governance*, but was added later. In addition, the faculty’s role in the selection of senior administrators was codified.

In the spring of 2005, the Board of Trustees approved the revised draft of the *Plan of Governance* after it received unanimous approval at two successive meetings of the faculty. Following this approval, a new faculty committee was formed to revise the faculty by-laws (provisions for amending the by-laws are contained in the *Plan*). The faculty adopted the revised *By-laws* in the spring of 2006. These by-laws have subsequently been amended to reflect the unification of the faculty of Arts and Sciences with the faculty of Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, as well as certain changes in senior administrative positions.
2.1.3 College Governance Today: the Role of the College’s Constituents in Shared Governance

(i) Board of Trustees

The primary roles of the Board of Trustees in College governance are described in section 2.1.1.²

(ii) Administration

Prior to 1997, a small group of administrators, including the President, the Provost, the Chief Development Officer and the Treasurer, met weekly to address the day-to-day operations and to discuss important issues facing the College. It was mostly this group that worked with Trustees. President Vickers expanded this group to include the Chief Information Officer, the Dean of the Undergraduate College, the Executive Assistant to the President, and, when the position was created in 2005, the Chief Administrative Officer. This group, now called the President’s Cabinet, meets regularly with faculty, students, and trustees. Under the new Plan of Governance, cabinet members are invited to faculty meetings, during which they field questions from the faculty. In addition, cabinet members meet periodically with student leaders and attend board meetings. Cabinet members are included in some executive sessions each time the Board of Trustees meets.³

(iii) Faculty

Before the Plan of Governance was revised, the Faculty had no clearly codified role in matters of college governance, such as administrative appointments, board decisions, and committee service. Faculty meetings consisted mostly of reports delivered by the President, the Provost, and Faculty committee chairs. As outlined in section 2.1.2, the new Plan of Governance clarified the Faculty’s role in governing the College.

For more details on the Faculty’s role in college governance under the new Plan, see chapter 4, section 4.3.4, especially subsection (ii).⁴

(iv) Staff

One of the important ways that staff members participate in shared governance at the College is via the activities of the Staff Association (SA). Formed in 1974, the purpose of the SA, as stated in its constitution, is to “further the quality of the College’s services and the welfare of its employees by providing (1) a formal line of communication

² See also the Trustees Handbook, in the appendix.
³ For the administrative structure of Bryn Mawr College, see Appendix 2.3.
⁴ See also the Faculty Handbook, in the appendix and online at: http://www.brynmawr.edu/provost/faculty_and_staff/handbook.html
between the employees, the Bryn Mawr College administration, and other groups of the Bryn Mawr College community, and (2) a forum for employee discussion of College policies, procedures, and condition of employment, and a means for taking constructive action” (See http://www.brynmawr.edu/staffassoc/who/constitution.html).

All College employees are considered members of the SA, with the exception of members of the Senior Administrative Staff and those employees who are primarily students or faculty members. Dues-paying members are eligible to hold office in the organization, have voting privileges, and have the right to represent the SA on College committees. General meetings of the SA occur at least once per semester.

Dues-paying members of the SA elect an executive council consisting of representatives from each of the College’s three employee categories—Administrative/Professional, Clerical/Technical, and Service/Craft—and a number of officers. The Executive Council has the power to call general staff meetings (the Council itself meets at least twice per semester), create committees, and appoint representatives to College Committees.

It is primarily through service on College committees that staff members participate in shared governance. Representatives from the SA sit on a number of important College committees, including the Budget Committee, the Committee for Facilities Planning and Priorities, and the College Benefits Committee. Staff representatives to College committees report on committee activities to the SA Executive Council and one member submits a report to the entire SA. In addition, two SA representatives attend Board of Trustees meetings to inform the Board about staff initiatives, accomplishments, and concerns. Twice a year two designated members of the Board meet with the SA Executive Council.

SA representatives also meet with the President, the Chief Administrative Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Director of Human Resources.

Recently, the SA worked with the administration to resolve some major concerns staff members expressed in a 2003 Staff survey. Some results of this work include the College’s adoption of a new performance evaluation process, the drafting of a new Grievance Procedure, and the appointment of a Staff Issues Liaison who serves as an informal, confidential resource to help staff members find resources for the resolution of their concerns. A member of the SA who served as a representative on the Budget Committee was involved in planning the budget cutting workshop in spring 2009, in which many members of the Staff participated, expressing their ideas and concerns about ways to reduce the existing operating budget.

The SA prides itself on being an agent for change on the campus. For instance, the SA has taken the lead in arguing for and implementing sustainable, “green” practices on campus. This work began in 1998 when staff, students, administrators and faculty formed the Green Plan Committee. The SA also helped to form the Bryn Mawr Greens, a
student group that raises awareness about sustainability and environmental stewardship, and advises the senior administration about student interest in sustainability. More than 10 years ago the SA initiated the end of year “recovery program” to recycle and reuse via a campus sale, items students leave behind. The sale is still organized and carried out by the staff, and each year more than 4,000 items are reclaimed during the event.

The SA plays a critical role in creating a strong sense of community on Bryn Mawr’s campus. For example, they have established a Knitting Club comprised of staff, students, faculty, and administrators who meet once a week to share their skills and work together to create knitted products that are donated to organizations in need. This group is one of the most representative gatherings on campus. The SA also has established a memorial garden to honor employees of the College who have passed away while employed at the College.

The SA encourages all staff to review and update their job descriptions annually, as these are key determinants of salaries and wages.

The staff communicate their activities to the community in a number of ways, including posting meeting minutes on designated bulletin boards across campus, sending periodic electronic communications, updating the SA website, and publishing the SA’s newsletter, The Banner (now entirely electronic).5

Students

Student self-governance has historically been very important at Bryn Mawr. In 1892, Bryn Mawr became the first college in the country to give its undergraduates responsibility for establishing and enforcing community standards and rules of behavior. Student self-governance continues to be important to this day—indeed, it is one of the reasons that many students choose to attend the College. In addition to giving students responsibility for regulating their own conduct, self-governance at Bryn Mawr gives students a major role in decisions regarding the academic, residential, and student life programs. There is a student representative to the Board of Trustees on some board committees and task forces.

The Task Force on Self-Governance and Supporting Student Life was formed in March 2005 to develop a shared understanding of student self-governance at Bryn Mawr. The Task Force report of April 2006 clarified the responsibility students share with the faculty and the administration in the management of the academic honor code, the social honor code, the Self-Government Association (SGA), traditions, Customs and the policies on parties, alcohol, and drug use.

5 For additional information on staff, see the Staff Handbook, in the appendix.
The Task Force also recommended that, in order to strengthen Student self-governance, the College must increase student awareness about the self-governance system by facilitating communication between the student body and its leadership.

Students and the administration responded to the Task Force recommendations and criticisms from students who felt that SGA was not sufficiently inclusive in several ways. In particular, student leaders engaged in a complete and quite successful review of the governance system to find ways to make the system more inclusive of students from all backgrounds, to increase student participation in the organization, and to provide leadership positions for sophomores and juniors that will ensure some continuity from year-to-year. A leadership retreat was established to train student leaders before school starts each year. A mandatory training program was instituted for student club leaders. To ensure the distribution of accurate information about SGA, the website was updated and expanded. Blogs were instituted to promote conversations among students about self-governance. Regular meetings were established between student leaders and Student Services Staff and with the President and the President’s Cabinet. SGA officers now work with the Student Life Office on special events, including guest speakers, fundraisers, and concerts. Students are made aware of their responsibilities for planning and overseeing the events and of the liability issues surrounding them. Appropriate administrative support is provided to ensure the safety of all participants.⁶

2.2 Strategic Planning

This section describes several important strategic planning efforts: the Plan for a New Century (section 2.2.1), the Task Force on Business Practices, Budgeting and Finance (2.2.2), the merging of Library and Computing Services into a single Information Services Department (2.2.3), and the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources (2.2.4). These strategic planning efforts significantly increased the participation of all College constituencies in the development of long-range plans for the College. This increased participation demonstrates the effectiveness of the task force structure for College planning. Of course, effective planning involving multiple College constituencies requires appropriate tools to provide the relevant information and analysis to all participants. The College’s major strategic planning tools are described in a supplementary section included at the end of this chapter.

2.2.1 Plan for a New Century

In 1997, when Nancy Vickers became President of Bryn Mawr, she immediately began to develop a strategic plan for the College. This plan was based in part on the self-study prepared for the College’s previous decennial accreditation review, which identified several areas of the institution in need of improvement. The resulting Plan for a New Century...
Century (Appendix 1.1) was developed after an extensive series of discussions among faculty, administration, staff, students, and alumnae.

The Plan for a New Century called for additional investment in College programs in order to meet five broad educational goals considered critical to carrying out the College’s mission and meeting the needs of students:

1. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to live and work in a global environment.
2. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to thrive in a context of rapid scientific change.
3. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to work with, and give shape to, the powerful new information technologies that are transforming our society.
4. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to meet the challenge of leading and serving in diverse communities.
5. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to take the lead in the world of arts and letters.

The Plan for a New Century also served as the basis for a major capital campaign, Challenging Women. This campaign provided some unrestricted funding that was used to raise the amount of resources available for financial aid, faculty salaries, etc. The campaign also attracted contributions to fund a number of new programs. The College made sure that the costs of new programs and capital projects were fully funded by the campaign.

The Plan resulted in a number of accomplishments over the past decade (see chapter 1, section 1.3) and it continues to guide strategic planning at the College in important ways. However, after more than a decade under the Plan, the College began to face new challenges, and it became clear that new direction was needed. See section 2.2.4 for a description of important work done to pick-up where the Plan left off.

2.2.2 Task Force on Business Practices, Budgeting and Finance

Another key component of Bryn Mawr’s strategic planning involved a comprehensive assessment of the College’s day-to-day business practices, budgeting and financial management. After the Plan for a New Century was produced, several years of budget deficits and staff reductions in the areas of business and finance reduced the College’s attention to long-term financial planning. In order to put itself on a more secure financial footing for the present and the future, the Board of Trustees formed a task force to examine the College’s finance and business operations, including the efficiency of its business practices, and the effectiveness of its financial planning, as well as to ensure sufficient staffing in these areas.
The Task Force on Business Practices, Budgeting and Finance was formed in the spring of 2003. Members included trustees of the College and representatives of the administration and faculty.

The task force began by collecting information on the current financial and business practices of the College (a situation assessment), including:

- Compiling a list of questions designed to collect general information about business services;
- Reviewing the scope and responsibilities of the business and finance organization;
- Examining the allocation of financial staff and responsibilities before and after recent budget cuts;
- Reviewing job descriptions of personnel in the Treasurer’s and Comptroller’s offices;
- Reviewing reports of Staff, Students, and Board liaisons concerning the College’s business practices.

The task force also consulted with members of the administration, business and finance staff, and other constituents of the College to further understand the strengths and weaknesses of the College’s business practices and financial management. In addition, a subgroup of the task force sent out a questionnaire to comparable colleges and conducted interviews with business and finance officers as well as with trustees and Finance Committee chairs of Wellesley, Barnard, Smith, and Mills Colleges. Findings that emerged from the interview data included the following observations:

- When resources are thin, day-to-day tasks dominate;
- As tasks are increased, the role of administration and finance are split;
- The processes of planning and centralizing business and finance organizations require focused resources;
- Resources for planning should be under the CFO.

On the basis of the information gathered, the task force identified a number of ways to improve the College’s business practices, budgeting and financial management, and to determine which staff members currently employed in those areas were best suited to various positions. Thus, it made the following recommendations:

- Create a new reporting format for the College’s financial statements;
- Identify key financial measurements or standards to be reported quarterly rather than annually;
- Hire Cambridge Consultants to comprehensively manage the College’s endowment;
- Collaborate with the Development Office to standardize progress reports on the College’s *Campaign for a New Century*. 
More broadly, the task force proposed an administrative structural reorganization that would preserve current strengths of the College’s business practices and financial management, reassign staff appropriately, and allocate responsibilities most efficiently and effectively.

The proposed reorganization recommended that the functions of the Treasurer’s position be split between a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), and that certain key staff positions be added. The CAO would be responsible for Human Resources and for the business and related College offices. The CAO would collaborate with appropriate staff members to make changes in current business practices that will improve operational efficiency and increase overall satisfaction of faculty, staff, and students with the services provided by these offices. The CAO would also serve on the president’s cabinet.

The CFO would manage the operating and capital budgets and would work with the College’s consultants and trustees Investment Subcommittee to manage the College’s endowment. The CFO would also be responsible for the long-term financial planning of the College and oversee the College’s day-to-day financial functions, including accounting, payroll, auditing, bank relationships, debt management, and appropriate recordkeeping, control, and reporting systems. Consolidating these financial responsibilities of the College under a CFO with broad authority over both day-to-day financial functions and long-term financial planning, while allocating other responsibilities to a CAO, became the centerpiece of the new organizational structure.

This new organizational structure, its costs and responsibilities was presented to the Board of Trustees at its December 2004 meeting, where it received full board approval.

In September 2005, after an extensive search by a committee composed of administration, faculty, and trustees, a new CFO was hired. Under the new CFO and CAO, the College’s business and financial offices made many significant changes, some of which resulted in cost reductions for the College. These changes include:

- Implementing dynamic computer-based models for 5-year budgeting and beyond, and for 10-year planning of facilities renovations and deferred maintenance;
- Calling additional “town-hall” meetings to discuss the College’s financial health that enhanced transparency, increased attendance at budget and planning meetings, and aided the entire community in accepting financial changes;
- Establishing a sophisticated endowment spending formula to regulate College spending as the market fluctuates and to help control fixed costs;
- Streamlining the financial close processes and changing from paper to electronic entries;
• Computerizing campus job descriptions, and electronically posting of job openings for over 1,000 positions;
• Developing a web based system to allocate venues meetings and events and electronically posting events on the College website calendar.

These organizational structural changes have significantly enhanced the College's business and financial operations. They have also improved data analysis and financial planning for other task forces and committees and helped to better support overall strategic planning at the College.

2.2.3 Merging the Library and Computing Services into a single Information Services Department

As technology has come to play an increasingly central role in its academic and administrative activities, the College has recognized the need to create an overarching structure that could respond to continual changes in technology-based resources used by the College community. After consulting with information technology staff, community members and outside experts, the College merged its library and computing services into a single Information Services department. This merger has allowed the College to take full advantage of its existing technology-based resources while preparing for future technological advancements.

In 2001, President Vickers established a Senior Advisory Group for Information Technology (SAGIT). Composed of the Directors of Administrative and Academic Computing, the Director of Libraries, the Associate Provost, two faculty members, and chaired by a professor from the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, SAGIT was charged with: (1) recommending a revised organizational structure of information technology services on campus, (2) devising a new system for delivering information technology, and (3) developing new computing policies and revising old ones. Later that year, the College recruited a visiting committee composed of information technology officers from Bates, Vassar, Cornell, and Mt. Holyoke, as well as a member of the Board of Trustees with substantial experience in this field, to assist SAGIT in formulating its plans for information technology services at the College.

After consulting with SAGIT, reviewing the report from the visiting committee, and receiving input from pertinent members of the College community, President Vickers appointed Elliott Shore, the Constance A. Jones Director of Libraries and Professor of History, to be the Chief Information Officer, effective January 1, 2002, and created a new department, Information Services (IS), which comprises Academic and Administrative Computing, all College libraries, the Visual Resources Center, the Audio-Visual Department, Telephone Services, and the Language Learning Center. IS was organized into teams or Nodes consisting of IT and library professionals charged with providing technology services directly to the three major academic divisions (Sciences,
The merger of the computing, library, and other academic support services has enabled IS to respond to the community’s changing technology needs with greater flexibility and creativity than before. Since 2001, IS has sought consistently to consolidate positions (IS staff has been reduced by approximately 10 FTE, or 15%), while devoting additional resources to areas of growing demand (For example, web management services, has grown from a one- to 4-person department within Computing Services led by a senior manager). Perhaps most notably, cooperative relationships with the Haverford and Swarthmore College libraries has greatly improved the processing of library materials.

IS continues to respond effectively to increasing community needs for technology support, in spite of some staff reductions resulting from the economic setbacks in 2003 and 2009. Now operating as a single department, IS has been able to make strategic decisions about where to make those reductions, while simultaneously protecting and improving essential and growing services. This improvement reflects the increasing importance of the Web for the work of students, faculty, and staff.

Concurrent with the merger, a Board of Trustees Information Technology Committee was formed, consisting of eight Board members, many of whom have information technology experience. The Committee was charged with:

...oversee[ing] the College’s technology, ensuring that the College is up-to-date, well-served and well positioned in a time of rapid and sophisticated changes. This would include understanding the strengths of current systems, advising on the weaknesses and facilitating not just improvements but, when appropriate, new directions. This oversight would also include identifying and supporting pilot programs and/or small experiments to make the operations of the College more effective and more collaborative to the benefit of all partners. It would also prepare the College for the changing demands and expectations of its Student body who have lived with IT all their lives.

After the Board restructuring in 2003, its Information Technology Committee was expanded to include in its meetings the Provost, the Treasurer, the Chief Administrative Officer, and the Director of Computing Services. The Committee also invited chairs of faculty committees, students, and staff members to participate in discussions on technology-related topics.

Not long after the formation of IS, it became clear that the former advisory groups, the Board of Trustees Information Technology Committee and the Faculty Committee on Libraries, Information, and Computing (CLIC) could not fully represent the technology needs of the entire College community. Accordingly, in the spring of 2004, IS developed a campus community survey as part of a broader assessment of technology services on
The department administered the survey again in the fall of 2005 and in the winter of 2008 in an effort to gauge community satisfaction and to identify technological needs. In addition to assessing technology needs of the College community, the survey has provided the College with a useful mechanism for comparing technology use at Bryn Mawr with use at its peer institutions as it has grown into a national instrument of assessment.

The 2005 and 2008 surveys played a critical role in establishing priorities for IS. The following is a small sample of the problem areas identified in the surveys, followed by a brief description of the response from IS:

- **Telephone services.** According to the 2005 survey, satisfaction with telephone services was low, especially among students. In response, IS eliminated the requirement that students have dorm room phones and the resulting monthly fee. To provide more reliable service, requests for room telephone lines were included in the IS’s central ticketing system.

- **Wireless Internet.** According to both surveys, students and faculty wanted more wireless Internet availability in both surveys. In response, IS has expanded wireless Internet access, which is now available in most academic buildings, the libraries, the lounges of all dorms, and Merion Green.

- **Network speed.** The 2008 survey showed decreasing satisfaction with the College’s network speed as the use of streaming video and internet radio has dramatically increased. In response, IS doubled bandwidth in the fall of 2007 and doubled it again in the winter of 2009. IS is collaborating with Haverford and Swarthmore to continue to increase bandwidth.

- **Help Desk.** Between 2005 and 2008, the survey showed increasing satisfaction with the IS Help Desk, but comparative surveys showed that Bryn Mawr did not provide the same level of computing assistance as its peers. In response, IS transferred one of its Desktop Support staff positions to the Help Desk and assigned two professional staff members to serve as the primary contacts for College community members requesting help.

In an ongoing effort to improve its services to all constituents of the Bryn Mawr community, in early 2007 IS began a College-wide assessment called the Information Systems Infrastructure Review (ISIR), which is now largely completed. This review paid special attention to community-wide services, particularly file sharing, email, and the web-based College calendar. In the course of this review, IS consulted with the Board of Trustees Information Services Advisory Group, the College’s senior administrative staff, the Faculty Committee on Libraries, Information and Computing (CLIC), administrative office heads, faculty members (during faculty meetings), and the Undergraduate Self-Government Association. As a result of this review, IS plans to adopt a new system of integrated services.
The experience of implementing this major change to the information environment raises the question as to whether the community needs a better, more inclusive structure for advising IS on priorities and programs. Although IS leadership meets regularly with the faculty committee CLIC, the IS department hopes to create venues for discussion with students and particularly staff, whose work is critically affected by the operations of IS.

2.2.4 Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources

In October 2005, the Board of Trustees convened the Task Force on Balancing the College’s Mission and Resources. This task force represents the College’s most ambitious strategic planning initiative to date, for at least two reasons. First, its scope covered a broad range of issues with far-reaching implications. This task force was formed to assess current practices of allocating resources and to create new practices that would allow more strategic deployment of resources for the College, with costs and benefits being considered from the perspective of the College as a whole, rather than from the perspective of individual constituencies. Second, drawing on the principles of shared governance (see section 2.1.2), this task force, comprising members of the faculty, administration, and trustees, undertook a truly collaborative effort. The Board of Trustees appointed the President of the College as the leader of the task force. Other members of the task force included the Chief Financial Officer, the Provost, four trustees, and faculty representatives serving on the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP).

The task force was charged to operate under the following principles, each of which marked a change from Bryn Mawr’s past practices:

- To adopt a long-range institutional perspective rather than a narrow, short-term perspective of specific issues, one-time opportunities or isolated crises;
- To be transparent in its work on a College-wide basis;
- To represent the spirit of shared governance and to provide a model of collaboration between trustees, faculty and administration in achieving institutional goals.

Thanks in part to the work of the Governance Task Force and Bryn Mawr’s revised Plan of Governance, the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources could focus on academic programs (again in contrast to previous collaborative efforts among trustees, faculty, and the administration).

The task force was given three years to conduct its work, during which time it sought to uphold the principles with which it was charged, maintaining a long-term perspective, cultivating transparency and representing a spirit of shared governance by

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7 The broad scope of this task force’s work is evident from the fact that every Middle States accreditation standard except standards 10, 12, and 13 is cited in connection with the present section.
communicating with the entire College community. In the course of its information gathering, the Task Force assembled and analyzed data on core academic and administrative operations. Information was gathered on:

- Course scheduling and use of College facilities, size of student enrollments in courses, and growth rates of course offerings;
- Departmental requirements for majors and minors;
- Graduate school admissions, time to degree, and outcomes;
- Cost of administration and student services;
- Projected costs of facilities and technology, including deferred maintenance, improvements, and expansion;
- The overall financial structure of the College and how it compares to its academic peers in terms of size, discount rate, student-to-faculty ratio, cost of a tenure decision, faculty leave policies, graduate programs, and endowment per student.

In order to weigh the costs and benefits of the two graduate schools, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) and the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research (GSSWSR), the task force commissioned thorough peer reviews of each school. The GSAS review was conducted by an ad hoc committee of highly respected graduate deans and academic officers, and the GSSWSR review by a reaccreditation team appointed by the national social work accrediting agency.

The task force created an information base for decision-making about mission and resources through:

- Briefings from senior administrative leaders.
- Benchmarking in relation to peers.
- Graduate program data assembled by the graduate schools and departments.
- Meetings with departments whose graduate programs were being reviewed in depth.
- Meetings with Student representatives from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and a meeting for student representatives of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research.
- Consistent reporting of the work of the task force during its three years to the Board and the Faculty at its meetings, through surveys, constituency meetings, circulation of draft documents, and interim reports, as well as access to minutes of the Task Force meetings themselves.

The task force completed its work in September of 2008 and made a number of significant recommendations that would allow the College to better support its mission and achieve its goals. The task force also developed a set of guiding principles by which
to enact its recommendations. These principles, which were endorsed by the College community, included:

- Bryn Mawr’s primary mission must center on providing a vital, rigorous undergraduate liberal arts education to women;
- The College must remain committed to excellence in graduate education, as appropriate to the scope, scale, and nature of a primarily undergraduate liberal arts institution for women;
- The College must conduct regular peer reviews of its departments and programs and improve accountability and responsiveness to these reviews;
- The College must support effective shared governance and collaboration among faculty, trustees, and administrators;
- The College community must receive regular updates on financial issues.

Guided by these principles, the task force made a number of recommendations for the College, including:

- Create a five-year budget model that directs resources to the College’s three highest priorities—faculty salary increases, innovation, and deferred maintenance—and reduces spending in non-priority areas;
- Building on the work of the Task Force on Optimal Enrollment, increase enrollment modestly without endangering the significant progress the College has made on managing its discount rate;
- With the cooperation of CAP and the Provost, reduce faculty leave replacements while providing appropriate curriculum coverage;
- Develop a multi-year plan for deferred maintenance and fund new building projects with designated gifts before construction begins;
- Enhance the transparency of the College’s finances through better reporting procedures and meetings;
- Continue ongoing assessment of the discount rate, while seeking to make the cost of a Bryn Mawr education manageable for all admitted students, regardless of their socio-economic status;
- Seek further opportunities to reduce administrative costs through increased collaboration with Haverford College;
- Create a single faculty by uniting GSAS and GSSWSR faculties and appoint a single Dean of Graduate Studies;
- Fortify integration among graduate programs and their relationship with the undergraduate program;
- Phase out the graduate program in Russian;
- Form a Curricular Renewal Group to conduct a comprehensive curriculum review;
- Explore with CAP and the Curricular Renewal Working Group the possibility of changing the student-to-faculty ratio from 8-to-1 to 8.5-to-1;
• Continue to adhere to guidelines for reducing the number of low enrollment courses;
• Review the success of scheduling courses more evenly throughout the week;
• Encourage departments to control costs and integrate programs;
• Require the Provost and the Dean of Graduate Studies to give annual progress reports to the Board of Trustees.

On April 26, 2008, the Board of Trustees of Bryn Mawr College formally endorsed the recommendations of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources. (See Appendix 2.5 for the complete task force report.)

The task force’s efforts will bring into better balance the College’s resources with its mission and highest current priorities. The information the task force collected on many of the College’s core functions will serve as the basis for current and future activities and assessment. This successful collaboration of constituencies, combined with the cultivation of transparency, was born out of the new model of shared governance adopted in 2005, and it serves as an illustration of the effectiveness of using task forces, as mandated in 2003 by the Board of Trustees revised governance structure. All of the College’s constituencies are engaged in creating a strong future for Bryn Mawr.

Before disbanding, the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources prepared recommendations for further strategic planning at the College. (See Appendix 2.5, especially p. 4 of main report and Appendix E, section III of the memo and section IV of the April 22 report to the Board.) Keeping those recommendations in mind, President McAuliffe has recently established a multi-constituency group to think creatively and strategically about the College’s future. The “Thinking Forward Group” has the following multi-faceted charge:

• Think big and bold and encourage others to do so.
  o Urge visionary thinking as a more regular part of the operation for all planning groups.
  o Push a long-range perspective, continually asking what Bryn Mawr should be in 5 years, 10 years and 25 years.
• Scan the external environment, including other colleges and universities as well as related institutions, for innovative ideas, emerging trends and competitive risks.
• Communicate regularly the College’s principal goals and its progress on these goals.
• Propose priorities (short term and long term) for institutional discussion of resource use/funding, communications and institutional attention. The Group will recognize that priority setting also flows from work in progress. Its role is not to preempt or undermine existing efforts but to propose how the College can prioritize across multiple venues and to bring that coordinated assessment forward for discussion, decision and dissemination.
• Monitor and coordinate the work of existing planning groups (curricular renewal, CAP, budget committee, space planning committee etc.).
  o Assure leveraging of such work for purposes of “quality of institution”, visibility, optimal competitive positioning, and the recruitment and retention of students, faculty and staff.
  o Identify the projects and planning exercises currently underway—as well as opportunities that arise from external sources—that support the College’s mission and could have a significant positive impact on enhancing the College’s leadership position in the global higher education marketplace.
  o Provide the mechanism for synthesizing and relating these various planning processes to one another.
  o Propose, if appropriate, an emerging issue to an existing committee.
• Develop data-rich analyses.
  o Can gather data directly or suggest such activity to an existing committee.
  o Compile and synthesize data that create an understanding across disciplines and programs of what the College of the future will look like.
  o Conduct gap analyses, and consider options for areas Bryn Mawr may wish to explore.

See Appendix 2.6 for a fuller description of the Thinking Forward Group and its charge. While still in its early stages, it is clear that this group is poised to lead Bryn Mawr into its next round of planning, assessment, and renewal.

2.3 Appraisal and Recommendations

Over the past ten years College governance has been restructured to significantly increase opportunities for multi-constituency communications, planning, and decision-making. As a result, faculty, staff, students, and administrators can collaborate more effectively than ever before to live up to the principles embodied in the College’s mission statement. The collaboration between constituencies that took place this past spring to reduce the College’s expenditures exemplifies the benefits of the shared governance model. This major budget reduction process happened for the third time since 1986, but this was the first time that faculty, staff, and students played a significant role in discussions and decisions regarding budget reductions and revenue enhancement strategies. And while the level of transparency and trust has certainly improved, more time and effort is needed to continue to build partnerships for consultation and discussion. As more collaborative and open decision-making continues to evolve, trust among staff, students, faculty members and administrators will continue to grow.

As we strategically plan for our future, the College will also attempt to better leverage our resources through our inter-institutional partnerships. For example, College faculty
and staff have been collaborating with their Haverford colleagues to reduce budgets and strengthen the bi-College relationship by consolidating some academic programs and administrative offices. Although a number of academic departments have already consolidated programs in major areas of study, until recently only the libraries and two administrative offices had combined their budgetary resources. In September, Bryn Mawr and Haverford announced the mergers of Dining Services operations and Public Safety departments. Pursuing these cooperative efforts led Bryn Mawr and Haverford to recognize the need for a strategic plan to improve services and reduce costs between the two Colleges. At the Board of Trustees Two-College Joint Council meeting in February 2009, each institution’s trustees, presidents, and administrators outlined an agenda for a bi-College strategic planning process. A subcommittee of the Joint Council was charged with overseeing the agenda and monitoring progress of the bi-College strategic planning effort.

To summarize, we note following strengths of the College’s present governance and strategic planning structures:

- Our model of shared governance has gotten off to a strong start as many important decisions at the College are now made in consultation with all major constituencies;
- We are able to take advantage of the considerable talents of our Board of Trustees via our task force approach to planning and assessment;
- The Staff Association and the Student Government Association provide important avenues for these two constituencies to make a significant impact on the College and its operations;
- We have overhauled two major areas of operation at the College, business practices/finance and information services, in response to assessment. As a result, these areas now operate more efficiently, can take better advantage of the talents and resources that we have, and position the College to move strategically into the future;
- The Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources was the first strategic planning effort to have a scope that covered a broad range of issues with far-reaching implications. This task force assessed current practices of allocating resources from the perspective of the College as a whole, rather than from the perspective of individual constituencies. This provides us with a good model for strategic planning in the future.

Moving forward, we offer the following recommendations:

- Continue developing the College’s multi-constituency, shared governance system via task forces, multi-constituency committees, and transparent and collaborative decision-making;
- Explore further cost-saving opportunities with Haverford College through the Joint Council strategic planning subcommittee;
• Use the work from the Competitive Position Task Force to increase the visibility of the College, to guide the College in developing programming that will continue to make Bryn Mawr attractive to prospective students, and to develop a price structure and set of financial aid policies that will make us competitive in the marketplace;
• Build upon the successes of recent strategic planning efforts through the President’s new “Thinking Forward Group”;
• Consider creating a more extensive and inclusive advisory system for IS.
Supplement: Strategic Planning Tools, Resources and Resource Allocation

Financial Strategic Planning Tool

The College’s strategic and financial planning model is PFM Future Perfect. It integrates numerous operating and financial variables essential for an academic institution, such as enrollment, tuition revenue, fundraising and endowment performance, and debt and capital planning.

The Future Perfect model is customized for Bryn Mawr College and houses the College’s five- and ten-year budget. In addition, it has the capacity to explore multiple financial and strategic options by allowing users to make projections and run various scenarios to see their potential financial impact on the College. Business and finance offices can consider scenarios in order to answer such questions as, “What impact does a 1% salary increase over the next three years have?” or, “What happens if we add 50 Students to next year’s class?” or, “What impact does $30 million in new debt have?” Future Perfect also produces graphics that enable administrators to communicate financial information clearly and readily to College constituent groups (staff, faculty, and trustees). Ratio analyses are simplified with a graphic interface that enables all Moody ratios to be charted in accordance with the College’s financial projections. Most recently, the College’s business and finance offices used Future Perfect to evaluate various financing options for the renovations of Goodhart Hall and Schwartz Gymnasium. After the financing decision was made, these new projects were integrated into the model.

The Facilities Master Plan

As the Plan for a New Century capital campaign was coming to a close, the College established the Campus Facilities Planning Committee, comprising representatives from all College constituencies, to guide the College in its allocation of capital resources for facilities.

In order to establish allocation guidelines, the committee needed to update the campus concept master plan, which was created in 1997. Over the past decade, this plan provided a framework for budgeting and decision-making regarding improvements and renovations of facilities. In updating this plan, the committee itemized its past accomplishments and future goals, and considered the best way to address current needs of the College community and maintain the standards outlined in the College’s mission statement. The revised plan provides a new framework for making decisions, accommodating expansion or change, and setting priorities among projects.

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8 See also “Financial Documents”, in the appendix, for further documentation regarding the College’s finances.
The committee hired outside architectural consultants from Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc., along with their sub-consultant and landscape architectural firm, Carter Van Dyke Associates, to collaborate with Glenn Smith and Joseph Marra from Facilities Services to update the concept plan and to collect input from College constituencies.

The committee identified the following needs:

• To update lab facilities for science departments;
• To improve athletic facilities;
• To renovate Thomas Hall and make Taylor Hall accessible to those with physical disabilities;
• To consider the potential consequences of moving the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research to the main campus;
• To improve campus dormitories.

As it revised the campus concept master plan, the committee agreed that the Park Science Building required the most extensive and complex renovations. Therefore, the committee commissioned the architectural consultants to design a plan for the science building to supplement the concept master plan. The consultants collaborated with science faculty and College administrators to develop the supplemental plan, and they continue to revise it, as the plan does not yet meet all the perceived needs and goals of the science departments. Using funds available from grants and the College operating budget, Facilities Services will begin to implement the recommendations of this supplemental plan in phases over the next few years.

In the fall of 2009, to complement the updated campus concept master plan, the College formed a Sustainability Committee to consider ways to reduce the College’s carbon emissions and to make recommendations about other environmental initiatives.

*Staffing and Salary Peer Comparison Studies*

In an effort to support Bryn Mawr’s mission statement and to compete with its peer institutions, the College is considering ways to expand its faculty and non-faculty staffing and to improve faculty and staff salaries. To these ends, the College participates in the Consortium On Financing Higher Education (COFHE), a valuable source of data for strategic planning. The College uses these data to compare its faculty staffing and salary levels to the other COFHE colleges, including Haverford, Amherst, Barnard, Carleton, Mount Holyoke, Oberlin, Pomona, Smith, Swarthmore, Trinity, Wellesley, Wesleyan and Williams. To make valid comparisons, the College examines the faculty staffing levels of COFHE colleges in light of their student-to-faculty ratios. Compared to its peer institutions, Bryn Mawr has the sixth lowest student-to-faculty ratio, which was 8.3-to-1 in the 2009-10 academic year. In addition, comparisons showed that Bryn Mawr faculty

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9 COFHE has a specific methodology for calculating this ratio, which is why the Bryn Mawr ratio for COFHE purposes is different than the one used for internal purposes of the Optimal Enrollment Task Force.
salaries are 9% less than the average of all COFHE colleges and 5.9% less than the average of the lower-endowed colleges. In response, over the past five years, the College has increased the average faculty salary pool by 5.6%.

Using data from COFHE’s non-faculty staffing survey conducted every three years, the College is also assessing staff salaries in relation to its student-to-staff ratio. The most recent survey, completed during the 2005-06 academic year, calculated Bryn Mawr’s median student-to-staff ratio as 4.3, slightly higher than the 4.2 median student-to-staff ratio for all COFHE Colleges. In its decisions about administrative staffing, the College particularly looks at areas where staffing is more or less than the average of the other COFHE Colleges. Moreover, the College periodically hires a consultant to survey College staff salaries in the local labor market and in other college and university labor markets. The College uses these data to make appropriate salary adjustments among staff categories. The College’s most recent salary survey, completed in fiscal year 2007, showed that staff salaries, on average, fall about 4% below market. In response to this finding, over the past three years the College increased the annual staff salary pool by 4.8%, bringing it more in line with its peer institutions and market rates.
3

Undergraduate Curriculum
Standard 11 • Standard 12 • Standard 14

At the level of individual courses, at the level of the major, and at the level of the College’s general education requirements, the faculty is constantly assessing the curriculum and making program improvements in response to that information. In the first section of this chapter (3.1), we outline how the College addresses its mission and the Middle States standards under our current curriculum, as it has evolved over the past ten years through assessment and incremental change.

While this type of assessment and change is highly effective, we also benefit from periodically stepping back and looking at the curriculum as a whole. Such occasions provide the opportunity for thoughtful reflection about the relationship of the curriculum to the College’s mission and about what the future holds for our graduates. In section 3.2, we describe an important example of just this sort of encompassing reflection and assessment, namely, the process of curricular renewal currently underway at the College. We then detail some of its early results.

3.1 The College Curriculum Today

3.1.1 The Current Curriculum (I): General Education

Middle States Standard 12 requires of an accredited institution that its curriculum be designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills that include oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency. Addressing this standard enables Bryn Mawr to fulfill key pieces of its mission:

- to encourage the pursuit of knowledge as preparation for life and work;
- to teach critical, creative and independent habits of thought and expression;
- to sustain a community diverse in nature and democratic in practice that enables students to consider many perspectives in order to gain a deeper understanding of each other and the world; and
- to encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world.

Bryn Mawr’s general education requirements allow students to have broad exposure to a variety of disciplines, while at the same time enhancing the core skills they will need
(writing and quantitative reasoning) for “life and work”. Such broad exposure to the liberal arts’ disciplines is an excellent way to build critical thinking skills and “habits of thought and expression” that will be useful no matter what the students’ chosen pathway.

Currently, students are required to take a College Seminar, two courses in each of the three Divisions (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences), a quantitative reasoning course, a foreign language (through the intermediate level, as evidenced by coursework or proficiency test), and a major course of study. These requirements were created by the Faculty’s Curriculum Committee and, as such, are owned, supported, and reviewed by the College’s Faculty—as are all aspects of the curriculum.\(^1\)

One of the most important ways to prepare students for life and work is to develop their communication skills. Accordingly, our College requirements ensure that students are trained in oral and written communication. The College Seminars (renamed the *Balch Seminars* in the fall 2009) are intentionally designed to train students in College-level writing and oral communication via emphasis on small group discussion, intensive process-oriented writing instruction, and bi-weekly writing conferences with faculty.\(^2\) Students continue to strengthen and grow their communication skills in smaller upper-level seminars and in their senior capstone experience (typically a senior paper or thesis). These projects require a significant writing component and often some form of oral or performance presentation. While a senior thesis is not a College graduation requirement, most of our major programs do require one. Overall about 80 percent of Bryn Mawr students complete a senior thesis or similar senior capstone experience. Students are also provided with co-curricular opportunities to improve their oral communication skills via participation in activities such as plenary, through representation to the Board of Trustees and faculty committees, and via participation in the Teaching and Learning Initiative.

For the quantitative course requirement, students are required to complete a course that has the teaching of quantitative skills or mathematical reasoning as its primary emphasis. In today’s society, some quantitative reasoning ability is crucial to everyday tasks, such as personal finance, and critical to being able to make sense of the complex information that is so much a part of our digital age. The majority of our students gain mathematical reasoning or quantitative skills by taking Calculus, but others opt to do quantitative work in probability and statistics. Our distribution requirements push students to experience potentially new areas of intellectual inquiry. All students are required to take some natural science—including at least one course that requires them to demonstrate competency in the laboratory—thereby giving students the tools to be scientifically and quantitatively literate. Bryn Mawr women choose to major in science and math at rates much higher than the national average, a fact that speaks to our

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\(^1\) For a complete description of the course requirements, see the Course Catalog, available in the evaluation team’s document room or online at [http://www.brynmawr.edu/catalog/2009-10/index.html](http://www.brynmawr.edu/catalog/2009-10/index.html).

\(^2\) See section 3.2 for a complete discussion of the revised *Balch Seminar* and Appendix 3.1 for the goals of the *Balch seminars*. 
success in training women to be successful in “life and work” in the sciences and mathematics. Overall 30% of Bryn Mawr women graduate with a major in math or science as compared to the average of 9% for women nationwide.

In many cases, students’ experience with science and math in the general education program creates a newfound interest in pursuing these fields. Many of these students go on to pursue graduate work in science and mathematics. By requiring breadth in their coursework, the College exposes students to essential knowledge and a breadth of intellectual discourse. Particularly in the sciences, many departments are beginning to offer courses aimed at the general population (rather than majors or potential majors). These courses are designed to give the students exposure to a discipline and its methods of inquiry, thereby giving them general literacy in a science, even if it is the only course they take in the field.³

Now and in the future, preparing students for “life and work” requires that they have technological skills and experience. Information Services supports students, faculty and staff with 21 librarians, 26 IT and media professionals, and 14 programmer analysts, systems, network and web services staff. Each year, reference librarians provide research assistance to between 4,500 and 5,000 patrons; they conduct over 100 Bibliographic Instruction sessions; and provide instruction in a variety of software applications and emerging technologies, including SPSS, Word, Excel, Contribute, blogging, and more. Blackboard, the course management system employed by Bryn Mawr, Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges, was introduced in 2002. Today every course in the tri-college curriculum has a Blackboard site that allows access to course syllabi, reserve readings, and other course related materials for every registered student.

Film and video editing capabilities and support have been available since 1998. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) instruction (via a GIS course offered almost every year, and through individual supervision of projects) is another way in which students are trained to use technology to pursue their scholarship. This merger of technology and data/information strengthens the curriculum and opens students to new ways of thinking about how information is both created and used.

Each summer up to 6 SMEDI (Summer Multimedia Education and Digitization Institute) interns are selected to participate in a paid ten-week immersion program in which they are given instruction in web design, digital video production, multimedia presentation production, as well as educational principles. Under the direction of the Staff Education Coordinator in collaboration with other members of Information Services, these students assist in faculty workshops and student training sessions during the subsequent year.

³ See “Conceptual Physics”, or “How the Earth Works”, in the Course Catalog, as examples of such courses.
In the fall of 2009, Information Services introduced a new concept for service, the TECH Bar. The TECH Bar merges the skills and knowledge of reference librarians, help desk, circulation and reserve desk staff into one-stop shopping for most research and technology needs. The TECH Bar staff educates students, faculty and staff in both existing and emerging technologies—technologies that broadly include instructional design, research and academic tools, and productivity and multimedia software. Based in Canaday library, it provides education and consultation referrals in-person and as-needed by professional staff and students, as well as supported work time. Online computer application guides, tip sheets, and instructional materials, which have long been staples in the self-instruction content of information literacy, are now accessed through the TECH Bar’s website, as well as through direct consultation with TECH Bar staff. This approach is intended to empower community members to become active and knowledgeable learners of new technologies by providing collaborative and dialogic learning opportunities, skilled advice and consultation, and self-directed, self-paced learning resources, scholarly information and technology.

Campus IT and Library effectiveness, including the information literacy IQ of the campus, is assessed primarily through two surveys, the MISO survey (Merged Information Services Organizations)—an instrument developed at Bryn Mawr and now used nationally by over 25 colleges and universities (2 year iterations)—and the annual Educause Core Data Survey. Additional data collected from “ticket tracking” and a faculty co-created survey on email usage is used to help inform service gaps and update information literacy goals. The next iteration of each of these surveys will also assess the effectiveness of the TECH Bar.

Two central aspects of our mission are “to sustain a community diverse in nature and democratic in practice that enables students to consider many perspectives in order to gain a deeper understanding of each other and the world” and the goal of creating students who are “responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world”. One critical component of realizing this mission is ensuring that students have a deep knowledge of cultural diversity and its relevance to understanding and interacting with others. While we have no formal global citizenship requirement, our requirements and educational offerings train students to be members of the global community. We offer instruction in 11 different languages, including Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Swahili (as part of our consortium participation in Africana Studies with Penn), and, as part of our bi-college collaboration, Japanese. An examination of syllabi from our language courses demonstrates that from the earliest phases of language instruction we emphasize cultural understanding as well as linguistic proficiency.

We strongly encourage our students to study abroad, and on average 40% of our students spend at least a semester studying abroad. This compares favorably to the national average of approximately 20% of students from Baccalaureate institutions who study abroad each year. As evidence of the value that our institution places on the
learning about another place in the world, we deliver the same financial aid to students who are going abroad as those who remain at the College, so that all students, regardless of financial need, can take advantage of this opportunity. To support this program the College spends 1.5 million dollars per year.

Via a special restricted endowment for Bryn Mawr students to Haverford College’s Center for Peace and Global Citizenship, each summer up to 10 Bryn Mawr College students are given fully supported international internships that allow them to pursue experiences in other countries broadly related to the Center’s mission of promoting peace, social justice, and global citizenship. The internship covers all of the students’ costs as well as any money that they need to earn for their financial aid award. These internships create a bridge between the students’ coursework and the world beyond. When students return from the summer, they participate in a for-credit course that focuses on the internship experience and helps the students place that experience in an academic and intellectual context.

Bryn Mawr also offers a tremendous range of course offerings that address cultural or international themes. According to a key word search of our college catalog (not including offerings at Haverford or Swarthmore), 12 courses have titles or paragraph-length descriptions containing “international”, 20 contain “global”, and 53 contain “culture”. In addition to majors in 8 different languages/literatures, including East Asian Studies, the College also offers a minor in International Studies and Africana Studies and concentrations in Middle Eastern Studies, and Latin America, Latino and Iberian People and Cultures. We also have a Center for International Studies that offers extensive opportunities for supplemental international activities including seminars, invited speakers, research grants and workshops.

Bryn Mawr women are characterized by their commitment to making a meaningful difference in the world and the College’s mission states that we “encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world”. Bryn Mawr’s curricular and co-curricular programming is highly consonant with this mission. At the time of our previous self-study, the College was beginning to explore the possibility of offering community-based learning coursework; ten years later, Bryn Mawr now offers a vibrant Praxis program. The Praxis program reflects and builds on the College’s strong tradition of community involvement and civic engagement. Its guiding principle is that social responsibility and civic preparedness are achieved through a combination of academically rigorous coursework and practical student experience. Fieldwork functions as a living textbook, while reflection, analysis and the scholarly understanding gained through coursework brings the learning all together. Our Praxis program enhances student learning, meets real community needs and builds collaborative relationships with the College and a growing number of community partners.
Each year, approximately 200 students participate in the Praxis program. There are different types of Praxis courses at the College, each requiring differing amounts of fieldwork. Regular courses require 3-4 hours/week in the field (Level I), while supervised, independent study Praxis courses require 8-10 hours/week in the field in addition to the independent scholarly work structured collaboratively between students and their faculty mentors (Level III). Each year, we offer 12-15 courses designated as Level I. These courses tend to be in Psychology, Sociology, Education and English. In addition, each year about 25-35 students complete the independent study, Praxis III option. Praxis III courses are developed in a wider variety of disciplines, reflecting the interest of students across the College to connect their academics with civic engagement.

A recent assessment of the Praxis program involving alumnae who participated in the program found that it was a valuable part of their College experience and contributed in unique ways to their education. Many of the alumnae claimed that their Praxis experiences impacted their subsequent decisions and opportunities with regard to community engagement, careers and further education. (See Appendix 3.2: Assessment Report: The Praxis Program and Alumnae; Experiences and Program Impact. Fall 2007.) Building on a qualitative assessment project of the Praxis program from our community partners’ perspective, the Praxis program is developing a Community Partnership Scorecard that will allow the program to assess its partnerships from the different perspectives of all constituencies that are involved. The scorecard has been piloted and will be revised again before it is officially used in the spring semester.

Bryn Mawr’s mission also identifies the goal of training women to be leaders. To this end, we have developed the “Leadership and Advancement Program” (LEAP). LEAP offers an intensive, co-curricular leadership development program for which students receive a leadership certificate as well as Physical Education credit towards graduation. Students in the leadership development program participate in 45 hours of workshops where they learn about finding resources for their organization, budgeting, leadership styles, group dynamics, team building, conflict management, strategic planning, managing meetings, and managing projects. They are also given assistance in bringing their leadership experiences forth in their resumes. As part of their training, students complete a community service project. Since its inception in 2007, more than 40 students have participated in the program.

Evidence suggests that Bryn Mawr’s commitment to fostering student engagement is paying off. On the 2008 administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE 2008), Bryn Mawr seniors were in the top 10% on the “Enriching Educational Experiences” benchmark. This benchmark taps students’ experiences with such things as community service or volunteer work, participation in co-curricular activities (e.g., organizations, publications, student government), practicum, internship, or fieldwork experience, study abroad, etc.
More recently, a group of faculty and students was commissioned to conduct an assessment of three of the College’s leadership/community engagement programs: Posse (a nationally based leadership program), the Social Justice Partnership Program (a student-driven social justice project), and the Teaching and Learning Initiative (a home-grown, cross-constituency teaching and learning initiative that partners faculty, students staff in experiences and conversations related to teaching and learning). The action research study involved surveys and focus groups of current students and alumnae. Students who participated in these programs reported that doing so gave them deeper and more complex insights into the differences between their own and others’ experiences, and taught them how to communicate with others around and about difference. Participants in these programs also stated that the programs gave them an enhanced sense of agency and supported them in becoming stronger students with a more developed sense of responsibility for their own learning. Finally, these experiences helped students gain an enhanced sense of belonging within the College and a feeling of responsibility to take part in the existing community. (See Appendix 3.3: Assessment Report: Students as Leaders and Learners. Summer 2009.) It is clear that these programs are having substantial positive impacts on their participants. Over the next year, we will be following up on recommendations from this assessment with the goal of capitalizing on these strengths and perhaps transferring lessons learned from these programs to other programs on campus.

While no curriculum structure itself guarantees that students will achieve a given set of general education goals, in a recent survey, more than 80% of BMC alumnae who graduated 5-9 years ago gave Bryn Mawr one of the top two ratings on the rating scale in analytical thinking, learning on their own, writing, thinking creatively, and relating well in diverse environments. In 2007, the AAC&U researched employers’ views on what college students need to know to be successful in the workplace. Employers identified analytical thinking, writing, and relating well in diverse environments as among the top skills necessary for success. Thus, our alumnae perceive that a Bryn Mawr education provides them with the kind of abilities that employers equate with success in the workplace. See Alumnae/i survey results discussed in chapter 7. In addition, on the COFHE senior survey, Bryn Mawr women regularly report that their ability to think analytically and logically, acquire new skills on their own, gain in-depth knowledge of a field, formulate original ideas were all “stronger now” than when they entered College and that their average self-reported gain during College for these items was higher than both women at the co-ed peer colleges and at the women’s peer colleges. These results suggest that our curriculum effectively contributes to achieving our general education goals.

3.1.2 The Current Curriculum (II): Content and Rigor

Middle States Standard 11 requires that an accredited institution’s educational
offerings display academic content, rigor and coherence that are appropriate to its mission. The institution is also required to identify student learning goals and objectives for its offerings.

Academic rigor is central to Bryn Mawr’s identity, as reflected by the opening sentence of our mission statement:

The mission of Bryn Mawr College is to provide a rigorous education and to encourage the pursuit of knowledge as preparation for life and work.

Bryn Mawr ranks in the top ten of all colleges and universities for the percentage of its graduates who go on to pursue the Ph.D. The College ranks among the top ten liberal arts colleges identified in the Wall Street Journal as feeder schools to the nation’s top law, medical and business schools. Bryn Mawr graduates’ admit rate to law schools is almost 80% and to medical school more than 75%.

Without question, Bryn Mawr students recognize the College’s emphasis on academic rigor. On the National Student Survey on Student Engagement, Bryn Mawr seniors scored higher than comparable women’s colleges and other participating select liberal arts colleges on the “Level of Academic Challenge” index. Items in this index include students’ report of the amount of time spent preparing for class, the number of assigned papers, the amount of assigned reading, and the amount of coursework that emphasizes analysis, synthesis, making of judgments and applying concepts to new situations.

For its student body size, Bryn Mawr offers a wide variety of majors (36) and interdisciplinary concentrations (8). Given that Bryn Mawr students have full access to Haverford courses (and vice-versa), that Haverford is less than a mile away and that shuttle buses run to Haverford about every ten minutes, Bryn Mawr students can avail themselves of an additional 500+ courses and 4 additional unique majors. Students are even free to major at Haverford in programs also offered at Bryn Mawr. It is clear that Bryn Mawr students have an ample opportunity for a broad array of courses of study.

Our mission statement also notes that Bryn Mawr is a place that teaches “critical, creative and independent habits of thought and expression”, emphasizes “learning through conversation and collaboration, primary reading, original research and experimentation” and encourages “students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world”.

These aspects of our mission statement are realized time and again in the way that our courses are designed and taught. Our 8-to-1 Student-to-Faculty ratio, combined with our small average course enrollment, ensures that students learn in a setting that includes discussion, debate and ample interaction with faculty. Review of syllabi available and course evaluations indicates that most courses involve discussion-based
learning as a critical component. In addition, many courses now include some sort of “virtual conversation” via blogs, discussion boards or wiki pages. In the COFHE senior survey, seniors reported a high level of satisfaction with the size of their classes, statistically higher than women at comparable COFHE women’s colleges and higher than women at our COFHE co-ed peers.

The College mission statement describes the character of the College “as a small residential community which fosters close working relationships between faculty and students”. We are highly successful in meeting this goal. As discussed below, about 80 percent of students complete a senior thesis or capstone experience involving original scholarship done in a close, mentoring relationship with a faculty member. Each summer in the sciences and mathematics, between 35 and 40 students are given paid research fellowships to work on research with faculty members in laboratories and in the field. In 2004 we established the Hanna Holbern Gray (HHG) Fellowships to provide the same research opportunities for 15 students in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

While the College provides many opportunities for student-faculty interaction, we do note that our students’ perception of those experiences, while quite positive, does not distinguish us from our peers. On the National Survey for Student Engagement, Bryn Mawr was no different from comparable women’s colleges, nor from similarly rigorous institutions from our Carnegie classification, on the “Student-Faculty Interaction” benchmark. Similarly, on the COFHE senior surveys aggregated across 2003-2008, we were no different from the COFHE women’s colleges or the COFHE coed colleges on student satisfaction with faculty availability. While we do as well as many of our peers, as we move forward with our curricular review (discussed below), we will attempt to provide innovations that improve these experiences and students’ perceptions of them.

Many aspects of Standard 11 are met at the level of the course and are covered in course syllabi. Almost all syllabi for courses offered at the College contain a clearly articulated statement of learning goals or outcomes, a clear plan as to how these goals will be met and appropriate measures of student achievement of these goals within the course.\(^4\)

To improve the quality of syllabi and to support new faculty in preparing their courses, we implemented a syllabus-writing workshop in summer 2009 for all new full-time faculty (tenure track and interim), supported through our Teaching and Learning Initiative. Almost all of our thirteen new faculty members participated. One explicit goal of the workshop is for faculty to understand student expectations and to help new faculty clearly articulate their expectations for students and student learning. The workshop resulted in a website that provided some guidelines and suggestions for syllabi design and offered some examples of existing syllabi from more experienced

\(^4\) See Appendix 3.4 for a random selection of course syllabi.
faculty members in the different divisions. Early feedback indicates that this website has been helpful to both new and more experienced faculty members.

In chapter 7, on assessment, we outline our efforts to enhance assessment at the level of the department. As part of this effort, each department submits a yearly assessment plan. Importantly, with respect to meeting Standard 11, these plans articulate departmental goals for student learning and lay out how the departmental course offerings, pedagogy, and advising system prepare students to meet these goals. Departments are expected to make explicit how they provide appropriate educational breadth, depth and integration in their academic program. At the end of each year, departments submit a brief report that documents what they learned as they implemented their assessment plan and what improvements they will make as a result of their findings. The plans are modified each year on the basis of these reports, departmental discussion, and feedback from the Provost and Institutional Researcher.

As the assessment plans make evident, there are clear linkages between the design of individual courses and the overall goals of the major. All majors are constructed carefully around a set of student learning goals. Individual courses contribute to those goals in different ways. For instance, some courses attempt to build students’ strengths across all of the department’s goals, while others focus on a few of the major’s goals and teach those in great depth.  

Bryn Mawr’s curriculum is highly responsive to new research findings and modes of inquiry. This is due, in part, to the College’s rigorous expectations for faculty scholarship. Most faculty members are highly active researchers and are therefore aware of the latest research and methods of inquiry in their respective fields. This awareness then feeds back into the curriculum. In fact, one of the main reasons the College invests so much in support of faculty scholarship is to sustain the feedback between research and the curriculum. Faculty members regularly develop new courses, particularly upper level seminars, related to their research. For example, in the three-year period from 2007-09 (academic years), a total of 143 new courses were introduced into the curriculum. Typically, we offer about 600 courses per year. This means that each year during that period approximately 8 percent of the courses offered were new.

The College also invests substantial resources in providing students with the newest tools to support their research. For example, we spend more than $200,000 per year for new equipment in the sciences. We have purchased several new digital technologies to support students’ inquiry with digital media. We have recently invested considerable personnel resources to better archive our teaching collection (which consists of objects, manuscripts, prints, photographs and drawings) so that it is available for use in teaching and student research. Finally, we have added new courses or areas of study to keep

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5 See the assessment plans in Appendix 3.5 for sample statements of departmental learning goals and explanations of how departmental curricula meet those goals.

6 More on faculty scholarship, and its relation to teaching, in chapter 4.
pace with contemporary scholarship. In the last ten years, we have added concentrations or minors in Film and Media Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Environmental Studies and Computational Methods. We have also added courses in Global Information Systems.

The Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) National Leadership Council of the Association of American Colleges and Universities identified 4 essential learning outcomes in its report on the future of liberal education. These are:

- Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World;
- Intellectual and Practical Skills (e.g., inquiry and analysis, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, problem solving);
- Personal and Social Responsibility (e.g., civic knowledge and engagement, intercultural knowledge and competence);
- Integrative Learning (e.g., synthesis and advanced accomplishment across generalized and specialized studies).

Both in the current curriculum and in the potential modification to that curriculum as part of our Curricular Renewal (see below), we believe we have demonstrated that a Bryn Mawr education promotes these learning outcomes. In meeting these outcomes, the College is positioned to have an important role in the education of future generations of successful women and in turn positions our graduates to have every opportunity open to them in the future. As we have worked to revise our curriculum, we continue to return to these outcomes as a touchstone for our planning with the goal of having Bryn Mawr be a model for how these learning outcomes are transferred into a liberal education curriculum.

### 3.2 Curricular Renewal

In the previous section, we discussed some of the ways in which Bryn Mawr’s curriculum is, on an ongoing basis, responsive to the latest scholarship. Such responsiveness is significant and important to accomplishing the College’s mission and meeting the educational needs of each new generation of learners. However, as we noted at the outset of this chapter, there are times when an institution benefits from a deeper, more encompassing review. In spring semester 2008, the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources identified the need for a comprehensive curricular review for the undergraduate college. Though individual aspects of the curriculum had changed in the meantime, a curricular review of this scope had not taken place since 1981. This review was motivated in part by the College’s interest in “right sizing” its programs to the College’s resources, as well as ensuring that the course of our growth and contraction matched the primary mission and goals of the College. In addition, the Faculty’s Curriculum Committee was reexamining its charge with the idea of broadening its vision to include the entire curriculum (in addition to reacting to “local level”
requests for course additions or changes to major requirements). As such, the College’s faculty Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) and the Curriculum Committee jointly established a Curricular Renewal Working Group (CRWG) to undertake a review of the entire curriculum. The willingness of the faculty to engage in a review of this magnitude reflects their desire to provide our students with an unparalleled educational experience that prepares students for the global world of the future.\footnote{See Appendix 3.6 for the charge to the Curricular Renewal Working Group from the Committee on Academic Priorities.}

We are currently in the middle of this curricular review process. While this renewal somewhat coincides with our decennial Middle States accreditation review, it is part of a larger ongoing project of aligning mission and resources begun by the Task Force, and so it will be a “work in progress” when the evaluation team visits. Some curricular initiatives will have been adopted and some will still be in their formative stages. In this section, we describe completed initiatives that have arisen from the curricular renewal process, as well as a number of potential innovations currently under serious consideration by the Faculty.

3.2.1 The Process of Curricular Renewal

The CRWG began its work in summer of 2008 and has been operating on two levels: one concerned with general questions about liberal arts education, the other concerned with particular curricular revisions. At the general level, the committee considered questions about the educational goals of a liberal arts college for women in the next 15 years. (E.g., “What should they be?” “Are they viable in today’s world?”) To address these questions, the CRWG conducted several community conversations on this topic (a Trustee meeting in fall 2007 and 2008, a faculty forum in December 2008, an email query to Faculty in February 2008, and a meeting of Senior Administrative Staff in Fall 2008). The group also read extensively on the goals of liberal education and on recent debates about the viability of the small liberal arts college model.

Guided by these broader discussions, the CRWG considered a number of particular curricular revisions, including: globalization of the curriculum, general education requirements, teaching of foreign languages, the teaching of writing, etc. Each topic was discussed at length, so that each could be related to the larger goals of the curriculum and the College as a whole. Once the framework for the specific topic was set, the CRWG commissioned a sub-working group on that particular topic. The sub-group comprised a few members of the CRWG and a large number of area experts (faculty and sometimes staff) who were brought together to develop particular curricular recommendations. For example, the sub-working group to review the teaching of foreign languages included two members of the CRWG and a faculty member from each of our language departments.
At several points during the sub-working group’s work, the group brought a draft of curricular changes to the entire Faculty for input and discussion (this occurred during regular faculty meetings or in special faculty forums). Once the sub-working group worked out the curricular recommendations, they were fed back to the full CRWG. The CRWG tweaked them to fit with the larger institutional goals and then sent them through the typical governance structures for further discussion and adoption. Recommendations relevant to curricular change were sent to the Curriculum Committee and those relevant to resources were sent to CAP. In this way, the faculty committee structure achieved the best of all worlds. Using this renewal process, the Faculty could flexibly constitute itself in ways that take advantage of particular expertise and interest, could engage the larger Faculty for input, and could use the normal committee structure for enacting change, thus ensuring that appropriate consultation and representation took place.

Curricular renewal is happening in an incremental, evolutionary fashion. The renewal will not be rolled out in one block, but will unfold over time in the form of discrete, implemented curricular innovations within the broader, mission-directed effort.

3.2.2 The Content of Curricular Renewal (I): Educational Goals

An early outcome of the CRWG’s work was the translation of the College’s mission statement into the following set of goals for a Bryn Mawr education in the next 15 years.

Goals of a Bryn Mawr Education:

1. Promote a life of intense intellectual engagement, including the recognition, in theory and in practice, that we need to be acquainted with a variety of approaches to inquiry for understanding the world and our place in it.
2. Promote the ability to think critically, that is, to reflect on the presuppositions and implications of our own arguments and commitments and those of others.
3. Increase students’ skills in areas that are fundamentally important to their ability to take advantage of a Bryn Mawr education and to make the best use of their knowledge in their life beyond. In particular, we want to train women who can communicate effectively and are quantitatively literate.
4. Enhance students’ breadth of knowledge and their life-long capacity to learn new things on their own.
5. Give students the opportunity to acquire a certain depth of disciplinary knowledge in at least one particular area of contemporary scholarship in the arts and sciences.

Note that this is another example of shared governance in action. See chapter 2 for further examples and discussion.
6. Prepare students to be active citizens in an increasingly global context, one in which the opportunities to overcome geographical and cultural boundaries are greater than at any other time in history.

7. Educate women who are prepared to transform and improve human life in their own communities and throughout the world.

As previously noted, these goals were formulated through conversations with Trustees, Staff, Students and Faculty. They are considered to be a work in progress and have evolved as the CRWG and its sub-working groups have conducted their work. These goals align very closely with the “Essential Learning Outcomes” identified by the Association of American College and Universities initiative, “Liberal Education and America’s Promise” (see p. 48, above). They also align nicely with AAC&U’s research on what skills employers value in their new hires. Thus, if the College is successful in meeting these goals we will have prepared our students very well for “life and work”.

In the remainder of this chapter, we present some curricular initiatives now emerging from reflection upon these goals and characteristics. For those initiatives that have been completed, we outline how the curricular changes will be assessed. The analysis is not exhaustive, but provides a representative sample of the group’s work.

3.2.3 The Content of Curricular Renewal (II): Initiatives Completed

(i) Goal 3

We have already taken significant steps towards better accomplishing Goal 3, which states that Bryn Mawr graduates should be strong and effective communicators. The work of the CRWG suggested that many constituencies endorsed this goal. In meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the President’s Advisory Council, alumnae talked about the important role the College played in helping them develop this skill and how important it had been to them in their current successful positions. Faculty in most departments identified communication as an important educational goal at our faculty retreats, but also expressed concern that we were not meeting this goal. Results of the COFHE senior survey data suggest that Bryn Mawr seniors on average feel that their writing has grown stronger over their time at the College. In fact, Bryn Mawr’s average score for this item was comparable to women at COFHE women’s colleges and higher than the average woman’s rating at the COFHE co-ed colleges. While this data is encouraging, our faculty evaluation of this area and some qualitative and anecdotal feedback from alumnae and potential employers made us want to revise the curriculum to do even better. Given the importance of this goal and the opinion that we could do better, we sought to improve this area of the curriculum.

The College requires that all first semester students take a College Seminar. The purpose of these seminars is to teach students critical thinking about broad intellectual questions within and/or across disciplines through close reading and interpretation of substantial
written, visual and material texts, as well as to provide instruction and practice in writing as a flexible tool of inquiry and interpretation. In spring 2008, an external committee composed of directors of writing programs reviewed the College Seminar Program.

The review produced several recommendations relevant to curricular change. The team concluded that the College Seminar program was very strong overall, but that it would benefit from some revision and renewal. Specifically, the visiting committee recommended that the College:

- more clearly articulate the program’s goals;
- adopt a broader view of what kinds of courses might constitute a College Seminar;
- increase its commitment to the program through more resources and a commitment on the part of the continuing faculty to teach in it;
- develop a better mechanism for assessing when students need additional instruction in writing after the course is over; and
- rename the program to signal to both the internal and external community that the program had been reinvigorated.

As per the external committee’s recommendation, the CRWG reevaluated the goals for the College Seminar program and articulated them anew. In April 2009, at a General Faculty meeting, the Faculty affirmed the CRWG’s proposed goals for the seminar. We also renamed the program the “Emily Balch Seminars”.

In moving forward the ultimate target is to have 90% of the Balch Seminars taught by continuing faculty (CNTTs, tenure track and tenured faculty). All departments have committed to teaching in the program on a regular basis. During the 2009 academic year (prior to the renewal of the program), 39% of seminars were taught by continuing faculty in 8 different departments. In the 2010 academic year, 68% of the seminars are being taught by continuing faculty members from 14 different departments. The success of this curricular change will also be measured by evaluating students’ writing skills at the end of the Balch seminars using a rubric developed by the Balch seminar instructors. As discussed in more detail in chapter 7, this assessment will be used to steer individual students to their next writing course, as well as for program improvement and professional development opportunities for faculty.

The external review committee felt that the College Seminar program was an excellent start to teaching students to be critical thinkers and better writers, but that a single course for this purpose was not enough. They recommended that the College institute a requirement for a “w” course—a writing intensive course within each major designed to teach discipline-specific writing. One reason we are considering such a requirement (along with a senior thesis requirement—see below) is that, while writing skills are
addressed in the Emily Balch seminars, many perceive a need to refine these skills further within the major.

The CRWG specified the following goals for writing intensive courses in the discipline: to give students instruction and practice in writing as tool of inquiry and critical thinking; and, to orient students to the practices of research and writing in their own discipline. Given the complex and unique staffing resources and curriculum structure in each department, the CRWG decided against creating a “w” requirement at this juncture. Instead, they articulated a clear set of goals for writing intensive courses. The CRWG recommended that all departments try to meet these goals either by creating writing intensive courses or by better incorporating the goals of these courses throughout their disciplinary curriculum. This year, pilot writing intensive courses are being instituted in several departments. Faculty development for these courses is being supported through the Engelhardt foundation. At the end of this year and the following year, we will revisit the question of a writing requirement to see whether we want to institute a formal requirement, or allow multiple pathways for departments to continue to improve students’ writing.

The final recommendation of the external review was to complete students’ training in being effective communicators by having all students complete a senior capstone experience. Currently there is variability across departments on the question of whether a capstone experience is required within the academic major. The Faculty and deans identified this as problematic because not all students get the benefits of working one-on-one with a faculty member on their writing, thinking and research skills. The CRWG is still considering the senior experience as part of the review of the major, and may recommend that all majors require a capstone experience, one that challenges students to integrate and synthesize knowledge they have gained throughout their career at Bryn Mawr.

Once we have intensified the teaching of writing beyond the Balch seminars, we will evaluate these changes by asking departments to assess the writing of students in the major at the end of the senior year (perhaps as part of the capstone evaluation). We will also look for changes in students’ perception of their writing improvement via the NESSE and COFHE senior survey. In addition, we will continue to collect qualitative feedback from alumnae and employers of Bryn Mawr graduates.

(ii) Goal 6

The language departments play a critical role in the College’s goal to prepare global citizens through both the teaching of language and their upper-level offerings in literature, theory and culture. Bryn Mawr has had a long history of distinguished accomplishment in the teaching of languages, literature and culture, and it has

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9 See Appendix 3.1, which includes a detailed statement of these goals.
traditionally been a focus of the College via a substantial language requirement. Bryn Mawr offers more languages than most colleges of its size, a strength we emphasize. Furthermore, curricula in our language departments are dynamic and innovative, incorporating areas at the forefront of emerging trends in the field—areas such as Francophone studies, cultural studies, interdisciplinary connections, and film studies. Each language we teach thus provides a unique opportunity for that department to contribute to the broader aims of liberal education at the College.

Our continued focus on the languages represents an important step toward making Bryn Mawr a leader in global education. Nationally, 75% of entering freshmen expect to major in something that has an international component. Our breadth in the languages, combined with our renewed commitment to making the languages a central contributor to the education of our students as global citizens, could make Bryn Mawr relatively unique for a college of its size.

One problem with the current requirement (in which students are required to take one language through the intermediate level or show equivalent proficiency through a placement test) is that, because students can place out of it, 15 – 20% of our national students do not experience another culture via language while at Bryn Mawr. While students who are educated and live in the US may be proficient in a language other than English, it is unlikely that their US secondary school experience provided the rich cultural education that is an integral part of Bryn Mawr’s pedagogical approach to language and literature. So in this sense, the current requirement does not meet our goal of increasing cultural understanding. At the same time, requiring students to take languages through the intermediate level forces many students into the language that they began in high school (since they are anxious to meet the requirement quickly). We want to encourage students to be more thoughtful in their selection of language study and perhaps try languages that were not available to them in high school and that fit with their plan of study. In addition, particularly in the hard to learn languages, the current requirement to continue through the intermediate level often does not meet the goal of proficiency.

Given this analysis, the CRWG recommended to the Curriculum Committee that we change the nature of the language requirement from a language proficiency requirement to a cultural competency requirement. The recommendation was refined by the Curriculum Committee and brought to the faculty for a vote in fall 2009. The new requirement will be in effect for the Class of 2015. The new requirement stipulates that all students will take one-year of a foreign language-based course, no matter what their level of language competence. In keeping with new recommendations by the Modern Language Association, and consistent with the way we already teach languages, all language classes, even those at the beginning level, will approach the teaching of language from a cultural perspective as well as a “skills perspective”.

Importantly, in the new model, students cannot place out of the requirement. Students who come to Bryn Mawr with language proficiency must either place up (and take literature or culture courses within the language departments) or begin a new language at the elementary level. According to the Registrar’s data, this will put an additional 30 students (or 60 course enrollments) into language courses. The new model would thus deepen our language requirement by reaching a new group of students and giving them the global perspective one can get only by looking at the world (literature, film, manuscripts, material culture) through another language.

While reducing the language requirement to one year of study may seem to weaken our goal of language proficiency, we will accompany this change with other innovations that further strengthen our teaching of language. In reducing our requirement to one-year, we do not suggest that one-year of language instruction makes students proficient in the language. Because language proficiency is such an important part of becoming a global citizen, we will continue to encourage beginning language students to study languages to an advanced level. Surveys of current students suggest that most of them will, in fact, continue their language study without a formal requirement to do so.

The CRWG also recommended several ways to further accelerate language learning during or after the academic year. The CRWG does not recommend a “one size fits all” option for all languages. Instead, it suggests that each department determine which of these program recommendations make sense for them to develop. Some possibilities are:

- Study abroad for one semester in the sophomore year as a way to develop language proficiency so that students will be ready for more advanced study when they return. This option would enhance opportunities for study abroad in the junior year.
- Offer summer language institutes (intensive programs) at Bryn Mawr modeled on, or in conjunction with, our highly successful Russian Summer Language Institute.
- Consider ways of modifying where students can enter the language teaching sequence and how different sections are paced.
- Offer intensive language study during non-traditional terms (May term, January term, August term).
- Offer some courses with a Praxis component providing students the opportunity to use new languages in a community setting as they work with their community partner.

Given the role that languages play in creating global understanding, the CRWG recommended establishing even deeper connections between the languages and other disciplines (e.g., a History major might take courses in German literature and culture). This recommendation is consistent with the MLA recommendation that the languages create synergies across the liberal arts curriculum. In addition, the CRWG recommended
that the College require students to better integrate the study of languages into their overall plan for education at the College. The language departments are currently considering all of these recommendations.

We will assess these changes to the language requirement in a number of ways. First, we will track changes in the number of majors in the language departments, as well as enrollments in the upper-level courses. We will continue to monitor students’ performance on proficiency exams at the end of the language learning sequence. We will also use data from the senior exit interviews to see if student satisfaction with the study of languages has changed. In fact, we could include a target question regarding this issue as part of the interview protocol.

3.2.4 The Content of Curricular Renewal (III): Initiatives in Progress

(i) Goal 1

Our current distribution requirements attempt to meet Goal 1 (see above) by requiring students to take two courses in each of the three divisions: Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences (one with a lab). Faculty and deans who have had significant experience with the curriculum and with student advising reported to the CRWG that students meet these requirements in a very menu-like, non-reflective way. In addition, the move toward greater interdisciplinarity that has occurred in the past twenty years means that some courses, while listed in one division, actually teach material that better fits in a different division, e.g., a course in political science that approaches the field from its roots in philosophy. The deans also report that some students navigate the requirements so as to avoid certain approaches to inquiry completely, for example, a social science student who takes particular humanities courses to avoid doing close reading and analysis of texts. Thus the CRWG concluded that our general education requirements were falling short of uniformly meeting our goal of training our students in multiple habits of mind.

In response, the CRWG produced several new models of general education requirements and brought them to a faculty meeting in April 2009. Based on faculty feedback, the CRWG chose one model to pursue and revised that model to reflect the input they received. The CRWG submitted this model to the Curriculum Committee in the fall 2009. The Curriculum Committee then brought a refined version of this model to the General Faculty for discussion on several occasions. These conversations have been vigorous and have raised issues about such things as the role of content versus method in giving students breadth, the importance of exposing students to the natural sciences, and the need for students to sample fields that they did not have access to in high school. The proposal as first constructed was also criticized because the distribution categories were not transparent or accessible to students. The following description
represents the latest draft of the proposal in response to faculty discussion, but the proposal will likely continue to evolve as the Faculty discusses it further.

The new model under consideration proposes replacing the current divisional requirement with the requirement that each student must take at least one course in each of four approaches to inquiry listed below. The Curriculum Committee believes it is central to our mission to expose students to a variety of approaches to inquiry and to promote the idea that liberal education must be more than a strong training in one discipline. Under this new requirement, all appropriate courses at the College would be identified as providing an introductory experience in one or two of the four approaches. Courses taken to satisfy the requirement would not only employ the relevant approach, but would also thematize and articulate it, stressing the need for awareness of the process as well as mastery of the content.

The first two modes highlight characteristic approaches to inquiry in the modern natural sciences, on the one hand, and in the humanities on the other:

1. **Scientific Investigation**: understanding the natural world by testing hypotheses against experimental evidence. Courses meeting this approach must involve a laboratory component, or a significant amount of hands-on manipulation of materials or models within the classroom experience.

2. **Arts and Interpretation**: interpreting meaningful works of the imagination, such as texts, objects and performances. This approach involves close reading of texts, whether literary texts, works of visual art or music, etc., as well as substantial reflection on the process of production and/or performance itself.

The third and fourth modes focus on ways liberal education should free us from the narrow-minded belief that our own time and place is the only significant time and place. Courses satisfying the requirement for these modes of inquiry typically would be drawn from the humanities and social sciences.

3. **Cross-Cultural Analysis**: learning to see the world from the perspective of culture(s) different from one’s own.

4. **Inquiry into the Past**: the study of past human experiences.

This new “approaches to inquiry” requirement would be implemented using a revision to our current advising system. Because another goal of the new requirements is for students to have a deeper understanding of the goals, purposes and meanings of a liberal education, faculty will become more directly involved with student advising to help students navigate the general education requirement. In the new system, students would be required to meet with a faculty advisor throughout their first two years. In a deliberate fashion under faculty guidance, students would both choose the courses that would expose them to these habits of mind and describe how these courses would fit
into their general educational goals and later plans to acquire depth in a particular subject area. These conversations will be facilitated by targeted questions students would answer before their advising sessions and an essay that the students would complete toward the end of their sophomore year. In this way, our general education requirements would also integrate better with our depth requirements in the major field. This more intentional charting of an intellectual journey is a particularly fitting process at Bryn Mawr, insofar as it is a natural expression of the Bryn Mawr woman’s characteristically purposeful vision of her life and insofar as it instills appreciation of the meaning and importance of liberal education, something fundamental to the mission and goals of the College.

(ii) Goal 3

In section 3.2.3, we noted some completed initiatives aimed at better accomplishing Goal 3. Those were mainly concerned with the development of communication skills. But Goal 3 also mentions quantitative literacy. Bryn Mawr prides itself on its success in graduating a high percentage of women who major in math and who go on to quantitatively demanding careers. Yet, at many of our faculty curricular discussions, faculty members who teach courses that require quantitative skills or quantitative literacy expressed frustration at how unprepared some students are for their classes. These faculty members are forced to either push on (knowing that some students will be left behind, or even fail) or spend an inordinate amount of time teaching quantitative literacy skills, thus losing the rigor of courses for our better-prepared students. The concern that some proportion of our students struggle with quantitative literacy is supported by data from both the COFHE Senior Survey and the NSSE 2008 data and by the Deans, who report that many students get into academic trouble because they lack the quantitative skills their coursework requires.

Ensuring basic quantitative literacy would better prepare all students to take advantage of other academic offerings at the College, particularly in areas such as economics, psychology, sociology, chemistry, physics, biology and geology. In addition, educating students for civic responsibility necessitates a certain amount of quantitative facility that not all of our students appear to be getting. The CRWG is investigating how best to support and develop students who enter the College with poor quantitative literacy skills. The CRWG is looking for effective ways to identify these students early on in their careers and provide them with the education that they need via coursework and other forms of enrichment. If we are successful, students can avail themselves of all avenues in the curriculum and they will emerge from the College ready to be informed participants in a society that increasingly relies on quantitative information. While the idea of a quantitative literacy requirement is appealing to many faculty members, it will be important to develop a program that is of the highest quality, that fits Bryn Mawr’s needs and is sufficiently resourced. These conversations will continue during the 2009-10 academic year.
If this plan is adopted, we would have two components to the quantitative requirement, a basic quantitative literacy piece and an advanced work component (our current requirement) in either mathematical reasoning or quantitative analysis. Currently the faculty is also discussing whether they want to make the advanced work component even more rigorous.

(iii) Goal 4

At the same time that the CRWG was considering interdisciplinary programs, an ad hoc group of faculty explored another approach to interdisciplinarity. In collaboration with the Provost, this group of faculty initiated a flexible interdisciplinary pilot program called Kaleidoscope. The Kaleidoscope program proposes a new arrangement of interdisciplinary and interactive educational experiences for students and faculty. This program builds on a strong institutional history of learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom walls yet situated within a rigorous academic framework. The Kaleidoscope program connects multiple courses, their students and faculty in a single semester through common problems, themes, and experiences for the purposes of research and scholarship.

A Kaleidoscope project entails a cluster of courses offered in a single semester that possesses five characteristics:

1. Kaleidoscope offers an interdisciplinary experience for students and faculty. The Kaleidoscope program views interdisciplinarity broadly, allowing each cluster to develop its own explicit definition. What is central is that these faculty members engage problems using different approaches, theories, prior data and methods and that they are explicit about that as they seek intersections across disciplines.
2. Kaleidoscope projects will unify courses and coursework by a focused theme or research question.
3. Kaleidoscope projects will engage students and faculty in active and interactive ways in a non-traditional classroom experience. This could occur through “data gathering” trips, praxis-like community based partnership/learning and/or intensive laboratory activity.
4. Kaleidoscope projects will encourage students and faculty to reflect on these different perspectives in explicit ways. Connections across courses are made explicit, shaped by collaboration among faculty members, and explored reflectively among faculty and fellow students.
5. Kaleidoscope participants will enrich the entire community by sharing their work with the community through such activities as poster sessions, research talks, web postings, panel discussions and/or data sharing. Both the Kaleidoscope programs and the data they produce will be archived for later use by others. Within three months after the completion of the program, faculty and students in each program will provide a written
evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the experience, with concrete recommendations for future projects.

We are proposing to pilot the Kaleidoscope project for the next three years. After the completion of the first projects, this experimental program will be assessed on the basis of internal reports, student evaluations of classes and projects and community discussion to determine if and how it will continue beyond the pilot phase. This review will occur during the 2012-13 academic year.

(iv) Goal 5

We turn now to work being done on Goal 5, which emphasizes depth within the major. Bryn Mawr has been very successful in producing scholars with the depth of knowledge in a major required for graduate study. As evidence for this, in most fields of study, Bryn Mawr is among the top ten colleges and universities in the percentage of students who go on to pursue the Ph.D. The COFHE senior survey data also strongly support this claim, as it is an outcome where Bryn Mawr distinguishes itself among most of its peers.

While Bryn Mawr has certainly been successful in training students for depth of knowledge in the major, the CRWG thought it important to re-examine the major and its role in the curriculum. To this end, the CRWG asked all departments to answer a series of questions about the major. These questions asked departments to reflect on how they provide depth and breadth to their majors, and, importantly, how their major program and course offerings contribute to the broader general education goals of the College.

Results of this query produced many themes. First, departments are central and effective organizers of their curriculum. They have articulated goals for their department’s offerings\(^\text{10}\) that balance the training of majors who want to go on to do graduate study and those who plan to pursue other career trajectories. These departmental goals operate at the level of individual courses but are also integrated throughout the major. In general, majors have two central goals: to give students depth in a particular field of study, and to have students gain experience as “practitioners” of their discipline, i.e., doing original research the way a chemist would, or conducting textual analysis the way a classicist would. Consistent with trends in how knowledge is being conceived of and generated in the world today, many departments also actively practice interdisciplinarity or multi-disciplinarity by forging connections to other departments or by allowing courses beyond the department to count towards the major.

The CRWG was particularly interested in the varieties of senior capstone experience departments offer. The many departments that have a capstone experience were quite

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\(^{10}\) See Appendix 3.5 for select Departmental Assessment Plans.
articulate about its value to the major and to the full development of a student’s depth of knowledge. Indeed, the senior capstone is emerging as one of the unique experiences Bryn Mawr can offer (an experience the College can offer because of its size and low Student-to-Faculty ratio). But since this experience is not universal for all departments, the CRWG is going to follow-up with departments in spring 2010. It will ask those departments without a senior capstone experience how they might structure their curricula to include one. For those that do have one, it will ask how they might strengthen the experience. Overall, the CRWG seems to be moving in the direction of recommending that the senior capstone be a central and required part of the Bryn Mawr experience.

(v) Goal 6

Our mission statement emphasizes the importance of Goal 6: to prepare students to be global citizens. Indeed, global citizenship comes forward as a key outcome of a liberal education in general, and a Bryn Mawr education in particular. The CRWG has done a significant amount of work on how we might better achieve this goal.

First, the CRWG took stock of what we already provide to students in this regard. In addition to the curricular and co-curricular offerings noted in section 3.1.1, the committee noted that all social science and humanities departments exhibit scholarly and curricular expertise beyond the United States, and many faculty members study non-Western areas. Many collaborate with research partners in other regions of the world as well.

The CRWG spent significant time, with broad faculty input, operationalizing the College’s general mission statement about achieving global citizenship or internationalization of the curriculum, so that our future plans can best be directed toward fulfilling those goals. To that end the CRWG defined three elements of globalization that the College will target moving forward:

1. The study of other cultures, especially non-Western cultures.
2. Action-oriented, experiential learning about unfamiliar cultures, in this country and abroad.
3. The study of globalization proper, by which we mean the cumulative processes of a worldwide expansion of trade and production, commodity and financial markets, fashions, the media and computer programs, news and communications networks, transportation systems and the flow of migrations, the risks generated by large-scale technology, environmental damage and epidemics as well as organized crime and terrorism. Educating women for a global world will mean helping to understand these processes and the ways in which they have and will transcend traditional boundaries of nationhood.
During the 2009-10 academic year, the sub-working group on curricular globalization, led by the President, will be exploring a host of ways to increase globalization of the curriculum toward these three elements. They plan to explore:

- the representation of cultural studies and globalization in the curriculum;
- possibilities for student and faculty exchanges in other regions of the world;
- the incorporation of international experiences in coursework, either by telepresence in course partnerships with non-US universities or by shorter travel experiences as part of the coursework;
- the creation of other summer and semester-break internships that allow students to get practical experience working in another country.

The sub-working group may also explore the possibility of creating a more formal partnership in a particular region of the world, or with a particular university in another part of the world, to investigate the idea of opening a satellite campus, or a dual-degree program.

(vi) Goal 7

We close this section with a discussion of work being done towards achieving Goal 7, which emphasizes the importance of preparing our students to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Bryn Mawr graduates have a strong desire to make a meaningful difference in the world, and historical evidence suggests that a Bryn Mawr education does indeed instill in women the ability to be strong leaders in their life and work. Drew Gilpin Faust ’68 was the first woman to become president of Harvard University. Shirley Peterson ’63 was the first woman commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. Ana Maria Lopez ’82 is the Medical Director for the University of Arizona. It is clear to the CRWG that these women’s education played a key role in their success by instilling in them the intellectual skills, leadership abilities and confidence to excel in areas traditionally closed to women. However, at a time when the value of a liberal education is being questioned—e.g., by those who would make training in a specific field the main objective of higher education—the CRWG thought it appropriate to rethink how a Bryn Mawr education can best prepare students to be change agents and effective citizens in their chosen fields. It is clear that the current curriculum prepares students to think critically, creatively problem solve, communicate effectively, understand complex local and global contexts and so forth. However, recent trends in the work force suggest that companies and institutions are also interested in students who have training in, and experience with, applying their knowledge in the real world.

To address these concerns, the CRWG is exploring the creation of some sort of co-curricular “enterprise leadership” program. Such a co-curricular offering would pull together existing programs such as our leadership training programs and our Praxis program, and combine them with new programs that give students education and experiences that will train them to be effective leaders and citizens. This program would
allow students to gain experience translating their academic knowledge into real world settings and at the same time provide them with some training in skills that will help them hit the ground running when they begin their careers. Such a program might include training in budget management, public speaking, leadership, management, grantsmanship and finance as well as experience gained through service learning, summer internships, leadership shadow programs and community service. Importantly, a Bryn Mawr education in this area would draw on the strong context of a liberal arts education and would approach these topics very much from a liberal education perspective. A proposal for this co-curricular certificate program will be ready for discussion in April 2010.

The Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) National Leadership Council has identified a set of ten “high-impact educational practices”. In recent work, George Kuh and other NSSE administrators present evidence that these practices carry substantial educational benefits to the students who experience them. Of these ten high impact practices, the existing curriculum, in conjunction with curricular changes under development, includes eight of them. They are: first year seminars, writing intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, community-based learning, internships, and capstone experiences. We are therefore confident that Bryn Mawr’s new curriculum will position the College to have the greatest impact on student outcomes and achievement.

### 3.3 Appraisal and Recommendations

Bryn Mawr’s curriculum has innumerable strengths and we recommend that the process of curricular change be mindful of these assets. These strengths include:

- an opportunity for students to pursue breadth at the level of general education requirements and depth in the major;
- opportunities for intense interaction with faculty through small classes, independent study and independent research;
- opportunities to engage issues of diversity through curricular and co-curricular offerings;
- opportunities for students to translate their academic work to local and global communities via programs such as praxis, internships, and study abroad;
- opportunities for curricular experimentation, growth, pruning and innovation.

The process of curricular renewal has thus far been quite successful. It has engaged the entire campus community, and particularly the Faculty, at the level of mission and goals.

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while working hard to relate the College’s larger educational goals to specific curricular initiatives. Thus, the most important recommendation we can offer is to maintain the momentum of curricular renewal. We also recommend that the administration and Faculty take steps as necessary to translate these initiatives into action and implementation and to further refine them through a process of assessment and revision.

Specifically, we recommend continued examination and action on the following curricular areas:

- Change the general distribution requirements to better ensure students’ exposure to a broader range of approaches to inquiry. Change the advising system to include even more intentional planning of an intellectual pathway through the requirements and to forge a connection between general education requirements and the disciplines.

- Continue to facilitate the participation of continuing faculty in the Emily Balch seminars. Explore the possibility of a “w” requirement—a writing intensive course in the major, or, alternatively, making effective written communication skills a more concentrated focus of the major spread across more courses. Consider requiring a senior capstone experience that involves a significant writing component. Consider making oral communication more of a focus as an institutional goal and provide programming/curriculum to support this.

- Consider changing the quantitative requirement to include a quantitative literacy component so that all Bryn Mawr students graduate with quantitative skills that will be an asset to their life and work and so they can better take advantage of the College’s offerings while they are here.

- Continue to strengthen the relationship between the major and the College’s general education requirements.

- Develop curriculum and programming to make Bryn Mawr the epicenter of global education for women.

- Develop additional curricular and co-curricular programming to further enhance language instruction and more fully integrate the study of language into the rest of the global curricular initiatives.

- Develop a co-curricular program or certificate in enterprise leadership. Take advantage of existing programming, e.g., the Non-Profit Executive Leadership Institute (NELI) at the GSSWSR, Dean’s Leadership Training, LEAP, and course exchange at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.
Student learning is central to Bryn Mawr’s mission. As the body most immediately responsible for student learning, the Faculty of the College is vital to accomplishing its mission and goals. This chapter provides an overview of the College’s Faculty, from its organization and composition to its responsibilities and accomplishments, with an eye to assessing the extent to which it is supporting the College’s mission while satisfying Middle States standard 10, concerning faculty. One thing is clear from the outset: the Faculty can provide the rigorous, deep, yet directed education called for in the College’s mission statement only if it also satisfies standard 10—that an institution’s instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

4.1 Overview of the Faculty: Organization, Appointments and Ranks, and Distribution

We begin with a general overview of the Faculty, detailing its overall organization, the types of appointments and ranks the College offers, and basic statistical information about the distribution of faculty members by appointment and rank. We also address several questions regarding the extent to which the make-up of the Faculty supports the College’s mission, specifically, whether it is large enough to allow us to carry out our mission and accomplish our goals, and whether the diversity and gender equality among our Faculty sufficiently reflects the vision presented in the mission statement.

4.1.1 Organization

Until recently, the College had three faculties: the General Faculty, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the Faculty of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. The General Faculty was partly, though not exhaustively, composed of the latter two. As of the fall 2008 semester¹, these divisions have been dissolved in favor of a single, unified Faculty. A single Faculty, we believe, both better reflects the goal of increased integration among our graduate and undergraduate programs and facilitates accomplishing this goal. The new, unified Faculty is responsible for all academic matters pertaining to the College’s three schools (the Undergraduate College, the Graduate

¹ This is the official date upon which the Faculty of the College became a unified body. It had been unofficially operating as such since the spring of 2008.
School of Arts and Sciences [GSAS], and the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research [GSSWSR]).

4.1.2 Appointments and Ranks

Officers of Instruction at Bryn Mawr College are divided, by appointment, into interim and continuing faculty. Interim appointments are usually at the rank of Instructor or Lecturer, though the College occasionally offers interim appointments to visiting professors with higher ranks (Assistant, Associate, etc.). Continuing appointments can be either non-tenure track, tenure track, or tenured. Continuing non-tenure track appointments are offered at the ranks of Instructor, Lecturer, and Senior Lecturer. Tenure track and tenured appointments are offered at the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and (Full) Professor (together, those holding these ranks constitute the ranked faculty at the College). For more detail on appointments and ranks, see. See the Handbook for Faculty, sec. 4, and Appendix 2.2 of this report, Article III, Section 8.

4.1.3 Distribution by Rank

There are 211 faculty members currently on continuing appointment at the College. Of these, 158 (75%) are full-time. The size of the College’s full-time continuing faculty has increased by almost 20% since the previous Middle States review: from 132 in 1998-99 to 158 in 2009-10. This increase paced the growth of the student body over the same period, which has allowed the College to maintain a strong student-to-faculty ratio—8-to-1—so crucial to enhancing student learning.

Of the 158 full-time continuing members of the Faculty, 98 (62%) hold tenure, and 25 (~16%) are on the tenure track. 35 (~22%) are on continuing non-tenure track appointment. The 123 ranked faculty members divide into 64 (52%) Full Professors, 34 (~28%) Associate Professors, and 25 (~20%) Assistant Professors. In terms of years of service, the Full Professor distribution has a large cohort with great institutional longevity. This is an area of concern—the Faculty would be disrupted significantly were all or many of those individuals to retire together. The College is exploring methods to smooth the transition.

4.1.4 Gender Equality and Diversity

Our previous self-study noted that, in 1998, the College was experiencing a trend in which the percentage of ranked female faculty members was steadily increasing. In fact, the report noted that 1998 was “the first time in many years, perhaps ever, [that] the

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2 On the unified Faculty, see the Handbook for Faculty, section 3.1.1. The Handbook is available online at: http://www.brynmawr.edu/provost/faculty_and_staff/handbook.html. This link is also available through the on-line appendix for this report at https://www.brynmawr.edu/middlestates2009. On the three schools, see Appendix 2.2 (the Plan of Governance), Article I, Section 2.

3 2009-10 Bryn Mawr Factbook, Faculty section: http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/bmcfactbook/20092010.html. This number excludes our athletics faculty, which comprises 8 full-time individuals.
majority of ranked faculty [members were] female”. The growth rate has tapered off since then, but the Faculty continues to have an even gender distribution. Indeed, in the present academic year, of the 158 continuing full-time faculty members, 79 are female and 79 are male. Among baccalaureate institutions nationally, by comparison, 44.2% of faculty members are female, and 55.8% are male. Among the 123 ranked professors, 64 (52%) are male, 59 (48%) are female. Of the 64 full professors, 29 (~45%) are female and 35 (~55%) are male. Among the 34 associate professors, 18 (53%) are female, 16 (47%) are male. Finally, the 25 Assistant professors consist of 12 females and 13 males—as close to 50/50 as possible.

The Middle States Commission observes that, “Faculty selection processes should give appropriate consideration to the value of faculty diversity, consistent with institutional mission” (Characteristics of Excellence, 2006, p. 37). We agree. Bryn Mawr’s mission statement affirms the importance of living and learning in a diverse community. Individuals immersed in a diverse community are more likely to be introduced to new perspectives, and, as noted in the College’s mission statement, it is “only through considering many perspectives that we gain a deeper understanding of each other and the world”. Such understanding is characteristic of the liberally educated person. It also fosters the respect and appreciation required of the sorts of people the College encourages its students to become, namely, “responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world”.

Diversity was a concern at the time of the College’s previous self-study, which noted that “some progress” had been made in addressing diversity within the faculty (BMC SSR, 1998, p. 18). Since that time, the College has made, and continues to make, a concerted effort to increase the presence of minorities within the Faculty. For instance, search committees are encouraged to work with the College’s Faculty Diversity Liaison to most effectively recruit diverse candidates and are informed that they must make a reasonable effort in their search to fulfill the College’s stated goal of creating and maintaining a diverse faculty. All job advertisements contain language strongly encouraging minority candidates to apply (see the Committee on Academic Priorities’ (CAP) approved position descriptions at http://www.brynmawr.edu/cap/). Also, in CAP’s 2009 Annual Report, the committee explicitly encouraged each Department or Program submitting a request for a new position to, “consider ways to define the proposed position as an opportunity to maximize the number of candidates from underrepresented groups, in particular candidates of color, in any subsequent search pool” (p. 2; follow link at http://www.brynmawr.edu/cap/).

Despite these measures, progress in recruiting a diverse faculty has been slower than we would like. Bryn Mawr’s percentages remain below those of a representative group of peer institutions. According to the 2007-8 administration of the IPEDS Fall Staff

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4 Bryn Mawr College Self-Study Report, 1998, p. 19. This document will be available to the evaluation team in the document room.

5 2008-09 AAUP survey; see Table 12 at http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/2/ecstatreport08-09/TOC.htm
survey, 16% of Bryn Mawr’s full-time faculty identify themselves as belonging to an underrepresented racial or ethnic group. By contrast, 19% of reporting faculty from a representative group of co-ed peer institutions identified themselves as belonging to an underrepresented racial or ethnic group, and 20% did so among a representative group of women’s peer institutions. This slow progress prompted us to change our search procedures in 2006-2007. Since that year, each search committee has its own diversity representative (prior to that, there was one person who served as the diversity representative for all search committees). The diversity representative, a faculty member from another department who is specially prepared by the Faculty Diversity Liaison, works with the search committee to ensure that the committee’s pool of candidates is sufficiently diverse and that the committee makes use of a broad and inclusive definition of ‘excellence’ when considering candidates. The diversity representative is not a voting member of the search committee. It is our hope that the diversity representative will improve the quality of the search they are on, but also will bring this diversity concern back to their own department the next time it has a search. Diversity representatives rotate each year, so that many faculty members are involved. A member of the Committee on Appointments sits on each search committee as well. This individual serves to ensure the integrity of the search procedure in general, but she or he also has the special responsibility of providing support and advice on minority hiring procedures. Finally, each search committee is now required to produce a plan explaining how they will attract diverse candidates. This plan is sent to the Provost and must gain the Provost’s approval before the search can go forward.6

We believe these changes in our hiring procedures should be resulting, and will continue to result, in the hiring of a greater number of faculty members indentifying themselves as belonging to a minority group. Indeed, in the searches since (and including) 2006-2007, we have hired 7 individuals so identifying themselves to tenure track positions. Those individuals constitute 35% percent of all new tenure track hires (20) since that year.

The College recognizes that minority representation within the Faculty is an area in which we must continue to improve. In the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey, 79.7% of respondents either “Agreed Somewhat ” (44.9%) or “Agreed Strongly ” (34.8%) with the statement that the College should hire more faculty of color, with only 4 respondents (4.5%) reporting that they “Disagree Strongly” with that statement. And in its most recent report to the Faculty, CAP specifically identified minority hiring as an area of concern, emphasizing “the need to build and sustain a community supportive and encouraging of diversity—a community of Faculty, staff, and students representing a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives”. CAP also noted “the specific challenge of attracting Faculty of color to our community” (both quotations from CAP’s 2009 Annual Report, Statement on Diversity; see link at http://www.brynmawr.edu/cap/). Despite the very real challenges our efforts face, we believe we have begun to equip

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6 For the forms for these reports, see Appendix 4.1.
ourselves to address them—through our revamped search and hiring procedures—and we are strongly committed to continuing to better address this important issue.\(^7\)

4.1.5 Size of the Faculty

An important issue facing any institution of higher learning is that of securing a faculty large enough to support the institution’s mission and instructional programs—as the Middle States Commission notes (Standards of Excellence, 2006, p. 37). We affirm the adequacy of the size of our faculty in this respect. Our student-to-faculty ratio is 8-to-1. The average class size is around 17.5 students (and has been for several years). Over two-thirds—218 of 303 (71.9%)—of our undergraduate class sections enroll fewer than 20 students.\(^8\) These numbers indicate that the Faculty is large enough to support the College’s instructional programs and, more importantly, to permit the close working relationships between faculty and students that characterize a Bryn Mawr education.

4.2 Procedures for Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion

Bryn Mawr’s mission statement opens with an emphasis on providing a rigorous education for its students. Effective recruitment and retention of prepared, qualified individuals is essential to achieving this goal, as are appropriately stringent promotion procedures. We outline the relevant criteria and procedures in this section. As we understand the Middle States Commission’s requirement that the Faculty comprise “qualified professionals”, we believe the points made in this section are sufficient to document compliance.

4.2.1 Search Procedures and Criteria for Appointment

All tenure track faculty searches are national and visibly advertised in appropriate media. Procedures for requesting a search—for continuing faculty (tenure track or non-tenure track) and interim faculty—are detailed in the Handbook, section 15.

Qualifications for interim and continuing appointments differ, as do qualifications for appointment at the various academic ranks and titles.\(^9\) This is appropriate, as the demands placed on individuals holding these ranks or titles differ (with respect to teaching, research, and service).\(^10\) Still, by way of establishing baseline qualifications of our faculty members, it is worth noting the criteria for appointment at the ranks of Assistant Professor, Instructor, and Lecturer.

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\(^7\) For a full statement of the College’s commitment to maintaining a diverse faculty and policies aimed at promoting this end, see Appendix 4.2, the Committee on Appointments’ statement, “Attention in Searches to Minority Recruitment and Multicultural Issues for Chairs of Faculty Search Committees”.

\(^8\) See Bryn Mawr Factbook, section on course sizes for more detailed breakdown of numbers of class sections by enrollment. http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/bmcfactbook/20092010.html

\(^9\) The types of appointments and ranks offered at the College are described above, in section 4.1.1.

\(^10\) Specific criteria for appointment at the various titles and ranks are set forth in the Faculty Handbook, sections 4 and 16 – 19. See also the Plan of Governance, Article III, Sections 7 and 8.
Appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor (the “entry level” tenure track appointment) requires,

training in [the candidate’s] discipline ... completed to the standard commonly expected of specialists (for example the Ph.D. or other comparable terminal degree).\textsuperscript{11}

The ‘commonly expected’ clause is important: it ensures that Bryn Mawr’s criteria for appointment at the level of Assistant Professor are on par with the norms for appointment at that rank affirmed by the wider academic community (this is the standard we take to fix the meaning of the phrase “qualified professional”).

Non-tenure track appointments, both interim and continuing, are typically offered at the level of Instructor and Lecturer.\textsuperscript{12} Instructors do not normally hold a Ph.D. (or equivalent degree), though these appointments do require,

an excellent prior academic record and limited [i.e., some] teaching experience.\textsuperscript{13}

Criteria for appointment with the title of Lecturer are, at least in practice, nearly as demanding as those for appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor. The Handbook notes that appointment with the title of Lecturer is normally limited to,

individuals who have completed the standard commonly expected of specialists in the field (for example, the degree of Ph.D. or other terminal degree) or who have had extensive prior teaching experience.\textsuperscript{14}

(Note again the reference to what is commonly expected of individuals appointed as Lecturers.)

153 (97\%) of our 158 continuing full-time faculty members hold a terminal degree in their discipline. Notice that this number includes continuing non-tenure track faculty members holding the title of Instructor or Lecturer—for whom terminal degrees are not strictly required. (Bryn Mawr Factbook, 2009-10, Faculty section)

\textsuperscript{11} Handbook, section 4.1.3.
\textsuperscript{12} ‘Typically’ is added here because there are two situations in which an initial appointment can be at neither of these levels: (a) when an interim appointment is at a rank typically reserved for a tenure track or tenured faculty member—as in the case of, for instance, a distinguished visiting professor—and (b) when an individual with a distinguished teaching background is appointed at the level of Senior Lecturer.
\textsuperscript{13} Handbook, section 4.1.1.
\textsuperscript{14} Handbook, section 4.1.2.
4.2.2 Evaluation Procedures and Schedules for Continuing Faculty

All continuing faculty members, full-time and part-time, are evaluated on a regular basis.\textsuperscript{15} During all reappointment and promotion reviews, the Provost and Committee on Appointments consider the candidate’s dossier, student letters and teaching evaluations, departmental chair’s letter, and, where appropriate, the opinion of colleagues and students from Haverford College and letters from outside reviewers. On the basis of review of these materials, the Committee on Appointments makes a recommendation to the President, who in turn recommends to the Board of Trustees. The Board is responsible for final decisions regarding reappointment and promotion.

Continuing non-tenure track faculty members are reviewed for reappointment at the rank of Lecturer after three years (or equivalent) of full-time service, for promotion to the rank of Senior Lecturer after six or seven years full-time at the rank of Lecturer, and for reappointment at the rank of Senior Lecturer every five or six years thereafter. Successful review at these ranks requires that the candidate provide evidence of both teaching effectiveness and professional development, particularly in the area of pedagogy.

Tenure-track faculty members are typically evaluated for reappointment at the rank of Assistant Professor during the penultimate year of their initial appointment (such appointments are generally for three or four years), and again during the penultimate year of their renewed appointment. (A typical evaluation schedule for an Assistant Professor, then, will involve evaluations during the third and sixth years of employment.) For initial reappointment, tenure track faculty members must demonstrate (or promise) excellence in teaching and scholarship, and must have provided service to the College. When the second evaluation review is successful, a faculty member is promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. Promotion to this rank requires excellence and maturity in teaching and substantial scholarly activity and service to the College.

Candidates who are denied initial reappointment or reappointment with tenure may appeal those decisions on the grounds of procedural error. Procedures for such appeals are detailed in the Handbook.\textsuperscript{16}

For candidates successfully promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, there are two types of regularly scheduled review: College reviews and departmental reviews. Officially, departmental reviews are to occur during the third and sixth year after a candidate’s promotion to Associate Professor with tenure (and during the twelfth, if necessary). These reviews have not, however, been done on a regular basis. The Provost has committed to instituting these reviews beginning with the 2009-10 academic year.

\textsuperscript{15} What follows is an abbreviated description of the evaluation procedures. Full descriptions of policies and procedures for faculty review, reappointment, and promotion are in the Handbook, sections 16 – 19 and the Plan of Governance, Article III, Section 8.

\textsuperscript{16} See section 20.
These reviews will serve to evaluate a candidate’s progress towards promotion to Full Professor. Sixth year reviews will be waived if a candidate applies for promotion to Full Professor. College reviews evaluate a candidate for promotion to Full Professor. Associate Professors with tenure may put themselves forward for promotion to Full Professor at any time. However, it is expected that five to seven years of full-time service at the rank of Associate Professor with tenure are required to establish the credentials sufficient for promotion to Full Professor. If a candidate does not initiate such a review, a mandatory College review occurs during his or her ninth year as an Associate Professor with tenure. If necessary, another mandatory review occurs during an Associate Professor’s fifteenth year.

Criteria for promotion to Full Professor are demanding, and include a sustained and significant record of scholarship, continued excellence in teaching, along with significant contribution to the curriculum, and the making of important contributions to both the College and the candidate’s profession.

Full Professors continue to be reviewed about once every three years. These reviews serve as merit reviews, and determine the merit component of a faculty member’s salary.

Policies and procedures for review of tenured faculty members for the purpose of termination of tenure are explained in the Plan of Governance, Article III, Sec. 9. Tenure may be terminated for a variety of reasons, including mental incapacity, evident incompetence, or gross misconduct.

In the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey, 78.1% of respondents (71 of 91) either “Agreed Somewhat” or “Agreed Strongly” with the claim that the criteria for advancement and promotion decisions are clear, whereas 19 (20.9%) disagreed “Somewhat” and only 1 (1.1%) disagreed “Strongly” with that statement. Given that there are not, and cannot be, specific, checklist-style, requirements for promotion decisions (these decisions rely rather on a careful evaluation of the candidate’s complete dossier), and given the understandably high levels of stress surrounding such decisions on the candidate’s part, we think the numbers speak positively about the clarity of our promotion criteria.

4.2.3 Policies for Review and Evaluation of Interim Faculty

The guidelines for interim faculty searches are available in the Handbook, section 15.5.

Interim faculty members are not signed to multi-year contracts, except in unusual cases (see the Handbook, section 4.4.3). As such, they are not subject to the same review and assessment policies as continuing faculty members (i.e., tenured, tenure track, and continuing non-tenure track faculty). But this is appropriate, given the nature of their appointment.
Interim faculty members are, however, occasionally given further appointments (for instance, they may be hired in consecutive years—though not for more than three in the same position at full-time\textsuperscript{17}—under distinct appointments). In particular, additional offers will be made on the basis of the candidate’s teaching effectiveness and professional development in the area of pedagogy (see Handbook, sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2). Chairs of the candidate’s department are now encouraged to meet with the candidate to discuss her or his work and teaching. This may involve reviewing and discussing the candidates teaching evaluations from the previous year(s). (Research productivity is not a criterion for reappointment of continuing non-tenure track faculty—see the Handbook, section 17.1, where this is noted via omission.) These criteria are in line with those for reappointment of tenure track faculty, though appropriately less demanding.

\section{4.3 Responsibilities, Roles, and Performance}

Faculty members at Bryn Mawr College have three primary roles: teaching, scholarship, and service. We discuss these in subsections 4.3.2, 4.3.3, and 4.3.4, respectively. The responsibilities that come with each role are explained in full in the Handbook and it is a faculty member’s responsibility to read and take note of them as explained therein.

New faculty members are introduced to their chief responsibilities during a two-day New Faculty Orientation, which occurs each summer, several weeks before the start of his or her first semester of work. The orientation was recently revamped to better prepare new faculty members for teaching at the College. Faculty involved in the Teaching and Learning Initiative (see below, section 4.3.2(ii), and elsewhere in this report) now orient new faculty members to teaching at the College, syllabus development, and student expectations regarding teaching and classroom mechanics.\textsuperscript{18}

Most importantly, significant productivity with respect to each of these roles is a condition of reappointment, promotion, and (especially) tenure. Faculty members passing initial reappointment reviews are therefore sure to be familiar with their primary roles at the College.

\subsection{4.3.1 Relations among the Faculty Member’s Roles}

It is worth commenting briefly on the relationship among the faculty member’s three primary roles before considering them in detail. There is an institutional commitment to the view that teaching and research are importantly interrelated. As noted in the description of the College’s sabbatical leave program, there is a “strong institutional commitment to faculty scholarship and to the relationship between research and

\textsuperscript{17} See Appendix 2.2 (the Plan of Governance), esp. Article III, Section 8.

\textsuperscript{18} See Appendix 4.3 for a sample New Faculty Orientation schedule (from 2009).
teaching, a relationship in which scholarship and teaching inform and enhance each other” (Handbook, section 12.2.1). Faculty members are expected to appreciate the interrelations of these responsibilities, and the relations of each to service. Indeed, recognizing such links is a core component of the teacher-scholar model that our faculty members strive to uphold. Appreciation of these links is strengthened through participation in the Teaching and Learning Initiative (see section 4.3.2(iii)), an opportunity of which many faculty members take advantage. This opportunity particularly increases reflective awareness of, and sensitivity to, the relations between teaching strategies and student learning. Furthermore, as documented below, promotion at the College requires that a faculty member excel in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. The College also emphasizes the importance of the relations among these roles during the promotion process. After the initial reappointment review, the Provost and Chair of the Committee on Appointments write the candidate a letter discussing the candidate’s performance in each of the three areas of research, teaching and service, and the relations among the faculty member’s responsibilities, and the candidate’s appreciation of them. (A similar process might be implemented pending a revamp of the Associate Professor Review process.). After the tenure review and the 6-year Professorial Merit Reviews, the Provost, the Chair of Appointments (and the President for the Professorial Reviews) meet with the candidate to go over the review, provide feedback and discuss issues of concern to the faculty member. The balancing of the faculty member’s roles is frequently a topic of these meetings.

4.3.2 Teaching

Insofar as student learning is central to the College’s mission, teaching is a central responsibility of the Faculty. In addition to providing quality instruction to the College’s students, a faculty member’s set of responsibilities as a teacher includes understanding the curriculum (particularly degree and major requirements, curricula of related programs, and related departments at Haverford), understanding the guidelines for the conduct of classes in their respective schools (Undergraduate College, GSAS, GSSWSR), knowing how and when to put a student in contact with her dean, and being prepared to offer academic advising, be it as a thesis supervisor or in offering advice regarding major and course selection (such advising is in addition to—not a replacement for—advising provided by a student’s dean). A faculty member’s responsibilities as a teacher are detailed in the Handbook, section 5. The Dean’s Office continually publishes useful guidelines for faculty around issues of degree requirements, registration, advising and access services.

(i) Teaching Load

An important part of supporting excellence in teaching (and, hence, student learning) is ensuring that faculty members are not overburdened by their teaching responsibilities. The College’s current principles for determining faculty course load derive from the Committee on Academic Priorities’ 2003 study, “What is a Course?”
The standard teaching load for full-time continuing faculty members (whether ranked or non-tenure track) is five courses per year (or the equivalent). This has been the institutional standard since 1989-90, when the standard course load was reduced from three courses per semester.

Full-time interim faculty members usually teach the equivalent of six courses per year, since there is no expectation of significant departmental or College service. Faculty members on one-semester sabbatical are expected to teach the equivalent of three courses in the non-sabbatical semester.

In some departments, senior thesis supervision counts towards one’s course load (though this is not feasible for all departments), as do some laboratory sections in the natural sciences. Faculty members receive a *numerical* course reduction when teaching very large courses (what counts as “very large” varies by department, of course, but a course with more that 60 students counts as “very large” at Bryn Mawr, regardless of the department), which can count as 1.5 or 2 courses. Course reductions are also offered to chairs of large departments and faculty members chairing committees with heavy workloads (such as the Committee on Appointments and the Committee on Academic Priorities).

The College offers many opportunities for collaborative (or, “team”) teaching. Faculty members welcome these opportunities and view team teaching as a valuable addition to the curriculum—both for students and the faculty members themselves. For faculty, team teaching provides the chance to cover a wider range of material, strengthen the interdisciplinarity of a course, or simply broaden one’s horizons. Students benefit from being exposed in a regular manner to different (professional) perspectives on a topic. In recognition of these benefits, the official College policy is to assign $1/n$ courses towards a faculty member’s teaching load for each of the $n$ faculty members involved in team teaching a course (unless the enrollment is very large—on this notion, see previous paragraph—in which case each of the $n$ faculty members accrues $2/n$ courses).

However, the Provost has adopted the practice of assigning a full course credit to each faculty member whenever there is both significant collaboration (each attends all classes, teaches a share of courses, and participates in syllabus development) and a reasonably large enrollment (at least 15 students).

(ii) Pedagogical Support

Maintaining a reasonable course load is one effective way of promoting excellence in teaching. Another is to provide direct encouragement and support for pedagogical development and innovation. Bryn Mawr does this in several ways. Informal discussion of classroom dynamics, grading policies, course structure, teaching methods, course goals, and learning outcomes is a common practice among members of many departments.
A major source of pedagogical support is the Teaching and Learning Initiative (TLI), launched in 2006. It is worth describing several of the opportunities the TLI provides. The first is a Faculty Seminar devoted to pedagogy. A Mellon grant supports up to 8 stipends per year ($5,000 each) for participation in this program. The seminar offers focused, supported time talking about pedagogical approaches, reading short articles and book chapters focused on relevant topics, and writing informally about pedagogy. The seminar meets once per week and includes weekly posts to a closed blog, an opportunity to work with a Student Consultant (who visits the faculty member’s class, observes, and takes notes), and discussion based on weekly posts and classroom visits.

Incoming tenure track faculty members are invited to participate in TLI’s New Faculty Seminar. This seminar is structured just like the Faculty Seminar, offering the same opportunities to discuss, reflect on, and write informally about pedagogy, though in the potentially more comfortable setting of a group of one’s fellow incoming faculty members. Although no stipend is offered for participation in the New Faculty Seminar, the Provosts’ Offices of Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges offer a course release for participation in the seminar.

Some comments from participants are worth noting. (See also the quotations concerning the Teaching and Learning Initiative in chapter 7, section 7.2.3.)

“The seminar has provided a vehicle for self-reflection and learning on the kind of pedagogy that works for me and my students. However, I feel I’ve gained the most from working with peers who also desire to talk about teaching, and feel their role as teacher is an integral part of their identity. While I didn’t expect this latter part, I’ve been very pleased with the peer-exchange in our group.” (New Faculty Member, Bryn Mawr College)

“The seminar has been more than I expected. It has provided me with a valuable opportunity both to reflect on my own experiences and share ideas with my colleagues. Writing weekly memos has been particularly helpful for self-reflection, and so has integrating memos into our discussions.” (Fourth-year Faculty Member, Bryn Mawr College)

Any faculty member can take advantage of the TLI’s Students as Learners and Teachers program, in which a student consultant attends a faculty member’s classes, takes notes, and meets with the faculty member to share her observations. Similarly, any faculty member can have the Coordinator of TLI arrange to have another faculty colleague attend his or her classes to provide feedback on pedagogical topics of interest. TLI can also arrange for individual or group discussions of course evaluations to assist in pedagogical development.

Faculty members interested in re-imagining individual courses, or departmental offerings, can work with the Coordinator of TLI and, when appropriate, a team of consultants, including students and staff from Information Services. (Of course, many
faculty members update or overhaul courses, or propose entirely new courses, on their own to keep up with continually evolving curricular needs.)

According to the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty survey, during the two years prior to taking the survey 50.5% of BMC respondents (46 of 91) participated in a teaching enhancement workshop and 77.2% (71 of 92) developed a new course. In the same survey, 65.2% of respondents (60 of 92) said that they participated in a workshop focused on teaching in the classroom at some point at Bryn Mawr College. It is quite likely that many of the participating respondents took advantage of the opportunities offered through the TLI.

A central topic of concern for the College’s faculty identified in our previous self-study was the incorporation of digital technology into the classroom and one’s teaching. Workshops on “techno-pedagogy” held during the summers following that self-study (1999, 2000, and 2001), supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, helped us begin to address these concerns. At the request of the faculty member, TLI can now convene a team consisting of members from the library staff, a member of Information Technology, and a student from the faculty member’s discipline to aid in revising courses to integrate technology in a pedagogically appropriate way. The 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey indicates that there is fairly strong agreement with the claim that there is adequate support for integrating technology into teaching: the mean agreement score was 3.4 (see note 7 for scale), nearly halfway between agreeing “Somewhat” and agreeing “Strongly”. This is firm evidence that the College’s efforts to address faculty concerns with incorporating technology into the classroom have been successful.

(iii) Performance

The Faculty of Bryn Mawr College sets for itself high standards of teaching excellence, striving to be engaging, creative, and challenging-yet-supportive. On the whole, the faculty lives up to its own expectations. The simplest way to support this claim is to observe that teaching excellence—along with a statement of one’s teaching philosophy—is a condition of reappointment and promotion at the College. The idea here is that there is a relationship between the process and the product. Specifically, the integrity19 of the hiring, reappointment, and promotion process guarantees the quality of the product: a faculty of qualified, excellent teachers.

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19 As to the integrity of the process: Every effort is made to ensure that the hiring, reappointment, and promotion processes are objective and impartial. In hiring, for instance, checks and balances are incorporated into every stage of the search. The Provost, in consultation with the Committee on Appointments, appoints all members of all search committees. The search committee comprises individuals from the department conducting the search, allied department(s) at the College, a representative from the Committee on Appointments, and a member from a corresponding department at Haverford College. Once the search committee has ranked its finalists, this list is sent to the Provost for review. The Provost then submits the committee’s recommendation to the President and Committee on Appointments for final approval. The Provost sends the candidate an offer, and, if it is accepted, the President sends a letter of appointment. The candidate’s department, Provost, Committee on Appointments, and President are also involved in reappointments and promotions, though in these cases the Board of Trustees are also involved. In cases of reappointment with tenure, promotions, and later reviews, reports from external reviewers and student evaluations are also
Further evidence of teaching excellence comes from data on teaching awards our faculty members have received. In the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey, 38% of respondents (35 of 92) reported receiving an award for outstanding teaching at some point in their career—the third highest percentage among a group of seven representative peer institutions (Bryn Mawr included). The highest percentage in the group was 43.7; the mean percentage was 31.4; and the median 31.3.

Data derived from Senior Exit Surveys from the past five years indicate that students are generally-to-very satisfied with the overall quality of instruction at the College—the mean satisfaction score being 3.53. This score is equal (in the sense of not differing to a statistically significant degree) to the mean score derived from surveys at a representative group of women’s peer institutions, and it is somewhat higher than the score derived from surveys at a representative group of co-ed peer institutions.

A final source of evidence of teaching quality is data about what Bryn Mawr’s students go on to do after they graduate. The College invests considerable resources in collecting information (via surveys) about the careers of its students after graduation, and is rightly proud of what it finds. See chapter 7, sections 7.4.1(iv) and (v) for key surveys and results. The success of our graduates in finding jobs and being admitted into doctoral programs attests to the high quality of instruction our students receive during their time at the College.

Evidence of teaching excellence is of primary interest here, of course, not only insofar as it shows compliance with one of the fundamental elements of the Middle States standard 10, but also insofar as it provides evidence that our Faculty is helping the College to accomplish those aspects of its mission concerned with education and student learning. In particular, in inquiring into the quality of our Faculty’s teaching, we are interested in the following sorts of questions (all of which contain language from our mission or the College’s description of a Bryn Mawr woman): Is our Faculty’s teaching contributing to the rigor of our educational programs? Does it promote an intense intellectual commitment or the desire to pursue knowledge in preparation for life and work? Does it cultivate critical, creative and independent habits of thought?

Survey results referenced two paragraphs back suggest that the answer to such questions is “Yes”. So do results from the 2008 administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), particularly the results pertaining to Level of Academic Challenge. In this part of the NSSE, students answer questions designed to gauge the

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20 On the following 4 point scale: 1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = generally dissatisfied; 3 = generally satisfied; 4 = very satisfied.
21 NSSE Level of Academic Challenge items include: time spent preparing for class; number of assigned textbooks or book-length course packs; number of written assignments of 20+ pages, number of written assignments of 5-19 pages, and number of fewer than 5 pages; coursework that emphasizes analysis; coursework that emphasizes synthesis; coursework that emphasizes making judgments; coursework that emphasizes the application of theories or concepts to practical problems or new situations; working
degree to which their coursework or instructors are challenging, pushing them to think harder, and more creatively, and the extent to which they set high expectations for student performance. Bryn Mawr’s scores on Level of Academic Challenge, for both first-year students and seniors, are higher than those of all of its comparison groups. In particular, the average scores for Bryn Mawr’s first-year students and seniors are significantly higher than those of the average first-year students and seniors attending NSSE 2008 schools. Indeed, our scores indicate that it is likely that Bryn Mawr is in the top 10% of all NSSE 2008 schools for first-year students and seniors on Level of Academic Challenge. Our students’ strong performance on Level of Academic Challenge indicates that our Faculty is indeed providing the high quality instruction supportive of our mission.

(iv) Advising

Another important part of a faculty member’s job as a teacher is advising. Faculty members at the College are expected to do a certain amount of advising over and above the advising that comes with teaching courses. Although Bryn Mawr does not formally assign each student a faculty advisor, faculty members assist with the initial advising of freshman at the start of the fall semester. The deans of the Undergraduate College are responsible for the academic advising of freshmen and sophomores. They encourage students to seek out professors for further pre-major advising. Upon declaring a major, students are assigned a major advisor, who will be a faculty member from the student’s department or program. Major advisors primarily advise students on fulfilling requirements for their chosen major, but may also offer advice regarding study abroad and preparation for employment or graduate school (though on the latter two topics students may also seek advice from deans and counselors in the Career Development Office). Many faculty members also informally advise students on course selection, time management and college life. Indeed, there is a strong culture of informal advising at the College, be it during office hours, in the course of working with a student on a senior project, or during a lunch or tea (regularly held by many departments). Some of the College’s classes (the Emily Balch writing seminars, for instance) and co-curricular initiatives (such as the Social Justice Partnership Program) also offer many opportunities for informal advising. The amount of advising, formal and informal, that faculty members provide varies within and across departments, depending on how many courses a faculty member is teaching, how many majors a department has, and so forth. In large programs and departments, major advisors can face a substantial time commitment. In the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey, nearly half (49.5%) of the respondents (92) reported spending 1 – 4 hours per week on student advising, and just over a third (34.1%) reported spending 5 – 8 hours per week. Together, that’s over 80% of respondents indicating engagement with advising students. Given the other demands on their time, these results show a strong commitment to advising from the College’s Faculty, and show that the Faculty take seriously the effort
to create a collegial atmosphere full of opportunities for student-faculty interaction, as called for in our mission.

Advising policies and practices are very similar for the Graduate Schools (GSAS and GSSWSR). In GSAS, graduate students are advised by a faculty member appointed as the Graduate Advisor in a given program, until accepted for Ph.D. candidacy, at which time the student’s dissertation advisor takes over advising responsibilities. In GSSWSR, a student’s initial advisement comes from a faculty member appointed as the Director of the Ph.D. Program in the GSSWSR. As with GSAS, after being accepted for Ph.D. candidacy the student’s dissertation advisor takes over advising responsibilities.

4.3.3 Scholarship

All faculty members are expected to develop and maintain a productive research program, including publishing in scholarly journals and books, presenting research at other colleges and universities and at professional conferences, and more generally to make contributions to the individual’s profession. The College recognizes numerous reasons to encourage and support faculty research and scholarship. As Middle States observes, encouragement for faculty research is a characteristic of an “enlightened” institution (Characteristics of Excellence, 2006, p. 38). More importantly, encouraging and maintaining a productive faculty supports our mission of providing a rigorous, deep, useful education. For teacher-scholars, we maintain, make the most engaging instructors. Their knowledge of contemporary scholarly issues and cutting edge research allows them to stimulate interest in their disciplines—and thus promote that characteristically intense intellectual commitment in our students—while their pedagogical sophistication enables them to help students learn the material efficiently and effectively. Setting high expectations for scholarly work, therefore, feeds back into student learning.

(i) Support

The College offers a generous suite of support for research. The programs are detailed in the Handbook, sections 11 and 12; we outline the major ones here.

The flagship research support program is the Sabbatical Leave Program. As the major element of the College’s effort to support faculty research, it is designed to free faculty members from teaching, advising, and College service so they may pursue scholarly goals more intensively than is possible while fulfilling their other obligations to the College. Only tenured faculty members are eligible for sabbatical leave. In general, a tenured faculty member is eligible for one year of sabbatical for each six years (12 semesters) of full time teaching or one half year of sabbatical for each three (6 semesters). Provided that they apply for outside funding, faculty members receive their usual salary (when combined with outside funding, if any) during leave.  

22 For further details see the Handbook, sections 11 and 12.
The Junior Faculty Research Leave provides junior faculty members with the opportunity to undertake a full year of research during their first or second term at the rank of Assistant Professor. Assistant Professors being considered for initial reappointment are eligible. These leaves are normally taken in the last year of the first term or the first year of the second term after a successful reappointment review—i.e., during the third or fourth year. The leave year counts as a year of service towards the faculty member’s first sabbatical leave. Faculty members receive their usual salary (when combined with outside funding, if any) and benefits during Junior Faculty Research Leave. For further details, see the Handbook, section 12.1. Notice that the Junior Faculty Research Leave and Sabbatical Leave programs together offer tenure track faculty members on a typical appointment schedule the opportunity to take two years of paid research leave during their first seven years of service at the College attesting to the value we place on faculty scholarship and productivity.

Other sources of research support include Professional Development Leave (for continuing non-tenure track faculty interested in spending focused time on pedagogical development—see the Handbook, section 12.3) and the Faculty Travel Pool.

The Faculty Travel Pool is a College program designed to support the scholarly development of faculty members on continuing appointment. In particular, a faculty member may apply for funds from this pool to support travel to deliver a paper, present at a poster session, chair a session, provide invited comments at a conference and/or sit on the boards of professional associations. See the Handbook, section 11.2.3.

The College has several endowed funds to help support the research and publication activities of faculty members and the Faculty Research Fund provides general support for faculty research. Each year the College provides approximately $50,000 in internal research grants to faculty, which are awarded through the Faculty Awards and Grants Committee. The Office of Sponsored Research has information on many sources of funding, internal and external (see the Handbook, section 11.2.1 and www.brynmawr.edu/grants).

According to the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey, our faculty members make good use of the resources noted here. Of 78 eligible respondents, 65 (83.3%) reported taking paid sabbatical leave, and of 88 respondents eligible to receive internal grants for research, 61 (69.3%) reported receiving such funds. Of 87 eligible, 75 (86.2%) respondents made use of travel funds paid by the College.

(ii) Performance

Having noted the importance of, and support in place for, faculty research and scholarship, two questions suggest themselves: Is our Faculty in fact producing research and scholarship to the expected degree? And: Do we have reason to believe this
productivity is in fact feeding back into student learning and support for our mission and goals?

One reason to answer the first question in the affirmative, for our ranked, continuing faculty members in particular, is to note that sufficient productivity is a condition of reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Again, the point is one concerning the relation between a process—in this case the reappointment, promotion, and tenure procedures—and its product, here a Faculty of productive scholars. Given the criteria for reappointment, etc., the integrity of the process ensures that the product has the target feature. (See the parallel point about teaching excellence above, section 4.3.2(iii). See also the remarks on integrity, in note 19.)

Success in meeting the College’s standards for scholarship can also be measured by the number and quality of publications our faculty members produce, and by their success in securing funds to support their research. In the past five years (June 1, 2005 – May 31, 2009), 176 grants have been awarded to members of the Faculty, including 34 NSF grants, 14 NIH Grants, 7 Mellon Grants, 3 NEH Grants, 9 Department of Education Grants, 4 from Microsoft, 4 from the Department of Homeland Security, 3 USDA, and 13 NSEP Grants, among many others. During this time, Bryn Mawr’s faculty members have also received 4 Lindback Fellowships, 3 Fulbright Fellowships, 3 National Humanities Center Fellowships, 3 NEH Fellowships, 2 Guggenheim Fellowships, 2 Mathematical Science Research Institute Fellowships, 2 Humboldt Fellowships, 1 Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, and 1 James Cattell Fellowship—and that is just a partial list.23

Our Faculty’s research productivity is impressive, particularly given the faculty’s teaching load, our small size and predominantly undergraduate student body. According to the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey, 74 of 92 respondents (80.4%) have had professional writings published or accepted for publication in the past two years. Of these 74 with recent, or recently accepted publications, 29 have had 1 to 2 published or accepted, 26 have had 3 to 4, 16 have had 5 to 10, and 3 have had between 11 and 20 (inclusive) published or accepted for publication. Of the same 92 respondents to the survey, 86 (93.5%) have at some point in their career published articles in academic or professional journals, with 25 having published 1 to 4, 23 with 5 to 10, 17 with 11 to 20, 17 with 21 to 50, and 4 with 51 or more such publications. 66 of the 92 respondents (71.7%) have at some point in their career contributed at least one chapter in an edited volume. 44 of the 92 respondents (47.8%) have in their career published at least one book, manual, or monograph, with 27 of these having 1 to 2 such publications, 9 with 3 to 4, 6 with 5 to 10, and 1 with between 11 and 20 (inclusive).

Several of our faculty members have been recognized for their scholarly work. Recent examples include (but are not limited to) David Karen (currently a fellow at the Institute

23 Source: Office of Sponsored Research, Bryn Mawr College.
for Advanced Research, School of Social Science, Princeton), Ellen Stroud (2009 fellow at the National Humanities Center), and Julia Littell (Pro Humanitate Literary Award, 2006).

See [http://www.brynmawr.edu/find/faculty_department.shtml](http://www.brynmawr.edu/find/faculty_department.shtml) for a sample of faculty member vitas, further illustrating the kinds of research being pursued by the College’s Faculty.

In light of these points, that the answer to this subsection’s first question is “Yes” seems fairly certain. But what of the second? Does the Faculty’s productivity in research and scholarship contribute to student learning and support the College’s mission and goals? Again, it appears so. See the results of the 2008 NSSE cited in section 4.3.2(iii).

4.3.4 Service

Bryn Mawr’s Faculty has long set itself a high standard for service to the College (as it has for teaching and scholarship). However, with the College’s adoption of a system of shared governance, in 2005 (see chapter 2, section 2.1), service has become a particularly important component of a faculty member’s work at Bryn Mawr. (The College still concurs, however, with the Middle States Commission’s judgment that “[s]uch participation should complement [and not supersede] the faculty’s primary responsibilities of teaching, research, and scholarship.” [Standards of Excellence, 2006, p. 37]) Participation in the governance of the College is important not only because it “keeps the wheels in motion”, so to speak, but because it provides a clear way in which faculty members model—to the students and wider community—the democratic practice and responsible leadership (indeed citizenship, of a sort) called for in our mission.

Some of the Faculty’s key responsibilities in governance are described below. But, in general, service to the College involves serving on committees in a regular fashion, attending faculty meetings, participating in campus-wide discussion and assessment of programs, policies, and mission statements, helping (on occasion) to write major grant proposals, and attending academic occasions, such as convocation and commencement. It also includes service to the faculty member’s department, including attending departmental meetings, helping to plan and assess the department’s curriculum, planning departmental lecture series, and participating in the appointment of new members of the department.

(i) Support

Some faculty members experience difficulty juggling the demands of service, research, and teaching. In the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty survey, 19 of 84 respondents (22.6%) cited committee work as a source of “Extensive” stress in the two years prior to taking the survey, and 38 (45.2%) characterized such work as “Somewhat” a source of stress (the remaining 27 respondents said such work was not a source of
stress at all). This has been a concern for some time. Indeed, it was one of the central areas of concern noted in the faculty section of the College’s previous self-study report (pp. 25-6).

The College has instituted several programs to ease the burden of service responsibilities. The College offers course reductions for faculty members with heavy service demands. Faculty can receive a course reduction of 1 course/year to focus on committee work, departmental leadership, program leadership, or large administrative writing projects. In the latest academic year (2008-9), we offered 31 faculty members (25.6% of the eligible pool) course reductions for service related activities. The Provost has also evaluated and reaffirmed the College’s policy of keeping service responsibilities for faculty members to a minimum during summer months. This opens valuable time to focus on research and course renewal, revision, and preparation.

Several facts indicate that faculty member attitudes towards the demands of service (combined with those of teaching and research) are improving. First, faculty surveys indicate that faculty members are by and large content with their workload at the College. In a survey conducted by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation between February and May 2009, concerning life and work issues at baccalaureate institutions, Bryn Mawr faculty members responded to a question concerning one’s ability to achieve a balance between work, family life, and personal life very similarly to faculty members at a representative group of peer institutions. Second, attendance is high at faculty meetings. Finally, faculty meetings are productive. The latter facts both indicate that faculty members are committed to carrying out their service responsibilities at the College, even if it adds to their workload.

The College has also improved the fairness of the distribution of service responsibilities (this was an area of particular concern for many faculty members, according to the College’s previous self-study). As described in the By-Laws of the General Faculty (adopted in May, 2006, and amended December, 2007), the faculty has established a Committee on Nominations charged with (among other things) circulating a questionnaire every year requesting prioritized lists of committees on which faculty members would be interested in serving. This information is used to help distribute service responsibilities. This, along with a self-nomination process and a new policy that faculty members are no longer elected to committees without prior notice or agreement, has resulted in an improved attitude among faculty members towards the allocation of service responsibilities. Election procedures are detailed in the By-Laws of the General Faculty, Article VI.25

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24 The exact wording of the question, and the response results, are as follows: The career pressures I experience here make it very difficult to achieve a good balance between my work, family and personal life. The response options, along with the representative peer institutions’ faculty member responses (RPI) and Bryn Mawr’s faculty member responses (BMC) are: Strongly Agree (RPI: 16.2%; BMC: 15.3%); Somewhat Agree (RPI: 32.6%; BMC: 32.2%); Somewhat Disagree (RPI: 25.9%; BMC: 27.1%); Strongly Disagree (RPI: 25.2%; BMC: 25.4%); Don’t Know (RPI: 0.2%; BMC: 0.0%).

25 The latest version of the By-Laws is available online at: http://www.brynmawr.edu/provost/governance/faculty_by-laws.html
A final note on Faculty attitudes towards service before we proceed. One of the results of the College's embracing of shared governance is that faculty members now play a deeper role than they previously had in the overall operation of the College. Of course, with added power come added responsibilities. But the Faculty has shouldered the extra burden willingly, for even though it implies added work and time commitment, it also grants more ownership and greater say in the adoption of policies and procedures that affect members of the faculty. Indeed, these were the very sorts of considerations that led faculty members to campaign actively for the adoption of a system of shared governance. So, despite the fact, noted above, that some faculty members find the demands of service stressful, the 2007-8 administration of the HERI Faculty Survey indicates that, on the whole, faculty members are satisfied with the institutional system of governance that leads to those demands. 88.8 percent of respondents (79 of 89) agreed either “Somewhat” (50 respondents) or “Strongly” (29 respondents) with the statement that faculty members are sufficiently involved in campus decision-making.

(ii) Key Roles in Governance

We turn now to some of the Faculty’s key roles in governance at Bryn Mawr. The Plan of Governance offers the following general description of these roles:

[T]he Faculty and the Administration shall have the mutual responsibility for consulting on program innovations and developing academic priorities [and] the Faculty has joint authority with the President for establishing new Academic positions. (Article III, Sec. 1.a.ii)

These broad roles are typically realized through a faculty member’s serving on one (or more) of various individual committees, particularly the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP), the Curriculum Committee, and the Committee on Appointments. CAP and the Curriculum Committee secure the Faculty's involvement in institutional planning and curriculum review (particularly at the present, through the Curricular Renewal Working Group, a group jointly empanelled by CAP and the Curriculum Committee for evaluating and renewing the general education curriculum—see further chapter 3, section 3.2). The Committee on Appointments, furthermore, establishes the Faculty’s role in assessing and implementing policies and procedures for appointing and promoting faculty members. It is worth detailing the responsibilities of these committees a bit further, to round out our discussion of the Faculty’s involvement in College governance and to establish the Faculty’s role in monitoring instructional programs at the institutional level.

The Committee on Academic Priorities is charged with, among other things, developing academic priorities in consultation with the Administration (including staffing allocations, department and program facilities and resources, restructuring or terminating departments and programs, and other resources related to teaching and research), developing general policies and recommendations, and serving as a
consultative body to the President on institutional priorities and College budget issues relevant to those priorities. (See By Laws, Sec. V.D.2) CAP also participates in outside reviews of departments, schools, and programs, and consults with the Curriculum Committee on questions concerning staffing needs of individual departments and programs.

The Curriculum Committee (or Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum) is charged with making recommendations to the Faculty concerning the curriculum and instruction in the undergraduate college, including the structure and content of the College’s offerings, degree requirements (major, minor, and concentration requirements included), and scheduling issues. The Curriculum Committee is also responsible for ensuring the quality and integrity of the curriculum, is involved, along with the Provost and CAP, in external reviews and the College’s response to such, and in outside reviews of departments and programs.26

The Committee on Appointments is a Faculty committee responsible for being familiar with all aspects of the academic and professional work of the College’s officers of instruction, making recommendations to the President regarding initial appointments, promotions and reappointments, reviewing cause for removal of tenured Faculty, and, in consultation with the Administration, providing procedures for appointment, reappointment, and promotion.

Each of these committees has the responsibility to keep the Faculty informed of its business and to present its recommendations and proposed policies to the entire Faculty for review. The Faculty as a whole—in conjunction with the Administration, President, and Trustees—is, therefore, the true unit of institutional and curricular review, assessment, and renewal (“monitoring”, in the language of Middle States' standard 10).

Faculty members are also responsible for devising, developing, and monitoring curricula at the program and department levels. Departmental chairs, in consultation with other members of the department (during regular departmental meetings) and the Provost, plan and evaluate the set of courses the department will offer at the College over a set of academic years (see the Handbook, sections 6 and 10). In particular, the chair is responsible, along with the other members of his or her department, for developing a three year plan for staffing and course offerings, and ensuring that these offerings meet the College’s standards, the students’ needs, and the contemporary requirements of the department’s discipline (see the Handbook, section 10.2.2).

Measuring the Faculty’s success at fulfilling its service responsibilities is a trickier matter, perhaps, than it is for teaching and scholarship. However, if depth of engagement and

26 See chapters 3 and 7 for detailed descriptions of recent and ongoing assessments by the Curriculum Committee and the Curricular Renewal Work Group.
value of committee work are any indication, we think we can only deem the Faculty’s work here a success too. See chapters 2, 3, 5, and 7 for more details on the interesting and valuable work that has been, and is being, accomplished by such committees. We do recognize, of course, that the burden of service continues to be an issue. The College will continue to look for ways to improve in this area.

4.4 Salary, Benefits, and Competitive Concerns

Achieving competitive faculty salaries continues to be among the College’s highest strategic priorities, and we have made good progress on this front of late. Over the past three years, faculty salaries have increased significantly, with the College going from last in its COFHE peer group (14th of 14) to 11th. Our strategy for achieving competitive faculty salaries has two components: (1) to make the starting salaries more competitive, and (2) to allocate more total resources to faculty salaries. In 2008, for example the average faculty salary increased by 9.42%. While we do not have a specific target for salaries, the College understands that it is important for our salaries to be competitive and not lagging within our peer group. See also the supplement to chapter 2, especially the section on financial planning and resource allocation.

The College offers a comprehensive Flexible Benefit Plan for all eligible members of the Faculty and staff, featuring both “core benefits” and “benefits of choice”. Core benefits include term life insurance, dental insurance, and employee assistance program, and long-term disability insurance for illnesses lasting longer than six months. Benefits of choice include several medical plans, cash if medical plans are waived, family coverage dental insurance, supplemental term life insurance for immediate members of one’s family, and flexible spending accounts. Since our previous self-study, the College has added a pre-tax transit check plan and short-term disability policy. The College also offers tuition benefits for children and spouses of eligible faculty and staff. Despite recent financial concerns, the College has maintained its health insurance and tuition benefits, in response to the community’s expressed preferences. A full description of the College’s benefits programs is available in the Handbook, section 14.

4.5 Additional Policies and Procedures

4.5.1 Policy on Academic Freedom

The College is committed to abiding by and upholding principles of academic freedom. This commitment is noted in several places, including the second sentence of the Plan of Governance of Bryn Mawr College (Article I, Section 1), and the first sentence of the College’s statement on “Policy for Research Support from Outside Sources”, where it is also the third general principle cited as informing the policy (See the Faculty Grants Handbook, section XII.A.a. Follow link at: http://www.brynmawr.edu/grants/grants_handbook.html).
More generally, the College has a commitment to free inquiry grounded in its Quaker roots. The College was originally formed to carry out the will of Dr. Joseph Taylor, who hoped to establish an institution that would inculcate women in Quaker beliefs and values—the College broke its formal ties with the Society of Friends early on, but carries forth its commitment to Quaker values such as freedom of thought, integrity, fairness, and mutual respect.

4.5.2 Initiatives towards Balancing Work and Family Life

The College recognizes that maintaining the overall well being of faculty members is crucially important to maintaining a productive, satisfied faculty. As such, in addition to its benefits package, the College strives to provide progressive career flexibility options to help faculty members balance the many demands of their professional and family lives. In 2006-2007, the President convened an ad hoc group of faculty to look at issues of work/life balance at the College. This group made a set of recommendations to the President, some of which have already been implemented. The Provost’s office is currently taking the following set of actions to continue with the implementation of this report.

Recognizing that the College already does well in these areas, we will expand and improve current policies and programs for both part-time work and tenure clock stoppage (a postponement of initial reappointment or reappointment effecting tenure):

- Part-Time Work. Although institutional policies exist for this career flexibility option, they are incomplete and the written standards and procedures for implementing them lack clarity and detail. To formalize part-time work policies and make them more comprehensive, the Provost will work with the Faculty Welfare Committee, the Committee on Appointments, department chairs, and Human Resources to develop transparent procedures to define guidelines for FTE status that are based on time spent on teaching, research, and service and to articulate tenure expectations.

- Tenure Clock Stoppage. Although institutional policies exist for this career flexibility option, they are incomplete and the written standards and procedures for implementing them lack clarity and detail. To formalize tenure clock stoppage policies and make them more comprehensive, the Provost will work with the Faculty Welfare Committee, the Committee on Appointments, department chairs, and Human Resources to develop guidelines and straightforward procedures for an inclusive tenure clock stoppage policy that applies to all aspects of family/elder care and personal disability, and to part-time appointments. To further improve its tenure clock stoppage policy, Bryn Mawr will provide a written statement to external

27 See, Appendix 4.4, “Accelerator Plan for Bryn Mawr College”. The rest of the section that follows is lightly edited from this document.
tenure reviewers regarding proper way to judge candidates who have stopped the tenure clock to complement its existing policy of providing such written statements to internal reviewers.

To increase the number of faculty using policies and programs and to widen acceptance of career flexibility at Bryn Mawr, we will:

- Conduct an annual presentation on the College’s career flexibility programs and policies for all faculty members. We currently include a formal presentation on career flexibility benefits during New Faculty Orientation each August, but an annual presentation is critical as people’s work and family situations change over the years.
- In the 2009-10 academic year, we will develop and implement a new annual workshop on work/family balance in our chair’s school workshop series. This workshop will educate new or rising chairs (and in the first year current chairs as well) about the institution’s current policies. It will familiarize them with best procedural practices to employ when a faculty member encounters a family situation where support is potentially needed.
- We have recently centralized website for faculty titled “Working at Bryn Mawr” that contains all career flexibility policies and programs, as well as Frequently Asked Questions, in one location. The site is organized topically based on work/family needs and will include clear explanations of policies relating to leaves, part-time work options, and tenure-clock stoppage.

Recently, the College was named as a finalist for the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant competition based on the high level of career flexibility offered to faculty in the existing College work/family policies (liberal arts colleges above the median in a policy benchmarking study were invited to submit grant proposals). We were pleased to be recognized for our policies and plan to use the benchmarking study carried out by the foundation to assess our future progress in creating an even friendlier work/life environment and policies.

4.6 Appraisal and Recommendations

Bryn Mawr’s Faculty does much to help the College accomplish its mission and goals. To summarize the main points of this chapter that support this claim:

- The Faculty is of adequate size to support the close, collaborative style that characterizes a Bryn Mawr education.
- Its research productivity and teaching quality, explained in part by its solid use of the College’s many sources of support for each, fosters a rigorous yet supportive atmosphere for learning.
• Our students respond well, as their scores on level of academic challenge surveys (such as NSSE 2008) attest.
• Finally, the Faculty is highly engaged in the governance of the College through its commitment to service—which we view as a positive not just in itself, but also insofar as it models democracy, citizenship, and responsible leadership.

To promote the Faculty’s continued excellence, it is recommended that the College:

• Continue to focus on diversity hiring. Current policies provide a solid foundation, and their effectiveness should be monitored closely.
• Carry out proposed initiatives to improve balancing work and family life. Begin by developing clearer policies; proceed to educate the community on the new policies.
• Clarify and institute policies for departmental review of associate professors. This will help keep faculty members on track for promotion.
• Continue to monitor balance of faculty members’ responsibilities, particularly the demands on their time due to service to the College. Encourage the Nominations Committee to distribute committee work as equitably as possible.
Graduate Education

The College offers graduate programs through two schools: the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) and the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research (GSSWSR). Typically there are about 1750 students enrolled at Bryn Mawr in a given year. Of these, roughly 450 are enrolled in a total of 10 active graduate programs, with about 170 in arts and sciences and about 280 in social work. Graduate education was part of the original vision of Bryn Mawr. The first Ph.D. was conferred in 1888, and since then there have been more than 1,580 Ph.D. degrees conferred. By 1907 there were over 70 graduate students, and M. Carey Thomas could report that among U.S. institutions offering the Ph.D., Bryn Mawr ranked 19th of 41 in the number of degrees awarded. The first male student was admitted in 1931, and by 1960 about 20% of the enrollment was male, which is still true today.

The College also has a very successful Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program, one of the oldest and most respected in the nation. Established in 1972, it is designed for women and men who are highly motivated to pursue a career in medicine but have not taken the required premedical courses as undergraduates. Enrolling typically 75 students each year, it is an intensive, full-time preparation for medical school obtained in one-year consisting of courses in physics, chemistry and biology.

To illustrate the manner in which we address several (most, in fact) accreditation standards in the area of graduate education, we provide here an account of the recent broad review of our distinctive mixed undergraduate-and-graduate academic model, conducted by the College Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources between fall 2005 and spring 2007. An important outcome of this critical look at graduate education at Bryn Mawr was a reaffirmation of the distinct ways graduate education “done right” can serve the mission of our primarily undergraduate liberal arts institution for women. Embedded here are examples that illustrate how the graduate enterprise helps us meet aspects of the mission of the College and how graduate student learning experiences are designed and assessed in graduate programs.

At the College, we seek to take advantage of opportunities presented by increased collaboration and cooperation between our undergraduate and graduate programs. As a reflection of this, the present chapter supplements and connects with chapters 3 (Undergraduate Curriculum), 2 (Governance and Strategic Planning) and 7 (Assessment). More generally, a number of the common themes of this self-study run through this chapter, including: identifying the need for change, motivating, supporting, and
planning change, and assessing change at the institutional and individual programmatic levels.¹

5.1 A Critical Look at Graduate Education

In October 2005, the Board of Trustees convened the Task Force on Balancing the College’s Mission and Resources at the recommendation of then President Nancy J. Vickers. The Task Force was formed to assess current practices of allocating resources (financial and personnel) and to recommend changes that would enable the College to direct those resources more strategically to support the institution’s mission and highest priorities.² During its final 18 months of work, the Task Force formed two subcommittees with additional members to study specifically the performance, costs and future opportunities for the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) and the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research (GSSWSR).³ The Task Force and its subcommittees invited participation by colleagues and outside evaluators⁴ on topics related to their expertise or authority, and consulted widely with the community through faculty meetings, surveys, constituency meetings, circulation of draft documents, and interim reports.⁵

In a communication updating the Board on the Task Force’s work, former President Vickers summarized the outcome of the external assessments of graduate education at Bryn Mawr. “We have within the past six months undergone significant peer reviews of both graduate schools: the first by an ad hoc committee of highly respected graduate deans and academic officers, and the second by a re-accreditation team appointed by the national social work accrediting agency.”

“What is striking about both of these ... is their enthusiastic endorsement of who we are and what we do (with, of course, recommended changes) as well as their excitement about our potential. Our social work reviewers deemed the GSSWSR a ‘gem’ that truly occupies a special position in quality social work education; our Arts and Sciences reviewers saw in us a unique opportunity ‘do graduate education right’. What our reviewers saw in us was the exciting possibilities that our small size presents to serve both our graduate students and our undergraduates by fostering a richer intellectual and social community.”

¹ Assessment looms large in this chapter. To facilitate the work of the Working Group on Graduate Education on these topics, the Working Group on Assessment sent a representative to sit in on their meetings.
² See, “Charge to the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources”, included as Appendix A of Appendix 2.5 of this report.
³ See Appendix 5.1 (Charge to the two subcommittees of the Task Force on Balancing Resources and Mission looking at graduate education).
⁴ See Appendix 5.2 (External Review Team Charge and Report on GSAS and the Ph.D. program in GSSWSR).
⁵ See Appendix 5.3 (Survey of Bryn Mawr Community on Graduate Education—Summary and Full report), Appendix 5.4 (Sub Committee Final Reports to the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources), and Appendix 5.5 (President Vickers’ Report to the Board on Carnegie issues).
In February 2008, the Task Force recommended to the Board that the College strongly re-commit itself to graduate education “done right” and appropriate to the scope, scale, and nature of our primarily undergraduate liberal arts institution for women. The Task Force cast its set of recommendations for moving forward with graduate education in a document entitled “Principles and Practices for Graduate Education”.  

It stated that while “the core mission of the College is undergraduate education, if pursued in collaborative and imaginative ways, graduate education can make important contributions to Bryn Mawr’s core mission.” For example, “graduate education...can distinguish us from our peers, contribute to our scholarly reputation, and enhance our ability to offer our undergraduates a rich array of ways to make a meaningful contribution to the world.” The goal is “deepening and broadening the impact of the benefits...while strategically managing the resources we use to deliver them”. Thus the Task Force called for enhanced vertical collaboration and cooperation between undergraduate and graduate programs, and horizontal collaboration and cooperation between faculty members and among departments (including those without graduate programs).

In April 2008 the Board of Trustees endorsed the recommendations made in the final report of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources. With regard to graduate education at the College, two goals were identified: (1) graduate education will achieve strategic integration with undergraduate education at the college to produce resource flexibility, efficiencies and enhanced learning opportunities for all students; (2) our community will be united in the goal of shaping and delivering mission-focused educational experiences through multiple strategies which include offering a select number of graduate programs. To achieve these goals, the set of principles and practices are being used to guide decision-making about the operation and development of graduate programs at the College.

To pursue the goals of increased collaboration and cooperation between GSAS, GSSWSR and the undergraduate College, the TF recommended the creation of a single Dean of Graduate Studies who would report to the Provost and oversee all graduate education at the College. The Dean/Director of GSSWSR would report to this Dean. Accompanying this administrative change would be the dissolution of the separate Arts and Sciences and GSSWSR Faculty bodies into a single Faculty body. The Task Force also recommended a modest downsizing of the graduate enterprise, including a reduction of GSAS and GSSWSR Ph.D. admissions to meet targets to maintain the College’s Carnegie classification as a primarily baccalaureate institution.

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6 See Attachment 2 in Appendix E of Appendix 2.5.
7 See Appendix 2.5.
8 See Appendix 5.5.
5.2 The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS)

5.2.1 Mission and Overview

The mission of graduate training originally envisioned by Carey Thomas was to “raise the standard of undergraduate work, aid in college discipline, [and] incite professors under whom [graduate students] study to original research”. Departments with graduate programs still tend to ascribe to this original vision, and departments without graduate programs have found other, equally effective means of achieving the same goals. In 2004, Graduate Council approved the following articulation of the GSAS mission.

Since 1886 Bryn Mawr College has welcomed students seeking to attain the highest level of academic achievement in the distinctive environment of a liberal arts college. Today, women and men in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences are a vital component in a continuum of learning and research, acting as role models for undergraduates and as collaborators with the faculty. Bryn Mawr provides an alternative to traditional models of graduate education in its attention to the unique needs of individual students and its commitment to developing a broadly trained community of scholars who are equipped for a variety of useful professional careers. Renowned for excellence within disciplines, Bryn Mawr also fosters connections across disciplines and the individual exploration of newly unfolding areas of research.

Individual graduate programs have developed their own approaches to meeting this mission in accordance with the resources available to them, the position of individual faculty members within their disciplines, and a collective sense of the needs of the fields they represent.

Total enrollment in arts and sciences programs peaked at 472 students in 1973, when graduate degrees were offered in 22 departments and three interdisciplinary programs. This was more than the College could support, and the Plan for Achieving Financial Equilibrium of 1987 called for a reduction to 12 sustainable Ph.D. programs: Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, Greek, Latin, History of Art, Russian, Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology, and Human Development. The selection of those programs and the cancellation of others occasioned rancorous debate among the Faculty. Anthropology and French appealed the cancellation, and because of the potential synergy with the French department’s summer Institut d’Études françaises in Avignon, an M.A.-only program in French was reinstated in 1988. Anthropology's appeal was denied.

Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, History of Art, and Greek, Latin and Classical Studies are nationally ranked programs with high selectivity (all three were ranked in the second quartile of graduate programs in their disciplines in the NRC assessment of 1995). These departments aspire to compete with the strongest programs in the country in the recruitment, training, and placement of students in academic or museum positions. In 2001 these departments—traditionally competitors for financial aid and
other resources—declared themselves a Graduate Group for the purpose of collaboration on the graduate level. This collaboration worked remarkably well. In 2004, the Graduate Group was awarded a Challenge Grant of $441,600 (requiring $1.76 million in matching donations) by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The match was met in June 2007, seven months ahead of schedule. The endowment created by the NEH Grant supports a number of collaborative innovations: GSems (multi-departmental seminars; recent titles include: Birth and Becoming, Death and Beyond, History and Memory, The Reception of Classical Literature and Art, and War and Peace in the Ancient World), curatorial internships, multidisciplinary fellowships, and a program of distinguished visitors.\(^9\)

Since 2000, the cluster of five science and math programs has been reduced to three: Geology was formally terminated by faculty request in 2003 and Biology has not accepted new enrollments since 2004. The remaining programs in the natural sciences (Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics) are small and have a mostly regional draw, due partly to institutional limits on financial aid; nevertheless, they are going strong and all have increased their pool of domestic applications and improved their yield since 2000. The programs in Chemistry and Math were externally reviewed in 2006 and 2003 respectively; both received hearty endorsements from reviewers who confessed to being surprised at their own findings. Physics, consistently the smallest of our graduate programs with as few as three students in some years, has excellent placements of its Ph.D.s.\(^10\)

The faculty members in these programs view their mission (consistent with the larger GSAS mission) as providing a rigorous research experience within the collegial and teaching-intensive context of a liberal arts college. They seek to provide advanced training in mathematics and the sciences in a flexible and supportive environment that stresses mentoring and advising by faculty members who have strong and balanced commitments to carrying out productive research at the frontiers of math and science and also to teaching at both graduate and undergraduate levels. Students are provided opportunities to gain both technical expertise within a discipline and familiarity with topics that transcend disciplinary boundaries. Graduate students, as both researchers and instructors, begin their training as future mentors by serving as role models for undergraduates. At the same time, they develop as intellectual partners of faculty through research and participation in seminars and study groups. These programs provide an alternative to traditional graduate programs in their attention to the unique needs of individual students and their commitment to developing a more broadly trained community of scholars who are equipped for meaningful and rewarding professional careers.

\(^9\) See Appendix 5.6 (esp. Proposal to the National Endowment of the Arts for the Graduate Group in Arch/Classics/History of Art).
\(^10\) See Appendix 5.7 (GSAS program placement outcomes).
Clinical Developmental Psychology, created after the merger of the Departments of Human Development and Psychology in 1992, is significantly unlike the other arts and sciences programs in adopting a scientist/practitioner model of education with a curriculum designed to meet state and national standards of professional accreditation. It is consistently our largest or second-largest program (vying with History of Art) and has a national draw of applicants due to its distinctive combination of clinical training with a research Ph.D. and its focus on children and families. The program has an excellent record of matching applicants to internship placements. Recent post-graduate placements have trended toward college and school counseling, though a preponderance of graduates work outside academic settings.

The M.A. program in French makes use of the internationally known summer program in Avignon to complement a small number of graduate seminars offered at Bryn Mawr. Of the GSAS graduate programs, French is the most popular option for Bryn Mawr undergraduates interested in the combined A.B./M.A. program (which allows students to “double-count” two courses toward both degrees), who account for a relatively large percentage of the graduate enrollment. The department’s mission is to prepare students for the best Ph.D. programs in the U.S. and abroad, as well as for teaching and other employment requiring fluency in French.

The Ph.D. program in Russian changed its orientation in 1996 to focus on Second Language Acquisition (in Russian). As such it has been highly distinctive, and an external review in 2005 confirmed that the students’ research, in particular, is very highly regarded in the field. Internally, however, questions about the impact of this very specialized training on the undergraduate curriculum were articulated in 2000, when a committee comprising members of the administration and the Graduate Council was formed to look into it. Encouraging a redesign of the curriculum to offer more courses that might be attractive to undergraduates, the program was authorized to continue on a provisional basis at that time. As described below, the College Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources revisited this issue as part of the comprehensive review of our mixed academic model and decided to phase out the graduate program in Russian.

5.2.2 Student Body

In support of assessing the quality of the GSAS programs the College offers, the Dean’s office tracks program enrollment numbers, graduation rates and post graduation placements to aid departmental faculty members in ascertaining how well their programs are meeting their goals for students. To provide an example we present the numbers for the 2007-2008 academic year. The total enrollment in the GSAS that year was 175 students. Enrollments in the Graduate Group in Archaeology, Classics, and History of Art accounted for 46% of the total (80), with Clinical Developmental Psychology representing an additional 19% (33). History of Art and Clinical Developmental Psychology are typically the largest single programs with ~35 each. Physics is typically the smallest with ~3 students.
That year, eleven percent of the student population was international, from 14 countries including Russia (3 students), Canada (2), France (2), Turkey (2), Belgium (1), Cyprus (1), Greece (1), India (1), Italy (1), Japan (1), Korea (1) the Netherlands (1), Serbia (1), and Singapore (1). American diversity is typically less robust. Among the students who declared their ethnicity that year, 6 were Asian American, 3 were Hispanic and 1 was African American.

Applications for admission have been trending upward since 2001, and reached a seven-year high of 216 in 2006. This past year however, we observed a ~15% reduction in applicants. It remains to be seen if this represents a new trend or is simply a statistical variation. In 2007 there were 209 applicants, of whom 55 (26%) were admitted. Twenty-two (40%) accepted admission. The most consistently selective program is Clinical Developmental Psychology (five-year average 19%), followed by Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology (24%) and History of Art (25%). Recruitment is principally through departmental websites and word-of-mouth. A poster advertising the Graduate Group in Archaeology, Classics and History of Art is mailed to about 700 college and university departments each year, and those programs also have extended profiles posted at petersons.com.

All students admitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences are admitted as M.A. students, and are classified as such until they successfully apply for Ph.D. candidacy. Most students earn the M.A. on the way to the Ph.D. As in all Ph.D. programs, there is some attrition at the M.A. level. Attrition rates are typically highest in Chemistry, Classics, and Mathematics and lowest in Clinical Developmental Psychology, Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology and History of Art. Higher attrition reflects a number of factors, including employment opportunities for M.A.s (especially in Chemistry and Classics), student desire to move on to bigger programs for the Ph.D. (seen in Chemistry), and faculty perception that the M.A. is a filter for lower-performing students. In most programs Ph.D. completion rates compare well with national norms, and in one case (Clinical Developmental Psychology) the rate is significantly above average.

5.3 The Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research (GSSWSR)

5.3.1 Overview and Mission

The Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research was established through a bequest in 1912 from an undergraduate alumna of the College, Carola Woerishoffer, who at the time of her death at age 25 was investigating factory conditions for the New York Department of Labor. Her gift of $750,000 (about $14...
million in today’s dollars) was the largest gift the College had received at that time, and was made so that others would be prepared to engage in social work, the field to which Carola Woerishoffer had committed herself.

The Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research opened in 1915 as the Department of Social Economy and Social Research. The department was the first social work program affiliated with an accredited college or university in the United States, and, in 1920, Bryn Mawr College became the first institution of higher education in the United States to award a PhD in social work. In 1919, the department became one of the six charter members of the American Association of Schools of Social Work, the predecessor accrediting body to the Council on Social Work Education, and has been accredited on a continuous basis since that time. In 1970, after decades of growth, the department became a professional school, the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research.

Innovation is essential to meeting this commitment and to nurturing our legacy, and the following innovations have made the School more inclusive and vital.

- In 1976, establishment of the Master of Law and Social Policy (MLSP) program, the first and only master’s degree program of its kind at a graduate school of social work;
- In 1987, establishment of a continuing education program that has since grown from 16 to 62 seminars and several certificate programs.
- In 2002, launching of a Center and curricular specialization in Child and Family Wellbeing to foster an interdisciplinary focus on a broad range of issues and challenges facing children and families across the life cycle.
- In 2003, creation of an Introduction to Social Work Education seminar that invites individuals from a range of professional and life experiences to explore a career change to social work.
- In 2004, founding of the Nonprofit Executive Leadership Institute (NELI) in direct response to a call from social and human service leaders in the community to establish a high-level, specialized leadership training program tailored to meet their individual and agency needs.

The Bryn Mawr College community provides an academic environment that is simultaneously intellectually intense and personally supportive. For more than 90 years, the co-educational GSSWSR has been a vital part of Bryn Mawr College, and the missions of the College and the School complement each other. Both place enormous value on critical, creative, and independent habits of thought, and both are historically committed to the pursuit of individual freedom, social and economic justice, and societal and global wellbeing. During the 2005-2006 academic year, the School revisited its mission, goals, and objectives in order to assure that they appropriately reflected our commitment and work as well as the broad purposes of social work education itself. Using an inclusive process, the School revised its mission statement to clearly reflect all
aspects of its program and expanded the goals and objectives that support the mission in order to provide a full and complete picture of its educational program. In fall 2006, the faculty voted to accept the revised mission, goals, and objectives that emerged from this process.

The mission of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research is to advance and apply knowledge to the enhancement of individual, societal, and global well-being and to promote social and economic justice through its teaching, service, and research and scholarly activities. The School provides a learning environment that is supportive and intellectually rigorous, encouraging critical thinking and the expression of social work values through classes, field-based training, research, and active civic engagement in collaboration with the College as a whole. In addition, the School promotes faculty scholarship and community service activities that further expand and refine social work knowledge and the development of service delivery systems, providing leadership in the areas of direct practice, policy, and research.

The program goals of the GSSWSR are derived from its mission.

- Through a curriculum that emphasizes the integration of practice, policy, and research within a context that promotes ethical behavior, social justice, and a global perspective, the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research prepares students for advanced social work practice as clinicians, administrators, policy analysts, advocates, community organizers, and researchers.
- The School promotes social and economic justice initiatives that enhance individual, regional, national, and global wellbeing.
- The School provides leadership and resources to communities, social service agencies, and the social work profession.
- The School develops and advances the knowledge and practice of social work and social welfare.

5.3.2 Student Body

With a student body of just under 300 men and women in three degree programs (MSS, MLSP, and PhD), the GSSWSR is large enough to offer a rich curriculum and a cross fertilization of ideas, yet small enough to allow for a strong sense of community. Students and faculty come to know each other as colleagues, grappling with ideas in the classroom, collaborating on projects and research, and working together on committees. Although more than 75 percent of the students are employed in addition to going to school and many have family care responsibilities, they find time to engage each other academically and socially.

The School is a diverse community. The student body includes 24 percent who identify as being from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. In addition, the student body includes—in almost equal numbers—recent undergraduates who bring a freshness and enthusiasm along with rich volunteer and internship experiences; seasoned social
workers who bring wisdom from their years of work in human services fields such as child welfare, community mental health, and domestic violence and who now feel it is time to pursue a graduate degree; and career changers who have worked in professions as diverse as law, business, engineering, teaching, and art history but find that their passion is working with people and intervening in the social forces that affect their lives. This mix of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences make the classrooms at Bryn Mawr challenge both students and faculty to think creatively, share a mutual respect and acceptance, and act inclusively.

In the world beyond the campus, alumnae/i have a meaningful impact as leaders in their chosen fields, quickly building bridges between the intellectual exploration and understanding of a subject and the opportunities for activism and change. Three alumnae have been named Social Work Pioneers by the National Association of Social Workers and in 2004 an alumna received the prestigious Philadelphia Award in recognition of her visionary leadership of the People’s Emergency Center and its Community Development Corporation. Additionally, an alumna is a member of the United States House of Representative, an alumnus founded the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, an alumna founded Friends Suburban Housing which later became The Suburban Fair Housing Council, Inc., and an alumna directs the federally-funded premenstrual syndrome (PMS) research program at the Hospital at the University of Pennsylvania. Of the alumnae/i for whom the School has current employment information, 85 are executive directors, presidents, vice presidents, or other senior level managers at human service agencies and organizations and seven actually founded the organization they currently oversee. 67 graduates of the MSS program for whom employment information is available have gone on to work in higher education, 12 as deans, directors, or associate deans. As in the GSAS, the GSSWSR not only keeps track of its alumnae/i, it uses information collected—such as the information presented in this paragraph—to gauge whether certain program goals are being met.

In the Spring 2008, the (CWSE) fully reaccredited Bryn Mawr College’s Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research through 2016. In its Accreditation Review Brief, the CSWE site team noted many of the GSSWSR’s strengths, including the integration of diversity content into the curriculum, the commitment to at-risk populations and social and economic justice, the quality of the faculty, and the school’s welcoming and supportive environment for women and for students and faculty of color.12

In August 2009, Darlyne Bailey was appointed dean and professor of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research and special assistant to the president for community partnerships at Bryn Mawr College. Bailey was the founding dean of the University of Minnesota’s College of Education and Human Development and has previously served as the dean of the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University. Dr. Bailey brings a rare mix of academic accomplishment

12 See Appendix 5.8 (Council on Social Work Education Accreditation Review Brief of GSSWSR).
and visionary leadership to the College which has prepared her well to join us in envisioning, designing, and co-creating new multidisciplinary opportunities, in identifying, cultivating, and securing new financial resources, and in building new connections and partnerships both within and beyond the campus.

5.4 The Postbaccalaureate Program

Established in 1972, the Bryn Mawr Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program is one of the oldest, most respected, and most successful in the nation. It is designed for women and men who are highly motivated to pursue a career in medicine but have not taken the required premedical courses as undergraduates. It is an intensive, one-year, full-time preparation for medical school. Each year one or two postbac students use it for preparation for veterinary or dental school.

There are 87 students postbac students in the Class of 2009-10. The 2009-10 class has broad and diverse experience in a variety of fields, including teaching, research, medical services, financial services, engineering, the arts, and law. Two students served in the Peace Corps, one was a US Foreign Service Officer in Afghanistan, one was a Fulbright Scholar, one served with AmeriCorps, eight have advanced degrees, 15 are certified EMTs and 25 have had significant professional or volunteer experience abroad.

The class went to 48 different colleges and universities, with 26 hailing from small liberal arts colleges, 28 from Ivy League institutions, and 33 from large universities. By institution: 6 students came from Brown, 5 each from University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth and Yale; 3 each from Pomona, Duke, Princeton, Amherst, Stanford, Vassar and Wesleyan; and 2 each from DePauw, Middlebury, Tufts, Harvard, Northwestern, George Washington and UC-Berkeley. The cohort's average undergraduate GPA (where reported) was 3.63, and average SAT (if taken) was 710 Verbal, 700 Math. The students range in age from 22-33 years old. 63 percent are female, 37 percent male.

The Program's admissions committee includes representatives from the science faculty, the Undergraduate Admissions Office, and the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program Office. There are approximately 500 completed applications per year. The program is highly selective, seeking applicants who show a strong academic record at both the high school and college level. Students' motivation for becoming a physician is also considered, along with their career history, volunteer activities, and any experiences they have had in health care.

Graduates of Bryn Mawr's postbac program have a remarkable history of success in gaining admission to medical school: acceptance rate consistently exceeds 98 percent, and most of them receive multiple acceptances. Bryn Mawr has early acceptance arrangements with sixteen medical schools, more than any other postbac program; and it has the longest-standing relationships with many of these consortial schools.
5.5 Moving Forward with Graduate Education: Analysis and Findings

To date, the Task Force recommendations for graduate education have had several implications in the areas of governance, assessment and curriculum and have been summarized most recently in the Report on Graduate Education submitted to the Board of Trustees in Spring 2009.\(^{13}\)

5.5.1 Realizing Institutional Priorities at the Administrative/Structural Level

- Administrative structure of graduate education: In Summer 2008, the organizational structure of graduate education was changed. Elizabeth McCormack, Professor of Physics, is now Dean of Graduate Studies, reporting to Provost Kim Cassidy. This spring, the search for new leadership at the GSSWSR ended successfully with the appointment of Darlyne Bailey who joined us in August 2009.

- Organization of the faculty: The establishment of a single Faculty occurred officially in Fall 2008 with the final of the two required faculty votes to change the College’s governance structure. In practice, since Spring 2008 the College has had a single integrated Faculty that continues to meet regularly as a whole. In addition, the Faculty has conducted the two required votes to change the structure of Graduate Council to expand its jurisdiction to cover all graduate programs at the College and expand its membership to allow for representation from the GSSWSR.

- Administrative functions: The College, with the help of a consulting firm specializing in organizational change, conducted a feasibility study to investigate opportunities to realize efficiencies and improvements to student services operations across the two graduate schools and the undergraduate College. As a result of this review, we have adopted a single integrated student services operation that will consolidate the area of admissions, financial aid, registrar, bursar, student employment and career development.

- Space: We are currently modeling the costs and benefits of moving the GSSWSR to the main campus. An important consideration in any move is to preserve the essential qualities of the GSSWSR’s existing campus that give the School its sense of identity and community.

5.5.2 Realizing Institutional Priorities at the Academic Level

In Fall 2008 the implications of the Task Force’s recommendations for individual programs were articulated in individual program meetings with the Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. Program faculty members have responded through revised curriculum and staffing plans for the upcoming year, revised recruitment and

\(^{13}\) See Appendix 5.9 (Report on Graduate Education to the Board of Trustees Spring 2009).
admissions practices, and adjusted five year departmental plans as required by the faculty Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) when making position requests. Task force “Report Cards” for each graduate program and the written departmental responses to them laying out specific plans and benchmarks for meeting goals provide documentation of the assessment process we are currently pursuing.\textsuperscript{14} With the additional pressure of reduced endowment revenue for the next several years, the principle that graduate education be suitable to the scale, scope, and nature of our small, liberal arts undergraduate environment has been particularly salient in our planning.

Graduate program faculty response to the task force recommendations has been facilitated through the coordinated efforts of the Provost, Graduate Dean, and the faculty Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP). While the process of change has necessarily been complex and has proceeded at varying rates, all programs have taken steps to implement changes to address issues raised by the task force. CAP’s role to not only evaluate and make recommendations on position requests, but also be the Faculty voice in institutional planning is relatively new. Our goal therefore, has been to work together to help faculty meet the challenge of translating the priorities and strategies identified at the institutional level by the task force into actionable staffing, curriculum and resource plans at the program level. Collaborative efforts have been critically important for providing clarity around expectations for change, encouragement to tackle the tough decisions, incentives to follow through, and accountability to recognize successful program change.

Also important to the planning of departments offering both graduate and undergraduate programs will be the outcome of the Curricular Renewal process being pursued by CAP and the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum (see chapter 3). The priorities that are set by the Faculty for undergraduate education will provide key guidance for faculty members seeking to make decisions about where to invest departmental resources while helping them to identify which opportunities to pursue to achieve integration across undergraduate and graduate programs in the balanced and value-added ways mandated by the task force.

The following points summarize some of the progress made to date on the task force recommendations:

- In this past academic year, 2008-2009, twenty-nine undergraduates and four GSAS students enrolled in GSSWSR classes. Two GSSWSR faculty members taught an undergraduate-only course in an undergraduate program. A GSSWSR faculty member and a faculty member in the psychology department co-taught a course enrolling both undergraduates and GSSWSR MSS students. In the 2009-10 academic year, six MSS courses have been

\textsuperscript{14} See Appendix 5.10 (Program TF “Report Cards” and Program Responses to TF “Report Cards”).
cross-listed in the undergraduate catalog, three GSSWSR faculty will each teach an undergraduate-only course in the undergraduate college (two in Political Science and one in Economics), one GSSWSR faculty member will teach a course at Haverford (Political Science) and a faculty member in Psychology will teach a course at GSSWSR. Appendix C in Appendix 5.9 provides an example rubric the GSSWSR has developed to express and track curricular and faculty collaboration goals and benchmarks.

- In addition to the many graduate TAs that assist in teaching in departments offering both graduate and undergraduate programs, graduate students have also been contributing to departments not offering graduate programs. While this is not new, it is worth highlighting as an example of the kind of horizontal collaboration that can be fostered across the graduate schools and the undergraduate college. For example, a GSSWSR doctoral student served as a TA in the undergraduate Cities program this past fall and a GSAS graduate student in Archeology served as a TA in the undergraduate Cities program this past term. A GSAS graduate student in Psychology is serving as a “College-wide” TA, helping undergraduate students undertaking research projects complete required IRB applications.

- The Graduate Student Associations of the GSAS and GSSWSR have had several shared events this past year for the first time and they are holding discussions about merging into one Association with a single elected Executive Board. The undergraduate Student Association and Graduate Student Associations have also sent liaisons to each other’s meetings this year.

- In conjunction with the Mellon funded Teaching and Learning Initiative (TLI), multiple workshops are offered to graduate students on topics associated with teaching and learning, mentoring, and professional development. TLI programming has emerged as a key mechanism to bring graduate students from across programs together and to support more deliberative professional development and instruction in teaching for graduate students from both the GSAS and the GSSWSR. One program deserving special notice in this context is the Dean’s Certificate in Pedagogy.15 Established in 2005, through a collaborative effort between the graduate programs and TLI, the Dean’s Certificate in Pedagogy is a program for graduate and post-doctoral students on campus to develop their skills in this teaching and mentoring. It is currently administered by the Dean of Graduate Studies and consists of three parts to be completed over two years (concurrent with a student’s academic work and often accompanied by a Teaching Assistantship award). The first element is to participate in a series of workshops that provide an opportunity to explore fundamental pedagogical issues and approaches. The second is to participate in several experiential and reflective activities designed to encourage a better understanding of a student’s own teaching.

15 See Appendix 5.11 (Dean’s Certificate Requirements).
style and areas for growth and improvement. And the third is to create a teaching portfolio with which a student documents and reflects on his or her teaching experiences. The program began in the Sciences and Mathematics programs in 2005 with 5 students making up the first cohort. In 2006-07, an additional 5 students from the programs in the humanities signed up, and in 2007-08, an additional 11 students joined the program—bringing the total to 21 students. To date, 8 students have completed the requirements for the certificate. The Dean’s Certificate in Pedagogy program has become an important element for strengthening our community and highlighting the distinctive attraction of pursuing graduate education in our liberal arts college setting.

- Individual programs in the GSAS are working to meet their task force defined target enrollments. Quality measures including average incoming GPAs and GRE scores and outgoing placements are being tracked to provide feedback to programs. Application trends will continue to be monitored to test the viability of programs as we move forward.
- The target to down-size by 10-15% the graduate enterprise overall was met this year and has allowed the GSAS to address the task force’s charge to “right-size” the graduate enterprise at the College in relation to undergraduate programs.
- Recognizing that we cannot gain additional resources from the College’s operating budget for graduate programs in the near future, there has been an increased effort to seek alternative resources to support faculty research and financial aid for graduate students. In the Humanities, the NEH challenge grant is a good example. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in grant seeking in the Sciences and Mathematics, which provides graduate student stipends and tuition support. 9 graduate students have been supported in the Sciences in the past 6 years. And in the past 5 years (academic years 2004-09), faculty members in math and the sciences have received 100 grants (worth $7,536,265.10), up from 75 (totaling $4,537,141.67) for the previous 5-year period (academic years 1998-2003).

Further information regarding individual graduate program goals and evaluations can be found in their program-specific task force Report Cards, program faculty responses to those Report Cards, and departmental five year plans.

In what follows, we present a few specific examples to (i) illustrate how we are tracking and evaluating graduate program development and (ii) provide examples of graduate program student learning goals and assessment.

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16 Source: Office of Sponsored Research.
17 Representative examples available in Appendix 5.12.
Here we describe the work at the GSSWSR as an example of the goal setting, strategy development and assessments that are taking place in graduate programs at the College as a result of task force recommendations. See Appendix C of Appendix 5.9 for the rubric the GSSWSR developed in response to its Report Card. The School is currently using it to track progress towards curricular renewal and faculty collaboration goals and benchmarks.

- The Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research is undertaking a full curricular review in an effort to “right size” the curriculum to a level that can be supported by current enrollments, yet at the same time provides the best possible educational experience for our students. This initiative will continue to require strong leadership to ensure that the curricular plans are realized.

  The goals for this curriculum include:
  - a ~15% reduction in program costs achieved by establishing new guidelines for the size of the curriculum, the size of classes, budget modeling based on conservative target numbers for course enrollments, and a reduced number of interim and tenure track/continuing non-tenure track faculty.
  - strategic collaboration and cooperation between GSSWSR, GSAS, and UG programs, students, faculty.
  - streamlined course sequencing and content that addresses student learning and professional development goals.
  - enhancing the contributions of adjunct programs—Center for Child and Family Wellbeing, Home and School Visitor Certification, Master of Law and Social policy.
  - establishing a visible and marketable niche in social work education—shaping social work leadership, highlighting the interdisciplinarity of the field, emphasizing theory-practice synergies and integrative approaches to policy, research, and practice teaching and learning.

- Increase number and strength of MSS applicant pool
  - Partnership with area agencies that will send appropriate staff to our program. We have signed a contract with Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) to provide opportunities for qualified PHMC staff to attend the MSS program on a full-time basis. The program is funded through financial awards from PHMC, BMC grant money, and student contributions, and has yielded 9 students who otherwise would be unlikely to enroll in our program. As we bring these students onboard, it will be important to coordinate what curriculum changes we will (or will not) make to meet the specific needs of this student population.
  - Evaluation of our web-based and print recruitment and application materials and procedures.
- Participation in greater number of graduate school fairs and targeted outreach beyond our region.

- After five very successful years, the Non-Profit Executive Leadership Institute (NELI) underwent an external review of its certificate program. The review focused on exploring new opportunities to meet the expanding leadership development needs of non-profit executives and evaluating potential strategic directions for program enhancement and revenue generation at the College. In addition to providing a strong endorsement of the value and quality of the current NELI program and identifying additional strategies for revenue generation, the consultant report has provided many exciting ideas for collaboration and cooperation with the undergraduate curricular and co-curricular activities. These ideas dovetail nicely with some of the goals for undergraduate education that have evolved from the undergraduate curricular renewal project involving leadership and social entrepreneurship training.\(^\text{18}\)

(ii) Graduate Program Student Learning and Assessment

Here we provide two examples of how an individual graduate program has identified specific learning and development goals for its graduate students and how they use various forms of evaluation and assessment to monitor progress towards those goals. Similar practices can be found in all of our graduate programs.

*The Graduate Program in Chemistry*

The Graduate Program in the Chemistry Department seeks to prepare the next generation of chemists for careers in education and research through rigorous experiences in both activities. There are multiple mechanisms used to evaluate the success of the program in achieving these goals. While in the program, students are evaluated through two instruments: course performance evaluations and master’s and doctoral exams. Upon graduation, one outcome that measures the achievement of these goals is the career paths of our graduating students. A third department-wide assessment comes each decade when the department is evaluated by an external review committee. These overlapping evaluation tools provide information that is used to ensure the program provides the necessary rigor to prepare our graduates for successful careers in the chemical sciences.

During their time in the graduate program, students are required to complete at least 12 courses, 6 lecture courses and 6 supervised research courses. At the completion of each course, student performance is reviewed and evaluated by a faculty member in a written report on their work. When students reapply for financial support each winter, their folder is reviewed by members of both the chemistry faculty and the admissions subcommittee of the Graduate Council. Any problems with student performance in a

\(^{18}\) See Appendix 5.13 (NELI External Review).
course or insufficient progress towards the doctoral degree can be raised at that time. The designated Graduate Advisor in the Department and/or the Research Supervisor meet(s) regularly with students to mentor and advise them in their program of study. Students not achieving acceptable progress can be denied financial support for the next year.

The first task on the path to a doctorate degree in the Chemistry Graduate Program is fulfilling the requirements of the master’s degree. Students must conduct sufficient research to write a thesis and then they must present and defend the thesis before a panel of the chemistry faculty. In addition, all students are required to take a written four-hour master’s exam prepared by faculty whose courses they have taken. After the exam, the student’s answers are circulated to the faculty and, approximately one week later, the student undergoes a one-hour oral review of the exam. The two oral exams, one for the research thesis and one for the written master’s exam, require that the student demonstrate an appropriate level of chemistry knowledge and understanding. The four or five faculty who typically attend will ask a range of questions across the sub-disciplines of chemistry and expect a strong fundamental understanding of the field. An absence of competence with core chemical principles requires that the student repeat the exam or leave the program.

After the master’s degree, there are six department-wide assessments of student development prior to the granting of the doctoral degree. These assessments include an 8 hour written exam, an oral exam reviewing the written exam, the preparation of an original research proposal, an oral review of the research proposal, a research thesis and an oral exam review of the research thesis by the doctoral committee. All six events provide the department and the doctoral committee an opportunity to review the work of the graduate student and determine whether sufficient progress is being made and whether the student demonstrates a level of knowledge and skill competencies appropriate to their stage in the program. One important criterion in evaluating the acceptability of the doctoral thesis is a demonstration that the research is worthy of publication in respected peer-reviewed scientific journals. If a manuscript of the work is not already accepted, then an acknowledgment by the thesis advisor and other members of the doctoral committee that the work is of sufficient quality to be subsequently published is required.

In addition to the evaluation of knowledge and skill competency and the research progress described above, the Chemistry department also regularly evaluates student teaching activities and accomplishments. Each semester that a student serves as a teaching assistant, the student’s faculty supervisor for the course writes an evaluation of the student based on their experiences and based on the teaching evaluations of the students in the course. Furthermore, the faculty supervisor meets with the students individually to review the evaluation and suggest ways to improve. This teaching assistant review process serves as another assessment of a student’s chemistry competency in the lab and an important assessment of his/her teaching competency.
Our close attention to teaching practices prepares our students well for careers in chemistry and science education.

When students graduate, we do our best to track their career paths. See Appendix 5.14 for an example of a report on Ph.D. recipient placements covering all graduate programs. Over the last thirty years, the Chemistry program has placed students in both academic and industrial institutions. In the academic sector for example, students have found faculty positions at institutions like Chestnut Hill College, Eastern College, Haverford College, and the University of New Haven. Master’s and doctorate graduates have found industrial positions as research chemists at Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, Roche Bioscience, BASF and DuPont. These outcomes serve as a strong testament to the value of the training that students receive.

As is the case for all programs, each decade the Chemistry Department is evaluated by a team of chemistry faculty from other academic institutions. During the most recent evaluation in 2006, the evaluation team was asked to pay particular attention to the Chemistry Graduate Program. Their assessment of the quality and nature of the graduate program was extremely positive. The external review committee was unanimous that the Chemistry Department Graduate Program is a “key component” in the success of the department. They found the graduate students to be “exceptionally well mentored to become effective researchers and teachers”. Although the reviewers did suggest that assessment could be enhanced by adding external members from local Ph.D. granting institutions to the doctoral committees, they analyzed a collection of recent doctoral theses and found them to be “a solid body of work”. After meeting our graduate students and reviewing their training, the committee reported that our graduate students “compare very favorably with the top echelon of graduate students” at other institutions. The thorough assessment of our program by the external reviewers serves as a strong endorsement of the current graduate curriculum in the department.

The Graduate Program in History of Art

The Graduate Program in History of Art provides students the opportunity to study the visual culture of images, artifacts, and monuments through the ages and around the world. Students are encouraged to take courses across media and areas in art and architecture, such as Ancient and Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque, Modern and Contemporary, Film and non-Western.

In our graduate seminars we seek to entrench students in the practices of looking at, talking about, and writing about works of art and the scholarly literature through which the significance of those works has been constituted and contested. Classes are kept small (8-10 students). Class meetings often are structured by discussion of a scholarly article and the work (or works) it takes as its subject. Through these discussions, students sharpen their analytical and critical skills in relation to both visual and textual sources. Students also participate in discussions in online forums. They make oral presentations of their work in class and submit written research papers at the end of the
semester. In the form of substantial written evaluations, these papers provide the most significant evidence for faculty assessment of student capacity and progress at the end of each semester.

Students meet with the graduate advisor in the spring and fall to register for classes and discuss their overall plan of study, one that is attentive to both their interests and the range of faculty expertise within the department. It is the role of the graduate advisor to make sure that the students are fulfilling their requirements and making good progress toward the degree. The graduate advisor receives evaluations and transcripts and monitors progress as they work their way through the program.

The master’s thesis, based on independent research and using scholarly methods of historical and/or critical interpretation must be submitted prior to matriculation as a doctoral candidate. Generally 40-60 pages in length, the master’s paper, written under the close supervision of a faculty advisor, is the culmination of the first phase of the graduate experience. The thesis advisor and a second reader together prepare and evaluate a written examination on the candidate’s field. The written master’s examination is a foretaste of the four preliminary doctoral exams that doctoral candidates may begin to prepare for once the entire department has read and accepted their dissertation proposals. These proposals are 6-10 pages in length and include a preliminary bibliography and projected schedule of research and travel.

For doctoral students the occasions of formal assessment are intensified and multiplied. Each student prepares over the course of a semester to be examined in four areas of art history by the four faculty members who will serve on her or his doctoral committee. They read the four written examinations and conduct an hour-long oral interrogation of the candidate. Eventually, they will read the completed dissertation of two hundred pages or more and conduct the traditional hour-long oral defense of it. In the preliminary and final oral examinations, faculty members serve as intellectual portals to the profession, testing the doctoral student according to the rigorous protocols of scholarship and presentation that prevail in the professional domain. Throughout the year, the faculty meets regularly to engage in a set of conversations that address and assess the outcomes of our classes, our goals, our values, our standards, and our individual graduate students.

The program’s faculty convenes each year at the beginning of the spring semester to discuss the work of each graduate student before making crucial decisions regarding his or her nomination for the award or renewal of academic fellowships, teaching assistantships, traveling fellowships, and dissertation fellowships. This is a collective responsibility that maintains continuity in the exercise of intellectual standards from one year to the next. We have an ongoing pedagogical commitment to train our students to be critical and self-reflective thinkers and competent and persuasive writers, whatever their object of study or intellectual attention. That this work takes place in a discipline that is by definition and from the moments of its intellectual origins
international and transnational, and, in turn, is fundamentally engaged in a project of comparative cultural studies, encourages an intellectual open-mindedness that should serve them well in years to come.

One of the best indications that we are preparing students well in our discipline is the success that our students continue to have in the field. Appendix 5.14 lists some recent Ph.D. recipient placements. We track our students as they move through their careers, both through the official mechanism of the alumnae association, but also through such informal mechanisms as the yearly Bryn Mawr reception at the College Art Association Annual Conference, where our alumnae (graduate and undergraduate), employed in colleges and museums throughout the world, come together to celebrate their connection to their fellow students and to the department and faculty that trained them and helped them to launch their careers.

5.6 Appraisal and Recommendations

Both the GSAS and GSSWSR received positive evaluations from their external review teams. The reviewers found that the graduate programs were of high quality and that they contributed to the overall mission of the College. In implementing the recommendations of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources, the College is in the process of further improving the quality and selectivity of these programs and is working to integrate them better with each other and with the rest of the College. Steps have been taken to recruit more students. Both undergraduate and graduate programs are trying to take advantage of the teaching talents of faculty across the entire institution. Undergraduate and graduate programs are also allowing and encouraging students to enroll in courses outside of their program that fit into the goals of their own program's course of study. Students across the graduate programs are coming together to create a larger community and are looking for ways to increase their interactions with the undergraduate population. We are in the process of implementing an integrated model of student services.

These changes are intended to result in improved student experiences, reduced costs, and improved workload efficiencies. In many cases, as described above, these changes will also facilitate horizontal and vertical cooperation and collaboration. Individual programs have also made some progress in achieving the benchmarks laid out by the Task Force but more work is needed. In general, the changes requiring the most re-envisioning of programs, goals, or priorities have been the slowest and will continue to need attention as we move forward.

The recent economic challenges have brought into sharp relief the need to develop and sustain ways of assessing how we are meeting the benchmarks set by the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources. The financial changes at the College should not cause us to revisit whether graduate education contributes to our primary mission as an elite
undergraduate institution; however, we must continue to work toward an affordable scope and cost of those programs. Most importantly, it requires us to continue to look closely at our priorities and weigh all of our programs to consider in where best to invest our resources. The process of undergraduate curricular renewal will provide us with a list of critical goals for our undergraduate students as well as an exciting array of new and existing academic offerings that will help us achieve those goals. A critical step in the renewal process will be to examine each graduate program to see how it intersects with and can contribute to meeting those goals.

In addition to these general recommendations, we suggest a number of specific recommendations for moving forward with graduate education at the College. In particular, we recommend that the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Provost and CAP continue to work together (using incentives, accountability and support) on the following goals in accordance with the task force recommendations and timeline. \(^{19}\)

- Increase the quality and quantity of applicants to both the GSAS and GSSWSR programs to support the attainment of viable enrollment targets set for these programs.
- Realize enhanced operation efficiencies and student experience through restructuring how we deliver student services in the areas of admissions, financial aid, employment, and career advising.
- Continue ongoing work with programs to achieve undergraduate/graduate resource balance and cooperation across programs to:
  - Achieve greater engagement of the Graduate Group in Science and Mathematics at the level of inter-departmental program coordination and collaboration.
  - Achieve better long-term coordinated planning in the Graduate Group in the Humanities and the continued balancing between the undergraduate and graduate program needs for these programs.
- Implement the new curricular model in the GSSWSR in ways that minimize the financial deficit and maximize the use of excess resources to contribute to the undergraduate college until such time as retirements occur.
- Create a departmental vision for Psychology’s graduate and undergraduate curricula that best leverages its strengths in its current resource environment. Find ways for the Psychology programs to achieve real dollar savings.
- Achieve further collaboration between Psychology and the GSSWSR. The curricular work that both programs are doing is a precursor to any transformational integration between the GSSWSR and Clinical Developmental Psychology Ph.D. programs. We also anticipate the need to incorporate more centrally the Center for Family and Child Well-Being and the Lab School programs into this work.

\(^{19}\) See Appendix 2.5.
• Articulate how graduate programs can intersect with the goals generated from the undergraduate curricular renewal.
• Continue evaluating individual programs to determine where limited resources should be focused and, if necessary, what programs need to be eliminated or modified.
Students

Students are the focus of the College’s mission statement, and much of what the College does is geared towards improving the students’ experience and chance for success both at Bryn Mawr and in their life and work after graduation. This means, in part, providing students with top-notch educational curricula developed and monitored by an excellent faculty of teacher-scholars. The College’s efforts towards achieving these ends are described in previous chapters, but promoting student success also requires strong admissions policies, high retention rates, and a host of student support services. The College devotes a great deal of attention to these aspects of the Bryn Mawr experience. Major efforts towards educating and nurturing the whole student are the focus of this chapter.

During the 2009-10 academic year, 1307 undergraduates are enrolled in the College.\(^1\) This number includes 24 part-time students and an incoming class of 362 full-time students. Applications for 2009-10 were a record high of 2,276, representing a 47% increase over ten years. As a result of these increases, Bryn Mawr for the first time was able to admit fewer than 50% of its applicants in 2004-05. Also during this time, the College consistently increased its racial and ethnic diversity through focused efforts. In fact, in the Class of 2013 over 50% of the students are either students of color or international students. Throughout this period, the College has remained a leader among selective liberal arts colleges in terms of its socioeconomic diversity.

The College’s facilities for student co-curricular activities have improved dramatically with the addition of Cambrian Row (a series of houses renovated for use by students), the renovation and expansion of Goodhart as a performing arts space, and the upcoming improvements to the Schwartz Gymnasium. In addition, a dance studio was added in the former Language Learning Center in Denbigh Hall, and the Arnecliffe Printmaking Studio was reopened as a student activity space for students to enjoy and explore creating various forms of fine art.

New academic support programs—such as Peer Mentoring and Peer Led Instruction in the Sciences—and a restructured academic tutoring structure have made it easier for students to get help with study skills and with approaches to key courses. Funded summer internships and well-supported summer research activities have added immensely to students’ experience and preparation for work and graduate study.

\(^1\) See chapter 5 for numbers of graduate students.
6.1 Enrollment: Admissions and Financial Aid

6.1.1 Optimal Enrollment

In the 1980s, as part of the Plan for Achieving Financial Equilibrium, the College set an enrollment goal of 1,230 full-time equivalent undergraduates. Once this goal was reached (in AY 2006-07), the Board of Trustees established the Task Force on Optimal Enrollment to conduct a feasibility study of how the College’s enrollment levels affect its ability to achieve its aspirations. More specifically, the study aimed to determine whether changes to the College’s enrollment were possible and potentially desirable and, if so, to set the stage for a broader conversation about enrollment size with the College community and Haverford.

Prior to establishing this task force, the College conducted a review of United States census data to determine how the upcoming decline in high school-age students might impact the College’s applicant pool in the long-term. Considering the College’s primary markets, it appeared that the impact would be minimal and would not preclude the possibility of enrollment growth.

Given the broad-based financial, academic, and social implications of expanding or reducing enrollment, the task force narrowed the focus of its work to the following:

- Preparing a feasibility study to serve as a platform for a broader community discussion on the impact of enrollment size on the College’s mission;
- Defining “optimal” as enhancing the resources of the community while preserving the fundamental strengths of the College;
- Sustaining the academic quality of the student body;
- Holding the discount rate constant rather than suggesting alterations to the composition of the student body;
- Focusing present attention on the nearer-term (0 to 10 years) rather than the longer-term.

To understand the numerous opportunities and constraints related to expanding or contracting enrollment, the Task Force divided itself into three subgroups: Physical Capacity, Academic Capacity, and Financial Issues. For theoretical purposes, the Task Force evaluated an enrollment size of 800 (to understand the impact of having more endowment income per student) as well as an enrollment size of 2,000 (to approach the size of peer women’s colleges). The Task Force determined that reducing enrollment to 800 would necessitate significant and undesirable cuts in the curriculum. It also found that given our physical constraints, growing to 2,000 seemed out of reach for the Task Force’s 0-10 year time frame. The Financial subgroup then developed the following scenarios based on the short-, medium- and long-term options outlined by the Physical Capacity group:
• 1,000 students, or, a decrease of 235 students.
• 1,285, or, an increase of 50 students.
• 1,355, or, an increase of 120 students.
• 1,455, or, an increase of 220 students.

Given the College’s reliance on endowment income to fund a portion of every student’s education, if enrollment increases while student-to-teaching faculty and student-to-staff ratios remain the same, the College will run deficits. Thus, the subgroup modeled the different enrollment levels at student-to-faculty ratios of 9.9:1 (current level), 10.4:1, and 10.9:1. It also modeled the same enrollment levels at 3.2:1 (current level), 3.3:1, and 3.4:1 student-to-staff ratios. The financial subgroup determined that increases in enrollment would not require additional senior-level administrators, but would require additional staff to continue to provide quality support for our services and programs.

The results of the feasibility study showed that modest growth in enrollment (up to 120 additional students), when pursued in tandem with slight changes to the College’s current infrastructure, was possible and would likely provide the College with more financial resources (approximately $1,000,000 in additional annual operating revenue) to assist in fulfilling its mission. Given the complexity of understanding the impact of increasing enrollment beyond what a model can predict, the task force suggested a series of next steps. First, the task force recommended that the College immediately implement a short-term slight growth scenario (approximately 30-50 additional students), since this could be achieved rather easily by balancing enrollment across semesters through the Junior Year Abroad (JYA) program. Second, the task force suggested a conversation with the broader College community to discuss and evaluate the implications of medium-term modest growth (which would bring the total increase to approximately 120 additional students). This option creates additional tuition and revenue resources and also allows for additional faculty and staff resources to support the increased enrollment.

The work of the Task Force on Optimal Enrollment led to a number of developments, including:

• An architectural feasibility study, conducted to evaluate the possibility of reconfiguring Erdman and Haffner residence halls to improve the quality of student life within those residences and to increase capacity. The feasibility of increasing room density in a sample historic residence—such as Pembroke—was also analyzed. The study showed that none of the existing residences could be reconfigured to create significant additional capacity.

• A Junior Year Abroad (JYA) semester reallocation plan, developed under the leadership of the JYA committee. The committee changed its application policy to require any sophomore desiring to go abroad to apply in February of her sophomore year. This eliminated the option to apply during a
student’s junior year, which may have been a cause of greater numbers of students enrolling in the spring. This policy was implemented in 2007-08 for the first time and created the desired result of freeing up more rooms in the fall semester than the spring semester, thereby enabling the enrollment of a larger first-year class.

- Administrator-student meetings, aimed at gauging student interest in near-campus apartment residences. Students were overwhelmingly supportive of the idea. Since that time, Bryn Mawr has worked with a local rental company and has secured the option to house as many as 40 students in such housing when the need arises.

- A record-high freshman class enrollment of 365 students in 2007-08. The initial plan was to increase the goal of the freshman class by 10 every four years for the foreseeable future. Total undergraduate enrollment is now 100 students higher than it was ten years ago in 1998-99. See attached enrollment model (Appendix 6.1). The College still plans to raise the first-year class target, although it will be reviewed carefully in light of the current economic crisis. Although applications to the College have increased, helping to maintain quality, yield has declined and financial need has risen dramatically after six straight years of decline.

6.1.2 Recruitment and Financial Aid

Over the past seven years, the College has made great strides in its undergraduate recruitment efforts. (See Chart 6.1 for numbers of applications received over the past decade, by academic year.) Also during this time period, through focused efforts such as a partnership with the Posse Foundation, targeted recruitment efforts, and sustained relationships with community-based organizations, the College has consistently increased its racial and ethnic diversity. Throughout this period, the College has remained a leader among selective liberal arts colleges in terms of its socioeconomic diversity. The percentage of Pell Grant recipients at Bryn Mawr has ranged from fourteen to nineteen percent over the past ten years.
Chart 6.1: Number of applications to the College, 1998-2009 (academic years). Particularly noteworthy is the fact that, following a period of flat or declining applications, the College has seen an increase in applications of over 45% since the 2002 academic year.

In 2002-03 the College began concerted efforts to lower its discount rate, which had been climbing steadily for the previous ten years, reaching a peak in 2004. Through a combination of changes to financial aid policy as well as new recruitment publications and messages, the College’s overall discount rate declined from 43% to 38% in five years. At the same time, as measured by standardized testing and rank in class, Bryn Mawr’s selectivity has remained relatively constant over the past six years. Progress on selectivity and financial aid was made via strategic attention to increasing the visibility of the College to prospective students. This strategic work was initiated by two important task forces, described presently.

(i) Task Force on the Competitive Position of the College 2004 & 2009-10

In April 2004 the Board of Trustees Task Force on Enhancing the Competitive Position of the College issued a set of recommendations to strengthen the College’s position and its appeal to the strongest and most desirable prospective applicants. (See Appendix 6.2 for the full report). Many of those recommendations were implemented and significant progress was achieved. Prior to the most recent entering Class of 2013, the College had stabilized both first-year enrollment and the discount rate. Compared to 5 years ago, applications increased, surpassing the goal set by the Task Force. Total enrollment was 75 FTE higher and the discount rate was the same, having declined by 4 points from its peak in 2003-04. The College has not yet achieved the level of selectivity or the yield goals on the most highly rated applicants set by the 2004 task force, mostly because of
the overall decline in yield over the past few years (this decline is largely attributable to the decline in early-decision candidates to Bryn Mawr).

With plans to increase enrollment by at least 50 students, changing national demographics, a recession, increased competitive pressures and a significant one-year increase in the College’s discount rate, it is time to take stock once again of the College’s competitive position. As such, the Task Force on Enhancing the Competitive Position of the College was reconstituted in the 2009-10 academic year to evaluate the College’s current and potential market for students and to make recommendations for strengthening the College’s ability to maintain a reliable tuition revenue base.


The College already enrolls the type of racially, ethnically, geographically and socioeconomically diverse student body to which many of our peers—who have eliminated loans or made their financial aid need analysis more generous—aspire. Increasing aid packages to compete for highly qualified lower income students would only serve to increase the College’s discount rate to unsustainable levels.

In this competitive environment it is critically important for Bryn Mawr to assess its financial aid strategies relative to its peers. It is unclear how the shift toward reducing student debt at some of Bryn Mawr’s peer institutions will impact the applicant pool and enrollment over the long-term. The simplicity of a “no loan” policy could be an expensive yet effective marketing initiative for other institutions. However, given the complexity of the College’s current financial aid practices and the greater socioeconomic diversity of its applicant pool relative to these peers, providing incentives for more low-income students to apply to Bryn Mawr in a need-sensitive admissions environment seems counterintuitive.

In the first year (2008) of competing against no loan policies, the College spent less on financial aid than it had in previous years. As noted earlier, the opposite occurred in 2009 as the yield on students without financial aid declined while the yield of those with significant need increased. Given the unsustainability of this financial aid trajectory, during the 2009-10 academic year, the Task Force will be evaluating the College’s competitive position and making recommendations for changes to financial aid policy. In particular, due to the economic downturn and the achievement of the admissions application goal of the 2004 task force without the desired results in the areas of selectivity and yield, the Task Force will be addressing the following specific questions:

- What are our enrollment priorities?
- How do our programs, services, and marketing efforts support those priorities?
- What is our current market position relative to our primary overlap schools?
• How do our academic and co-curricular programs, marketing, and financing approaches differ from our primary competitors?
• How does financial aid policy fit into the College’s overall strategic goals and its mission?
• What is a sustainable discount rate and how does that impact our potential to enroll the highest quality students? Or, how much net tuition revenue do we need?

These questions get at the heart of the College’s mission and future direction as it relates to its enrollment goals and whom the College will serve in the future. The Task Force will provide an excellent opportunity to bring together individuals involved in the current curricular renewal effort with those engaged in trying to differentiate the College in the marketplace and those trying to develop a sustainable financial model for achieving Bryn Mawr’s mission.

6.1.3 Retention

Recruiting and financially supporting as many talented, diverse students as possible helps the College accomplish its mission and goals only insofar as those students stay at Bryn Mawr to receive the education we aim to offer. Retention is thus a central issue for the College. It is, moreover, an area of concern, since our retention rates lag behind those of our peers—both co-educational and women’s. Since 1998, fall-to-fall one-year retention rates have fluctuated between 86.9 percent (entering cohort fall 2003) and about 92.5% (1999, 2002, and 2004). Overall, though, they center on 90%—very nearly the rate for both 1998 and 2007 entering cohorts. Happily, six-year graduation rates have on the whole improved since 1993. For the cohort entering in fall 1993, the six-year graduation rate was about 77 percent. For the 2002 cohort (the most recent for which we have data), it was up to 86 percent. 2

In 1998-99, the College commissioned a study of undergraduate attrition, which focused on interviews with students who had withdrawn from Bryn Mawr and with deans at peer colleges, for insights into persistence behavior and retention initiatives. The analysis of student responses pointed to key reasons for choosing not to complete the degree at Bryn Mawr, including a perceived lack of social life, a sense of political correctness, and an intense academic profile that seemed not to value educating “the whole person.”

To address these concerns, as part of the Plan for a New Century, a variety of facilities, programmatic and recruitment initiatives were implemented.

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2 See Appendix 6.3 (Bryn Mawr Institutional Dashboard, Jan. 2010).
(i) Facilities

Constructed to address the need for more dedicated student space, Cambrian Row was opened in 2004. The series of renovated faculty houses includes the Multicultural Center, the Civic Engagement Office, a religious life house, and offices for the student Self-Government Association. In 2005 the College renovated its Campus Center to create a space more conducive to community interaction. The opening of the renovated Goodhart Hall in the fall of 2009, with the addition of a new teaching theater, provides student performance groups and our theater program with a more flexible and readily available performance space on campus. Finally, anticipated renovations to Schwartz Gymnasium, to be completed by fall of 2010, will make the College’s fitness center a more inviting space for all students to use.

(ii) Programmatic

In 2001, the College hired a new Director of Student Activities to help create more obvious ties to Philadelphia and to assist student organizations in the development of a more comprehensive program of student events. In addition, the College’s community service efforts have evolved into the creation of the Civic Engagement Office which links volunteer activities with academic activities related to service in an effort to connect students to the wider world. Significant investments were also made to enhance our intercollegiate athletic program, including creating more full-time coaching positions and better supporting the student athletic association.

In response to gaining a better sense of the support students need to succeed academically, the College added or improved a number of academic support programs including Peer Mentoring, Peer Led Instruction in the sciences, and more support for Writing Center programming.

(iii) Recruitment

One way to retain students is to ensure that their expectations about the College are accurate at the time they choose to enroll. Market research revealed that the perception of Bryn Mawr by high school girls was wide-ranging and sometimes inaccurate. Moreover, senior exit interview results were uncovering some disparities between the students’ perception of the image the College presented during the admissions process and what they experienced after enrolling. These factors, combined with the results of a recent retention study (mentioned above, see also section (iv), below), underscored the need for new messages about the College that were both persuasive and accurate.

In the spring of 2003, for the class entering in 2004, the College presented an early version of its characterization of a Bryn Mawr woman. According to this early version, a Bryn Mawr undergraduate embodies:
• an intense intellectual commitment;
• a self-directed and purposeful vision of her life; and
• a desire to make a meaningful contribution to the world.

During the message development process, members of the faculty, staff, student, and alumnae bodies were consulted. Groups of high school students (including subgroups of (a) those we knew were interested in the College and (b) those who had not yet expressed interest in the College) were selected in three regions (New York City, the Chicago suburbs, and the San Francisco/Bay Area) to view and respond to our test messages. Data gathered from these sessions enabled us to select the messages and styles that were both authentically “Bryn Mawr” and appealing to high school women.

While the first class (the Class of 2008) recruited with the new messages has yet to be counted among six-year graduation rates, the cohorts enrolled after the new messaging initiative are graduating at higher rates than any of the previous five entering cohorts. See Appendix 6.4 for details on recent graduation rates.

(iv) Recent Retention Analysis

Our most recent study of retention, conducted in fall 2009 using students from the classes prior to the implementation of new recruitment messages, suggests that the following factors do the best job of explaining variation among students’ five-year graduation rates (in order of importance):

• Academic rating at admission (higher ratings predict higher graduation rates);
• Geographic region (regions other than the mid-Atlantic exhibit lower graduation rates);
• Ethnicity (varies by ethnic group);
• Grant aid recipients (recipients of institution-source grant aid graduate at higher rates).

In other words, students are more or less likely to graduate within five years depending on how they score along these dimensions.\(^3\) As noted earlier, the 1998-99 study noted social life, political correctness, and a general lack of balance as the most consistent themes among students who left the College. The more recent study, however, did not support this finding. It is worth noting that the more recent study did not include student interviews, whereas the former did. However, one must be careful in attributing either study more accuracy on this basis, as students’ self-reports regarding their reasons for leaving are not necessarily reliable. The most important factor in non-persistence, according to the more recent study, was low academic rating at admission. There is, perhaps, a way to connect the findings of the two studies. For it may well be

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\(^3\) See Appendix 6.5 (Undergraduate Persistence at Bryn Mawr).
that students with less academic preparation (as evidenced by their admission rating) have to work harder to succeed at Bryn Mawr, and as such may have a more difficult time finding the social life or balance they may have enjoyed in high school.

In sum, the College has made great strides in its analysis and reporting of graduation and retention rates; however, it still lacks a systematic and proactive approach to addressing and understanding student retention issues as they occur. Implementing a semester-by-semester retention tracking system as described in the most recent retention study would go a long way to providing information in a timely fashion about how particular cohorts are tracking relative to others. In addition, developing a more systematic collection of exit interview data would most likely improve our ability to predict non-retention behavior. A more standardized exit interview form, perhaps no more than 10-15 questions, would greatly improve our ability to understand the causes of the myriad reasons students choose to leave Bryn Mawr.

### 6.1.4 Student Services Initiative

In 2008, based on the findings of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources, Bryn Mawr’s Board of Trustees mandated that the College’s leadership explore the possibility of greater integration between graduate and undergraduate student services throughout the campus. After more than a year of consultation and review, the College is consolidating graduate and undergraduate student administrative services in a new organization serving all of Bryn Mawr’s students. For an overview of the process and the rationale for the decisions, see Appendix 6.6 (Student Services Organizational Review).

It became obvious as we conducted this review process that in trying to offer high quality service, the College’s staff was constantly forced to compensate for the siloed and diffuse infrastructure we had in place to support them. The new structure also links enrollment and communications, enhancing the College’s capacity to communicate the extraordinary quality of Bryn Mawr to prospective students and their parents and building greater visibility for the College among all those whose support can advance our mission.

In creating this new administrative student services structure, the College is consolidating what were eight offices crossing five different divisions of the College into five offices that will report directly to a single person responsible for enrollment and communication. In addition, all the users of the current student administration system will be in one organization, thereby enabling one point of contact for developing priorities for information technology support.

The offices in this new organization include:

- Graduate and Undergraduate Admissions
- Student Financial Services
6.2 Student Life

6.2.1 Self-Governance and the Honor Codes

From early in its history, Bryn Mawr granted the right of self-governance to its students and sought to treat them as responsible adults. These values were central here long before most colleges embraced them. The Self-Government Association encouraged students to create a democratic community in which students created rules and guidelines needed to enable them to live together effectively while allowing individuals considerable freedom to make their own choices. Today, weekly meetings of the SGA Assembly attract about fifty students, and the Plenary that takes place each semester requires the participation of one-third of the student body. While only a small percentage of students become deeply involved with SGA, it has an impact on the experience of most students.

In the spring of 2009, Aheli Purkayastha ‘09, the outgoing President of the Self-Government Association, wrote an overview of SGA that summarizes the current students’ understanding of its purpose quite well.

In 1892, Bryn Mawr became the first college in the United States to grant its undergraduate students responsibility for establishing and enforcing rules of behavior and community standards. Today, the tradition of student self-governance allows students to experiment, to create and to sustain a policy of self-governance within the College society. Students create their own policies in residence halls, adjudicate their own disputes, take responsibility for the integrity of their research and scholarship, and work hard to build a genuinely free, open, and fair community. They also gain first-hand experience in collaboration and leadership, negotiation and compromise, freedom and responsibility. Furthermore, the social and academic Honor Codes foster a sense of mutual respect and integrity inside the classroom and out.

Giving students a great deal of responsibility and trust supports the College’s mission to “encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world.” There is, however, some tension between students’ desire for and pride in autonomy and their wish that the College would provide more direction and programming. They both want responsibility and find it at times a burden, on top of high academic demands.
The Academic Honor Code is central to the experience of students and has tremendous influence on their relationships to their work, their professors and each other. Faculty members feel free to leave the room when giving tests and quizzes, and to use take-home testing and self-scheduled exams. Feeling that degree of trust helps students to take themselves more seriously as people and as scholars. Potential violations are heard by a Board including the Dean, faculty members, and students who seek to educate and re-connect those guilty of infractions as much as possible.

The Social Honor Code forms the basis on which students live and work together at Bryn Mawr. They are expected to treat each other with respect, despite great differences in background, values, and opinion. Again, this reflects the College’s mission to “sustain a community diverse in nature and democratic in practice.” When conflict arises, students are supposed to try to resolve it by discussing it directly and honestly and seeking a resolution. A group of students trained in conflict management are available to help students achieve resolution. Only when no satisfactory resolution can be found is the Social Honor Board or a Dean’s Panel used to impose a solution. Since there are no professionals living in the residence halls and very few rules governing students’ social lives, they learn that they must take responsibility for their own actions and deal with the actions of other students when they conflict with individual or community standards. While there is a lot of idealism in trying to base community life on a “social honor code,” even when the effort fails, it does provide a set of goals and values to which students hold themselves and others accountable.

Effective student leadership is essential to making self-governance and the honor codes work. In recent years the College has increased the number of programs designed to train leaders. Customs People (usually sophomores who work with small groups of first year students living near each other), Hall Advisors (juniors or seniors living on each hall who are trained to respond to emergencies and serve as resources and models for other students), Community Diversity Assistants, Peer Mentors, Athletic Team Captains, Dining Hall Supervisors, and TA’s of various sorts all receive significant training for their leadership roles. The Dean’s Leadership Retreat brings together a group of students in a variety of leadership positions before the year begins to strengthen their skills and to give them a chance to get to know staff and other students who can be potential resources as they plan and execute their goals for their organization. Students report that the workshops on understanding different leadership styles, setting goals, running meetings, and budgeting are very helpful, and staff who work with student groups find this early chance to form relationships with student leaders invaluable. Another leadership training program, LEAP, takes place over the course of the year and allows students who would like to prepare to take on leadership roles to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed. As the diversity within the Bryn Mawr community has grown, the learning that goes on for students attempting leadership roles has become better preparation for diverse workplaces and increasingly global communities.
6.2.2 Advice and Support

(i) Academic and Personal Advising

Academic Advising

The Deans

Much of the support for individual students who are struggling academically or personally comes directly through the deans who advise them. The deans serve as generalists in every sense. They oversee the student’s progress through her general education, pre-major requirements, meeting with her each term as she selects courses for the next. They call in or are sought out by students having difficulty in one or more courses and help them address their problems. The deans also support student development as the students discover their own strengths, achieve new levels of academic success, and begin to plan successful futures beyond the Bryn Mawr campus. Until a student declares her major, advising comes largely through her dean.

Deans also do more personal advising when it is appropriate. They work with students who are ill or have missed classes due to illness or family emergency, and they discuss problems in a student’s residential situation or at home that are affecting her ability to function well. They try to ensure that a student has found activities and communities that interest her, and refer her to people who can aid that process. They frequently refer students to the Counseling Service, to Access Services, to Financial Aid, or to Career Development.

Among the virtues of having deans advise first- and second-year students is that there is a fair amount of consistency in the quality and content of advising. Each dean advises many students and thus becomes familiar with a wide range of problems, policies, and solutions, and the deans meet twice a week so that it’s easy to get advice about complicated situations. Surveys such as NSSE suggest that our first year students are more satisfied with the quality of their advising than students at many peer institutions.

Faculty Advising

For the past four years, faculty volunteers have met with entering students during the orientation period to discuss students’ goals and questions and to help them select a first set of courses. In some cases, those relationships continue, but that is voluntary for both students and faculty members. It is clear that having an ongoing advising relationship with a faculty member to supplement the relationship with her dean would be a benefit for first- and second-year students. Having faculty members do more advising for first- and second-year students would also benefit the students by allowing the deans to devote more time to develop more active and sophisticated academic support services (including tutoring, peer mentoring, and targeted faculty and staff

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4 On the Faculty’s roles in advising, see also chapter 4, section 4.3.2(iv).
mentoring), to ensure timely and efficient delivery of information, guidance, and programming to ensure that students themselves are taking responsibility for their progress, to coordinate with student affairs/student life staff to make sure the College’s programs take into account the whole student, and to have adequate time for other work (such as fellowships). It is clear that a program increasing faculty involvement in advising needs planning and support if it is to be effective, and faculty must accept the role and help design it as well. Conversations have begun about this as part of the curricular renewal process and will continue this year.

The Dean of Studies is also planning to work on helping to support advising within the majors more effectively. For some departments it seems to go very well, but more structure and consistency throughout the College is needed.

Advising for Fellowships

Bryn Mawr College provides fellowships advising through the Office of the Undergraduate Dean. Along with the faculty Committee on Undergraduate Awards, the fellowships advisor (one of the advising deans of the College) works to help students become aware early in their college careers of scholarships and fellowships that provide support for undergraduate studies, graduate education, and independent research and travel. Those who are interested in preparing themselves for such competitions are encouraged to make the most of the various opportunities available at Bryn Mawr for civic engagement, leadership on and off campus, undergraduate research, funded internships, and the like. Likewise, students are encouraged to view the process of applying for fellowships as an invitation to reflect on their formative experiences at Bryn Mawr and their goals for study and work beyond the College. Because such self-reflection can be valuable to all students, the Fellowships Advising effort works especially hard to make all students aware of opportunities that do not set GPA cutoffs and that rely more heavily upon evaluation of applications (such as the Fulbright and the Watson). Each year, approximately fifty students make use of formal fellowships advising in applying for at least one national scholarship, advising intended to help them be more effective in presenting themselves in both written statements and interviews. The Fellowships Advisor works closely with both faculty and staff from a range of Student Life offices. In addition, the College has created a part-time position for a graduate student “Assistant Fellowships Advisor”. This not only increases the support available to students but also provides an opportunity for a graduate student to add advising experience to his or her resume. In recent years, students and alumnæ have received Fulbright Grants, Watson Fellowships, Truman and Goldwater Scholarships, National Science Foundation awards, and others. Students have been named finalists for the Rhodes Scholarship, Honorable Mentions for the Udall Scholarship, and alternates for the Boren Undergraduate Awards. Even students who have not met with success in fellowships competitions per se have found that the experience has served them well in graduate school and job applications.
*Advising for International Students and Study Abroad*

International students, undergraduate or graduate, with immigration or adjustment concerns receive orientation and on-going assistance through the Office for International Programs. The College has actively recruited international students from very early in its history, and the current first year class includes 20% who are foreign nationals or dual citizens. They thrive here and add enormously to both academic and community life.

This office also offers advising for students who want to study outside the United States and transfer the credits to their undergraduate degree. We have a list of about 70 approved programs, and a faculty committee screens applications from students who want either to attend one of those programs or who seek special permission to attend a program not in that group but especially appropriate for their academic interests. Currently, over a third of each junior class studies outside of the United States, usually for one semester.

*Advising for McBride Scholars*

McBride Scholars (women beyond traditional college age who are enrolled in the Undergraduate College) receive orientation and advising through the dean who directs the McBride Scholars program. They are allowed to take a part-time program to allow for child or family care demands, continuing part-time employment, etc.

*Advising for Underprepared Students*

Our holistic evaluation process in admitting students means that some who are qualified and even likely to thrive at Bryn Mawr are underprepared in some areas. We are continuing to develop programs to support students who arrive less well prepared for Bryn Mawr’s academic work. The Writing Center, located in the main library, has become an important resource for students throughout the College. For the past several years it has sponsored a program called “Writing Partners” in which entering students identified by Admissions or Dean’s Office staff or, in some cases, by themselves, as being weak writers are paired with trained writing tutors to work together on writing assignments. For many of the participants, the program has made a huge difference. A Peer Mentoring program run out of the Dean’s Office places trained mentors in each residence hall. These Peer Mentors are students nominated by deans, student life professionals, and faculty members as having developed successful approaches to learning. They hold workshops on different topics—preparing for tests and exams, taking notes, proper citation, etc.—and also meet individually with students having difficulty finding effective study strategies for one or more of their courses. They, too, have been lifelines for many students. In the large introductory and intermediate science courses, a Peer Led Instruction program offers one or two sessions a week in which material prepared in lectures is reviewed in a more interactive way. Talented juniors and seniors lead these sessions, working in close collaboration with a faculty
member teaching in the course and attending all lectures. An assessment of this program has shown that students who attend these sessions are significantly more successful than those who do not. One thing we currently lack, however, is a support center for quantitative work. The math department provides tutors for students in its courses, but students struggling with the quantitative content of courses in economics, geology, or psychology, for instance, often are unsure of where to go for help. Plans are underway to address this need and others as part of the curricular renewal process so that more of our students can get the help they need to succeed and thrive in our curriculum.

Advising for Special Needs

Students (as well as faculty and staff) with disabilities—physical, psychological, or learning—may receive advice and accommodation through Access Services. Students must provide appropriate documentation, and referrals are made for testing when that is needed. Ongoing support in the form of counseling, time management help, and other assistance is provided for those who want it.

(ii) Health and Counseling

The College has been fortunate to have a Health Center staffed by physicians, nurses, and nurse practitioners to provide easy access to health care or referrals to specialists. Over the past decade, 75% of our undergraduate students have used the Health Center every year, and they average 4-5 visits. The Counseling Service, staffed by psychologists, clinical social workers and consulting psychiatrists, as well as graduate student interns and psychiatry residents, provides evaluation and individual counseling. Students who prefer to see someone off-campus, or who need more frequent visits than our service can provide, receive referrals to professionals in the area. Each undergraduate student is entitled to six free visits every year, and graduate students receive free evaluations and referrals. A third of the undergraduates seek help from the counselors, and they have an average of 7-10 visits a year.

Until this fall, the Health Center had been open 24 hours a day when the College was in session, enabling students to remain there overnight when they needed nursing care and to go there at night for evaluation by the nurse or to consult the counselor-on-call by phone. This year we are testing a new schedule for the Health Center, according to which we will close the Health Center on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights and use on-call medical and psychological support services for those periods. The decision to test this new schedule is driven partly by budgetary pressures and partly by the nursing shortage that has made staffing the Health Center on weekend nights very difficult. The on-call services will be supplemented by two graduate students who will each be on campus every other weekend to respond to after-hours emergencies, follow the directives of the on-call medical and counseling personnel, and to support the Hall Advisors. The overnight nurses have often been more important as part of the residential life program than as medical personnel, since we have no residential life staff
living in our residence halls or elsewhere on campus overnight. The experiment with closing the Health Center three nights a week will enable us to see how the on-call services and graduate student interns do in responding to emergencies. We are hoping to develop a model that will allow us to close the Health Center to overnight patients and still provide good support for the students and the residential community. At the same time, we are exploring closer cooperation with Haverford’s health and counseling services to improve our programs and function more efficiently.

(iii) Physical Education and Wellness

Bryn Mawr’s commitment to students’ personal development, health, and well-being is also supported through our Physical Education and Wellness requirement. Students’ physical well-being has been an important component of a Bryn Mawr education since the College’s founding. Every student must take a Wellness Course during her first year to satisfy part of the Physical Education requirement. This course provides an excellent opportunity to educate students about drugs and alcohol, nutrition and sleep, living successfully in community, and managing stress. Presenters are professionals on campus to whom students can turn when they need them—our health professionals, counselors, the nutritionist, etc.—so the course also introduces resources and makes it likelier that students will seek them out. Without this requirement and this course, the students who most need the information would never attend programming on these issues. While the program is assessed and changed every year, about 850 out of 1125 evaluations from the past few years rated its overall quality as “excellent” or “very good”. Once a student has completed the Wellness and Swim Test components of the program, she has fulfilled 3 of the 8 required physical education credits and has many options for fulfilling the remaining 5. Courses in kick boxing, aerobics, yoga, and Tai Chi have been especially popular, but lifetime sports (such as tennis) and courses in many forms of dance are also offered. A personal finance option—initiated by students—has recently been added to the list of offerings. Evaluations of all PE courses for 2008-09 rated the overall quality of the courses as 4.6 on a 1 – 5 scale.

6.2.3 Community

(i) Residential Life

The experience of living in and shaping a small, diverse residential community is a significant part of Bryn Mawr’s undergraduate education. As noted in our mission statement, “Living and working together in a community based on mutual respect, personal integrity, and the standards of a social and academic Honor Code, each generation of students experiments with creating and sustaining a self-governing society within the College.” As the student body has grown more diverse, the community experience has become richer and more valuable. Indeed, on senior surveys, students invariably identify living in a community and developing relationships with other students as the single most valuable part of their Bryn Mawr experience.
Ninety-seven percent of the undergraduates live in twelve residence halls and two smaller houses. Quotas ensure that all four classes are well represented in each of the twelve halls and the older students serve as leaders and role models for living together effectively. Seventy percent of our rooms are singles, but most entering students live with one, two, or three others in large rooms or suites.

While there are no staff members or faculty living in the halls, one junior or senior Hall Adviser lives on each corridor. These forty students are trained and supervised by the Residential Life and Counseling staffs to promote community, connect students to appropriate supports when they need it, and identify problems and seek intervention as early as possible. The Hall Advisers are encouraged to sponsor programs that bring students in their areas together, and a series of college-wide traditions are powerful in giving current students a sense of connection to each other and to previous generations at the College.

Increasing our staffing in Residential Life is an important goal for the near future. With the move towards closing the Health Center at night, more support is needed during emergencies so that the Hall Advisers aren’t asked to assume responsibility beyond what one student should bear for others. More staff in Residential Life could also support programming that would bring more faculty members into the residence halls for informal discussions that students enjoy but cannot easily create for themselves.

First year and transfer students come five days early for an orientation program called Customs Week. They are divided into small groups of 10-15 and paired with sophomore leaders who live near each other in the halls. These groups are especially important during the first weeks of the year, combating the loneliness that some new students feel and connecting them to programming, but they continue to function as small communities throughout the year. The orientation includes group meetings and individual appointments with faculty members, deans, and staff who support students in many areas: Health and Counseling, Public Safety, Information Services, and others. New students are introduced to Haverford, academic and co-curricular possibilities and Philadelphia.

(ii) Student Activities

Participation in music, dance, and theater is high, with many student-run groups supplementing those with professional directors. The renovation of Goodhart Hall as a performance space and the creation of a second dance studio in Denbigh Hall have greatly enhanced the possibilities for students interested in the arts. While Fine Arts is taught at Haverford, we have recently opened an informal studio space in Arnecliff for the student-run Art Club to use, and that, too, is a welcome and needed facility. Most of the College-sponsored performance groups (Theatre, Chorale, Chamber Singers, Orchestra, Dance Club) are bi-college, as are a number of the student-sponsored ones.
Arts activities are an important area in which students from the two colleges come together. The students would love to have an informal performance space where they could schedule poetry readings, musical performances, and similar activities and display student artwork. We are currently trying to identify such a space.

While a lower percentage of Bryn Mawr students participate in varsity athletics than is typical at our peer institutions, those who do cite it as a very positive experience. The renovation of our athletic facility that is underway is critical to more successful recruitment and, ultimately, to more successful competition, but the athletes almost to a woman answer in the affirmative to “Has participation in athletics enhanced your experience as a student at Bryn Mawr?” Students participating in athletics at Bryn Mawr graduate at a somewhat higher rate than those who do not, as is generally true at selective liberal arts colleges. Still, a good number of students feel that the academic demands of Bryn Mawr make it impossible for them to participate on a team.

With the exception of varsity athletic teams and a few musical and theatrical groups or performances, most co-curricular activities are initiated and led by students themselves. While this can mean that they are less successful some years than others, it also gives students a sense of responsibility and ownership. As noted in connection with student self-governance, students both welcome and resent the degree of responsibility they are given. Clubs of all kinds exist, and new ones are formed every year. SGA funded over 100 last year. A few of these—especially ones related to politics and religious activities—are bi-college.

Student participation in the community extends beyond the realm of student activities since they are important members of a number of College committees—the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the College Budget Committee, and faculty and administrative search committees. There are student representatives to the Board of Trustees and to Faculty Meetings. Students are a valued constituency whose opinions and advice are sought in the shaping of the College.

(iii) Diversity

The mission statement of Bryn Mawr College emphasizes the importance of sustaining a diverse community. This ideal applies to the student body as well as to the Faculty, Staff, and Administration. In senior exit surveys, our students report a relatively high level of satisfaction with the experience of racial and ethnic diversity on campus and with the sense of community. We wanted, however, to get a clearer sense of who felt a strong sense of belonging and who did not, and what aspects of identity seemed responsible for those feelings among our students, staff and faculty. In November 2008, Bryn Mawr launched a Campus Climate survey asking all members of our community about their attitudes and experiences around four aspects of diversity: Race/ethnicity, Gender,

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5 Source: Data from the annual survey of student athletes conducted by the Director of Athletics. See Appendix 6.7.
Sexual orientation, and Social class. Participation was high among students and faculty, less so for staff, though a total of 192 staff members responded. Social class was the most problematic aspect of diversity for all groups. Those who self-identified as being from “lower social class” backgrounds were likely to cite instances of discrimination and a sense of “not belonging” at Bryn Mawr on the basis of class, but this was less true for students than for staff. Race/ethnicity was the next most problematic aspect of diversity. Gender and sexual orientation seemed not to be problematic aspects of diversity for the vast majority of students. While the survey does reveal areas where we need to do more work, it is in many ways encouraging and suggests that our efforts over the past decade to make Bryn Mawr a more inclusive and supportive community for all of its members are working. The level of comfort that students feel in this diverse community is something we can be proud of.

Most of the diversity outreach efforts to students are coordinated through the Office of Intercultural Affairs (OIA). Its mission is broadly defined and it supports students in their work concerning differences of race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, ability, and national origin. It sponsors diversity conversations that are often very well attended and provides a place for discussing issues that are causing tension or confusion on campus. Students often are asked to lead those discussions. OIA also provides support to more than 30 affinity and religious groups on campus. Training for leaders of those groups takes place in the Multicultural Center where OIA is based, as does training for Campus Diversity Assistants, individuals who work in the residence halls trouble-shooting and sponsoring programs that both raise awareness of problems and exploit “teachable moments”. The Campus Diversity Assistants also serve as a resource for other residence life professionals. Graduate students from the School of Social Work and Social Research often serve as interns in the OIA, and all graduate students are welcome participants in its programs.

For the past six years efforts to make Bryn Mawr an inclusive and supportive place for a diverse population have been coordinated by the Diversity Leadership Group that meets regularly with the President. In addition to Jane McAuliffe, it includes Raymond Albert (group chair and Professor in the GSSWSR), Florence Goff (Associate CIO and EEO Officer), Jenny Rickard (Chief Enrollment, Communications, and Student Services Officer), Mary Osirim (Professor of Sociology and Faculty Diversity Liaison), Chris MacDonald-Dennis (Assistant Dean and Director of Intercultural Affairs), and Karen Tidmarsh (Dean of the Undergraduate College). In addition to meeting to plan programming and discuss policies, they are convened when crises occur on campus that may have an impact on individuals or groups and are related to issues of difference. Once or twice each semester, that group meets with the larger Diversity Council that includes representatives of the undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff. They discuss with them any issues or planning related to diversity on campus for which a broadly based community sounding board is important.
A number of special programs have helped to increase diversity on campus and to provide leadership for the efforts to make it work. Posse, further described in the section on recruitment, has been very important as a model of ways to support students who might otherwise feel isolated and also as a source of leaders who help make diversity work at the College. The Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program encourages students from underrepresented groups and their allies to pursue careers in the academy. We learn from those students some of the barriers they have encountered as they work to prepare for graduate school, and the suggestions they make for improving our programs affect a much wider group of students.

Two years ago, a group of students, working in collaboration with some faculty and staff members, began a program called the Social Justice Pilot Program. Its goal was to encourage on-going conversation about controversial issues related to diversity so that education of the community wasn’t always sparked by a crisis of some sort. The program has evolved to become the Social Justice Partnership Program. It creates safe spaces, resources, and programming within which students coming from different backgrounds and life experiences can explore what issues of diversity mean to them and how those issues affect them. Cohorts of first- and second-year students facilitated by teams of a faculty or staff member and a student meet regularly throughout the year to share ideas and experiences and ultimately to learn from each other. Students have responded quite well to the program. Although they are not required to participate in this program, about 100 students do each year. Some of the common benefits from participation include increased self-confidence and agency, strengthened relationships with faculty, staff, and other students, a greater sense of belonging to a community, enhanced critical thinking skills, and enrichment of the student’s academic experiences. More generally, participants report that the program encourages the development of a collaborative, inclusive learning environment.⁶ Many of these effects, we note, directly support the College’s mission.

(iv) Connection to Staff

The Staff of the College figures prominently in students’ lives. In fact, staff members probably have more impact on the day-to-day quality of student life than any other constituency on campus. Staff members keep their living spaces clean, feed them, work side-by-side with them in campus jobs, protect them from harm and care for them when they are sick. The Staff provides students with a strong sense of community, is a steady, friendly presence in all areas of the campus and offers students another source of supportive adult relationships. For example, students quite often turn to members of the staff when they want an unbiased listener, when they need adult guidance for a new campus-life initiative they are organizing, or when they want advice during a critical life event. Staff members are incredibly dedicated to the students and go above and beyond the ordinary to foster a positive college environment.

⁶ Source: SJPP student participant assessment. See Appendix 6.8.
Students connect with Staff in a more formal way via the Empowering Learners Program (ELP). The ELP joins “non-academic” College employees from across the campus with undergraduates in unique, reciprocal learning partnerships, where both partners share their knowledge in different areas with one another. For example, members of the campus facilities services may teach students about construction and wiring, and students may teach the facilities staff about how to use social messaging media such as Facebook for communication. A member of housekeeping may teach a student how to do arts and crafts, while the student teaches the housekeeper how to use her digital camera. These partnerships foster intergenerational learning, civic participation and friendship. Students broaden their outlook on the College as an institution, while staff members gain increased access to the College’s educational resources and the opportunity to participate directly in the College’s educational mission. Each year more than 18 students and 18 staff members participate in this program.

### 6.2.4 Connecting to Work and Service

(i) Civic Engagement

Fostering civic engagement is a core aspect of Bryn Mawr’s mission. Indeed, the College’s mission statement concludes by emphasizing this very aspect of the Bryn Mawr experience:

> The academic and co-curricular experiences fostered at Bryn Mawr, both on campus and in the College’s wider setting, encourage students to be responsible citizens who provide service to and leadership for an increasingly interdependent world.

Furthermore, civic engagement promotes—and is a natural product of—the third distinctive characteristic of a Bryn Mawr woman: the desire to make a meaningful contribution to the world.

It would thus seem incumbent upon the College to provide support for service and activism work off campus. And so it has. The Civic Engagement Office was created to provide just such opportunities. The Office’s mission statement reads:

The Civic Engagement Office (CEO) strives to empower members of our community to be authentically engaged citizens on campus, off campus, and throughout the world. The CEO bridges the academic and civic missions of the College by:

- Developing and modeling genuine partnerships with local communities and community organizations with a specific emphasis on reciprocity, transparency, and sustainability;
- Providing training and capacity-building programs for the campus community in the areas of civic engagement, community-building, and reflection; and
- Sponsoring and supporting a wide variety of civic engagement opportunities for students, including volunteering, internships, community-based learning, activism, and organizing for social change.
The CEO adds new programs every year and works with fully two-thirds of our students. Its work is considered a model by many other colleges and universities, and in February, the CEO’s staff members were delighted to learn that Bryn Mawr College was named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction. The Community Service Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service learning and civic engagement. Honorees were chosen based on a series of selection factors including the scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses. In the application for the award, the CEO reported that during the 2007-08 academic year, a total of 873 Bryn Mawr students were engaged in community service (both curricular and co-curricular), engaging in a total of 72,056 service hours.

In addition, the Office coordinates the Praxis program, which supports faculty members in developing and offering courses with an off-campus internship component. During the 2008-09 academic year, 14 Praxis courses were taught and 26 students developed Praxis III independent study courses. There are 15 Praxis courses planned for the 2009-10 year.

As just one example of the important impact that our students can and do have on our community partners, 27 students were trained and participated in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program during the spring semester. In partnership with CADCOM, Community Asset Development Commission of Montgomery County, over $1.7 million in tax returns and savings was returned to the community members of Norristown and Montgomery County. This program grew out of a partnership with the city of Norristown developed jointly by the Civic Engagement Office and the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. Through programs like this one, the Civic Engagement Office inspires and empowers students to act as change agents in their communities and prepares them to leave Bryn Mawr as effective, informed, and engaged citizens wherever they live and work.

(ii) Career Development

The Bryn Mawr-Haverford Career Development Office works with students from first year undergraduates to those completing graduate degrees. There is an office on each campus with its own staffing, and two “traveling” staff members divide their time between the two offices. Students are encouraged to come for counseling and to use the library and databases whether they are completely undecided about future career plans or ready to begin a focused job search or apply to business, law, or other professional schools.

Three-day to two-week Externships in which students shadow a Bryn Mawr or Haverford alumna/us or parent take place during winter and spring breaks and provide valuable chances to talk with professionals in a field and observe their day-to-day work
life. The alumnae/i network is also used extensively for informational interviews, panels on campus, and to host visiting days in which small groups of students visit them in their work places. The two colleges are active participants in consortial groups of similar liberal arts colleges that co-sponsor networking events in major cities.

Students and alumnae considering careers in the Health Professions receive advice on course selection and help with applying through the Health Professions Advising Office. Students and alumnae work closely with an individual advisor throughout the process and can take advantage of the Office’s resource room, which includes many materials devoted to preparing for a career in the Health Professions, from books about the various careers to standardized exam preparation materials and job listings.

Alumnae/i seeking jobs or considering career changes may also make use of the Career Development Office, as it has one staff member dedicated to working with this group.

(iii) Summer Internships and Research

Summer work is increasingly important to students to help them make career choices and to prepare them with appropriate experiences when they begin to apply for full-time employment. These summer experiences are often life changing for students and must be available to all, including the majority of our students who need to earn money during the summer to contribute to their academic year expenses. To enable students to take on summer-long internships and research projects for which there would be no funding from other sources, Bryn Mawr in its recent campaign raised money for summer internships. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, Bryn Mawr now sponsors a robust summer funding program that supports a wide range of student work and research experiences. In 2009, the College disbursed over $600,000 in support of 170 students.

We now have a half-time staff member in the Dean’s Office who advises students on possible placements and coordinates the advertisement and selection process for over 100 College-funded internships.

Research in the humanities and humanistic social sciences is funded by the Hanna Holborn Gray Scholarships, and librarians and graduate students work with the recipients to help them structure their work. Approximately 15 students participate in that program each summer.

About 40 science research internships enabling students to do research in faculty members’ labs over the summer are coordinated by one or two members of the faculty, and our Howard Hughes Medical Institute grant funds another six science internships. Students are brought together regularly during the summer to report on work in progress and to hear talks by outstanding scientists from outside the College. These experiences give students majoring in science a chance to experience laboratory research and to discuss with scientists the pleasures and challenges of their work.
Bryn Mawr also offers its students several international internships. Some are funded through the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship at Haverford College, and others through our own internships funds. These are intended to nurture global citizenship by encouraging students to augment lessons learned in the classroom with first-hand experiences in the field.7

6.3 Appraisal and Recommendations

Since the last reaccreditation, the College has engaged in substantial assessment of its applicant base and enrollments and has created a solid infrastructure to manage enrollment, and a strategic plan for the future. Over the past ten years, the College has also made important strides in educating and supporting the “whole student.” These positive elements include:

- Quality academic advising and support through the Dean’s office.
- A strong sense of community via diversity initiatives and opportunities for leadership through such programs as Posse, Social Justice Partnership Program and the Teaching and Learning Initiative.
- Strong connections to the staff.
- Opportunities to engage with the larger community via the Praxis Program and the Civic Engagement Office.
- Opportunities for extra-curricular activities via formal and student-generated organizations, programs, teams and groups.

We hope to continue to build upon these strengths as we also address areas of concern. Towards both ends, we recommend that:

- Faculty members become more involved in academic advising. Becoming accustomed to meeting with faculty members in their offices is important, and faculty members can provide additional opportunities for students to discuss academic choices and planning.
- Be more proactive in our efforts to retain students by implementing some early warning systems and a systematic method of understanding why students leave through a more formalized exit interview process.
- Use the Task Force on the Competitive Position of the College to take on the larger market issues of the College’s position in the competitive landscape and the sustainability of its financial aid policies.
- Investigate relieving enrollment pressures for first-year students by increasing the number of transfer students enrolled and increasing revenues from graduate programs.

For a full list of summer internships and more information on each, see
http://www.brynmawr.edu/deans/summergrants/index.shtml
• Faculty members become more involved in students’ co-curricular and residence lives, keeping in mind the demands already made on the Faculty’s time as well as students’ desire for private space.
• The Residential Life Office be expanded to include staff who live on or near campus to support evening programming, help manage emergencies and conflicts, and generally support the residential life program. As the Health Center becomes primarily a source of day and evening support that closes overnight, increased professional support for residential life is essential.
• Conversations continue with Haverford regarding potentially beneficial ways in which Health and Counseling Services at the two colleges can collaborate.
• Academic programs be enhanced for students who enter less well-prepared in certain areas. In particular, we need to enhance programs devoted to developing quantitative reasoning, public speaking, and writing skills.
The practice of critical self-reflection, intended to improve the institution is embedded in Bryn Mawr’s culture. As the previous chapters of this report make clear, faculty and administrators have devoted significant resources to the ongoing task of systematic assessment, in order to support comprehensive strategic planning. This chapter will describe ways in which the College carries out these procedures.

Bryn Mawr has revised its assessment criteria to better align them with those of the MSCHE. These criteria place greater emphasis on making goals explicit, defining methods of evaluation, and documenting ways assessment results are used for institutional improvement. Since Bryn Mawr’s previous decennial review, the College has regularly assessed programs and administrative activities, according to the four-step planning-assessment cycle: (1) goal formulation around a particular topic in the context of the wider institutional mission, (2) thorough evaluation of that topic, (3) decision-making and change, and (4) follow-up assessment.

Since its previous Middle States Periodic Review, in 2004, the College has notably improved its assessment of student learning. The assessment of student learning is the area where our progress since our previous Middle States Periodic Review (2004) is most notable. Our current Provost, Kim Cassidy, has made it a focus of her administration. As described below and elsewhere in this self-study, the Provost’s office invests considerable resources in support of academic assessment at the department level. Important initiatives include regularizing and reinvigorating department-level assessment procedures that were already in place (such as the periodic departmental reviews), focusing them more explicitly on student learning outcomes, and the implementation of department-level assessment plans.

While conducting research for the present self-study, it became clear that the College’s assessment practices in two key areas would benefit from further development. Specifically, we recommend that the College:

- Consolidate and improve assessment at the level of the administrative and academic unit or department.
- Improve the coordination and integration of planning and assessment across institution-level, department-level, and individual or course-level goals.

As described below, the department (or unit, or program), is the organizational level where the goals of the institution as a whole connect with the goals of the individual
course, project, or employee. Departmental goals and mission statements serve a coordinating and integrating function for individual employees, courses, and projects within them, while at the same time directly supporting the College’s mission.

At the same time, the College’s strategic planning or assessment function is relatively decentralized. One of the more substantive recommendations of this report is to endorse and reaffirm the College’s movement toward creating a standing strategic planning committee (see section 7.2.1 of this report and also chapter 2, section 2.4) to perform a centralizing, coordinating function for many of these planning and assessment activities.

The following diagram illustrates our conception of the relations among the organizational levels, and provides the overall structure of the discussion to follow:

### 7.1 Assessment of Student Learning

#### 7.1.1 Institution-Level

As with institution-level assessment of institutional effectiveness, reviewed below (see section 7.2.1), assessment activities at this level of the institutional hierarchy tend to be ad hoc and topically driven. The institutional indicators dashboard (see below) is one exception to this rule as a regular monitoring mechanism that is shared regularly with trustees and senior administrators.

The curricular renewal effort, described in detail in chapter 3, is another exception to this preference for more focused, ad hoc institution-wide assessment of students’ learning, insofar as it transcends any single topical issue. The work is essentially a
strategic planning effort, focused on the academic curriculum, with special focus on the general education requirements for students outside of the academic major. The work of the Curricular Renewal Working Group thus complements the major efforts currently ongoing at the level of the academic department (see section 7.1.2).

From an assessment perspective the most important contribution of this work has been to distill the seven core learning goals for a Bryn Mawr education.

1. Promote a life of intense intellectual engagement, including the recognition, in theory and in practice, that we need to be acquainted with a variety of approaches to inquiry for understanding the world and our place in it.
2. Promote the ability to think critically, that is, to reflect on the presuppositions and implications of our own arguments and commitments and those of others.
3. Increase students’ skills in areas that are fundamentally important to their ability to take advantage of a Bryn Mawr education and to make the best use of their knowledge in their life beyond. In particular, we want to train women who can communicate effectively and are quantitatively literate.
4. Enhance students’ breadth of knowledge and their life-long capacity to learn new things on their own.
5. Give students the opportunity to acquire a certain depth of disciplinary knowledge in at least one particular area of contemporary scholarship in the arts and sciences.
6. Prepare students to be active citizens in an increasingly global context, one in which the opportunities to overcome geographical and cultural boundaries are greater than at any other time in history.
7. Educate women who are prepared to transform and improve human life in their own communities and throughout the world.

These goals have guided important work on a number of aspects of the curriculum and many of the recommendations of the curricular renewal group are being worked out at the time of this writing. The curricular renewal effort is reviewed in much more detail in chapter 3, and so will not be recounted here. However, one important element—the assessment of writing in the first-year Emily Balch seminars—has been finalized and was in place in fall 2009. We review this work presently.

(i) Writing Assessment in the College Seminar

All first-year students are required to enroll in a College Writing Seminar in the fall of their first year. The Emily G. Balch Seminars are small (~14 students), discussion-oriented, reading- and writing-intensive courses organized around issues and debates of general relevance. The courses are designed to acquaint students with the engaged intellectual culture that is typical of the Bryn Mawr classroom during their first semester, a time when they tend to be enrolled in an array of introductory courses that might, by contrast, be more lecture-driven.
The key learning goal for the Balch Seminars is to hone skills in effective writing. Students in these courses therefore produce between 25-30 pages of writing over the course of a semester. Students receive a great deal of instructor feedback via written comments on papers and bi-weekly conferences focused on effective writing. In the spring semester, a follow-up course is offered. Though the course is designed for students that faculty believe would benefit from continued work on their writing, all students are eligible to enroll. At this point, students so designated are not required to take the spring writing course, though they are strongly encouraged to do so. Other students interested in getting further targeted writing instruction often elect to take the course as well.

Devoting additional instructional resources where they are most needed in this way is a form of educational assessment—a “closing of the loop”, as it were. Nevertheless, beginning in 2009-10, the College piloted a more formal assessment in the Balch seminars. Near the end of the Balch seminar, faculty members teaching the pilot classes choose a piece of student writing from the seminar for assessment. A panel of three faculty members was asked to assess the essays according to a rubric developed by the Balch Seminar program co-directors in consultation with the Balch Seminar instructors.

This assessment allowed the College to measure the quality of students’ writing at the end of the first semester and identify those students who would benefit most from an additional semester of focused writing instruction. This same rubric will also be used to evaluate students’ writing at the end of the second semester course. This system of pre- and post-course assessment should allow the College to evaluate the effects of these seminars on the quality of students’ writing.

(ii) Other Institution-Level Assessments of Student Learning

Bryn Mawr seeks to ensure that all students perform to the full measure of their capacities. Toward that end, the College recently conducted related assessments of two types of students: those admitted through the POSSE program, and intercollegiate athletes.

**Posse Program**

The Posse program is an admissions program designed to assist colleges such as Bryn Mawr in their efforts to recruit students from public high schools in urban centers who have extraordinary leadership ability and academic potential. Posse students are often first-generation college students with socioeconomic and ethnically diverse backgrounds.

In 2008, before renewing its contract with the Posse Foundation, Bryn Mawr took the opportunity to assess the academic achievements of Posse students and compare these achievements to those of non-Posse students. After controlling for a range of other
demographic characteristics, this assessment showed that Posse students’ academic performance, including cumulative GPA and likelihood of graduation, did not differ from that of non-Posse students at Bryn Mawr. The Posse program benefits the campus in many ways, including expanding the applicant pool and enhancing College diversity.

**Academic Recruitment and Performance of Student Athletes**

Using a similar method, Bryn Mawr also assessed the academic performance of its student athletes. Although this assessment showed that student athletes’ academic performance, including cumulative GPA and likelihood of graduation, did not differ from non-athletes, their academic performance varied by sport. The Office of Institutional Research will continue to conduct these assessments in support of the Athletic Department’s efforts to ensure that all Bryn Mawr athletes excel both on and off the field.

(iii) **Student Enrollment Report**

The faculty Committee on Academic Priorities determines how to allocate resources such as new or replacement faculty lines across departments in support of the institutional mission and strategic planning. One of the major tools CAP uses in making these determinations is the “Teaching FTE by Department” report that, until 2006-07, was produced by the Associate Provost.

One limitation of that report was that it was static, and thus the data supporting it could not be independently examined by CAP or by the departments affected by CAP decisions. Since that time, in the interest of transparency, the Provost’s office has distributed this report to departmental chairs.

In cooperation with the Office of Institutional Research, the Provost’s office redesigned the “Teaching FTE by Department” report during the 2008-09 academic year, to include the comparative measurement *average class size by department*. This redesigned report focuses attention on the number of students taking courses in an academic department, rather than on the number of faculty teaching those courses.

After several iterations, the format of the report and the methodology used to produce it were approved by CAP in May 2008. In its new form, this reporting tool will better represent the experiences of students and faculty in the classroom.

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1 Appendix 7.1 (Posse Assessment)
2 Appendix 7.2 (Athletic Recruitment and Performance)
3 Appendix 7.3 (Course Enrollment Report (Sample))
(iv) Student Surveys

Bryn Mawr devotes considerable resources to regularly surveying its students\(^4\), from the point of their admission through the remainder of their lives as alumnae. Most of these surveys are coordinated by the Office of Institutional Research, and are sponsored by COFHE, of which Bryn Mawr is a member.

Summaries of responses to key questions (e.g. self-reported learning gains, overall satisfaction, and satisfaction with particular areas and services of the college) are reviewed regularly by the President’s Cabinet and are distributed to other offices for comparison with peer institutions.\(^5\)

Over the past several years, the College stopped producing general annual survey summaries for senior administration. Instead, it has begun using survey summaries to address issues of broad institutional interest, such as satisfaction with the freshmen experience or student retention and graduation rates.\(^6\)

(v) Post-Graduate Outcomes Data

Bryn Mawr is extremely proud of what its students achieve after graduation, and the college devotes considerable resources to collecting information on post-graduation student outcomes. To an extent that is atypical for elite liberal arts colleges such as Bryn Mawr, our admissions materials emphasize hard data on these outcomes in making the case to prospective students about the value of a Bryn Mawr education. In addition, though Bryn Mawr has long collected data on alumnae outcomes, and has shared this information internally for institutional improvement, since the last decennial accreditation review the college has made considerable strides in making this information publicly available on the web.\(^7\)

“One-Year Out” Survey

The Bi-College Office of Career Development, shared with Haverford College, conducts an annual survey of students in their first year after graduation. The response rate for the survey has averaged 81% over the last five administration cycles. Survey results show that over the past five years, an average of 27.2% were enrolled in graduate school, and 63.9% were employed in the year after graduation.

Beginning in 2008-2009 these data were made available online through the institutional factbook.\(^8\) Again, Bryn Mawr is an outlier among its peers in making this kind of

\(^4\) Appendix 7.4 (Summary of Student Surveys)
\(^5\) Appendix 7.5 (COFHE Senior Survey Data)
\(^6\) Appendix 7.6 (First Year Findings Summary)
\(^7\) http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/documents/Alumni0809.pdf
\(^8\) http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/documents/Alumni0809.pdf
concrete post-graduate outcomes data readily available to prospective students and to the world at large.

**Ph.D. Productivity**

Bryn Mawr’s goal of cultivating an “intense commitment to intellectual inquiry” is fulfilled in part by the percentage of graduates who pursue advanced graduate studies. According to the National Science Foundation’s *Survey of Earned Doctorates*, Bryn Mawr ranks eighth in the nation overall in the percentage of graduates who later earn a doctoral or professional degree (Ph.D., M.D. etc.). It ranks ninth in the percentage of graduates who pursue a doctoral degree in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. And the College ranks third in the nation in the percentage of graduates who pursue a doctoral degree in the social sciences. Even when ranked against *all* types of institutions—including large research universities (e.g., MIT, CIT, Harvard)—when controlled for institutional selectivity, Bryn Mawr ranks second in the percentage of graduates who earn Ph.D.’s.⁹

Importantly, these ranks are among *all* institutional categories and types—including universities that have many more resources and a stronger financial commitment to research *per se* (e.g., MIT, CIT, Harvard). Granted, attainment of the Ph.D. degree is not the only index of “intellectual intensity”. But it is a metric on which the College has valid comparative data, and it is reassuring that Bryn Mawr shines so brightly in an area that is so clearly aligned with its institutional mission. These data are made publicly available on the institutional research website¹⁰, and are frequently referenced in many admissions materials.

### 7.1.2 Department- or Program-Level

As one member of the College’s Faculty (not coincidentally, a Professor of Political Science) put it, the academic department is the key “citizenship” of faculty members at Bryn Mawr. Faculty members wear many hats—as committee members, as representatives of an academic discipline or specialty, as course instructors, as participants in graduate programs, and as institutional representatives—but it is their academic department that defines their institutional identity and gives them a sense of belonging.

First, the academic department establishes departmental goals in line with the mission of the College. These departmental goals not only inform curricular design and pedagogy, they also guide faculty members working with individual students in a particular course or on a particular project.

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⁹ Appendix 7.7 (PhD Productivity Overperformance)

¹⁰ [http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/phd_productivity.html](http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/phd_productivity.html)
Paralleling our conclusion about the institutional effectiveness of the administrative side of the College (see section 7.2), we believe that Bryn Mawr would realize the greatest benefit by directing its assessment of student learning efforts at the department/program-level of the institutional hierarchy. Two considerations support this conclusion. First, we believe that although departments already engage in much activity that can rightfully be called “department-level assessment”, they have much to gain from routinizing these efforts, more formally identifying and acknowledging them, and thinking more strategically about them within the resource allocation process. Second, we believe that engaging in assessment work at this level will have the indirect benefit of strengthening the academic department’s role as intermediary between institution-level priorities on the one hand, and more “bottom-up” initiatives at the individual- or course-level, thus enhancing the systemic, well-integrated nature of the College’s assessment work.

(i) Annual Departmental Assessment

Assessment Plans

In fall of 2008, the Provost’s office asked departments to develop assessment plans11 specifying departmental learning goals, curricular processes in support of those goals and plans to assess those student learning goals. Throughout the course of the academic year, departments received support in developing their plans from the Office of Institutional Research and the Provost’s office.

The Provost and the Director of Institutional Research jointly reviewed these plans and either endorsed them, or requested revisions and resubmission by the following fall. The assessment plans themselves were required to be comprehensive in scope in terms of the stated learning goals for majors and in terms of describing how curricular processes were linked to attaining those goals. The requirement for the actual assessment component of the departmental plan was more iterative or serial in nature. Departments identified a key element of their departmental curriculum that they wished to assess, be it a course, a capstone requirement, or a key learning goal, with the intent that the results of this assessment “feedback loop” would lead to future rounds of learning assessment.

Many departments chose to begin their assessment efforts with an evaluation of the senior capstone experience—be it a thesis or a senior seminar—in terms of the department’s learning goals. English, for example, is currently evaluating all senior theses according to a department-designed rubric that operationalizes the departmental learning goal of effective writing. The department has engineered time into its regular meeting schedule to consider the aggregated results from this application of the rubric to evaluate their own effectiveness as a department.

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11 See Appendix 3.5 (Select Departmental Assessment Plans).
Each fall, all departments resubmit their assessment plans, detailing modifications based on feedback from the Institutional Research and Provost’s Offices and outlining specific plans for the upcoming academic year. The Provost and the Director of Institutional Research will review these resubmitted assessment plans to ensure that the newly planned assessment work is substantive and aligned with departmental learning goals. At the end of each year, departments will submit a brief assessment report outlining the results of their assessment efforts and their response to the outcome.

**Senior Exit Interview Transcripts**

Each year since 2002, graduating seniors have been given the opportunity to participate in an “exit interview” with a faculty or staff member from a department other than the one they majored in. The Office of Institutional Research annually coordinates these interviews and tabulates and presents their contents to the President’s Cabinet, either in a formal written summary (2003, 2004, 2006) or in raw form. In 2009, 134 seniors (over 40% of the graduating class) chose to participate.

Beginning in 2008, senior exit interview transcripts were given directly to the department in which the student majored. These transcripts provide invaluable information on their students’ experiences, as departments assess their expectations of majors. Currently, departments are not required to formally respond to these transcripts.

**Office of Institutional Research Reports to Departments**

Beginning in 2009, the Office of Institutional Research has prepared quantitative summaries of survey and institutional data on student majors for academic departments. These reports compare average responses on senior surveys on structured items relating to self-reported estimates of learning gains across a range of areas, including satisfaction with the major and post-graduate outcomes. The reports also include institutional data summarizing course enrollments, student majors and minors, admissions test scores and diversity of student majors within a larger institutional context. All of these reports present departmental summary data in a context of comparable summaries for the academic division and the institution as a whole and, where possible, provide comparisons to other institutions (including, in the case of senior survey data, comparisons to the same majors at other institutions).

The Office of Institutional Research is currently compiling a departmental report that will incorporate information from a 2009 administration of a comprehensive alumnae survey. The survey obtained response rates well over 40% for the more recent graduating classes. Again, with this survey we have peer data by student major so

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12 Appendix 7.8 (Senior Exit Interview Form)
13 Appendix 7.9 (Sample Department Self-Assessment Report)
departments will have numerous ways to meaningfully benchmark their departmental data.

Combined with other materials, these reports provide a standard framework for evaluating department-level outcomes data. Some departments received a pilot version of these reports and referenced them in their annual assessment plans. Although a departmental response to these reports is not mandated, their use will likely become a routine aspect of these annual assessment plans and progress reports as well as departments' periodic external reviews (see below).

**Teagle Project on Department-Level Assessment**

Seeking to enhance the College’s assessments of student learning, in the spring of 2009 Bryn Mawr, together with Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges, submitted a grant proposal\(^\text{14}\) to the “Systematic Improvement to Student Learning” program of the Teagle Foundation. This proposal grew out of the desire of the College faculty to know how other colleges assess their departments and the best methods to conduct such assessments. The proposal was approved and the proposed activities will occur over three academic years, from September 2009 through May 2012.

Within the proposed project, we will work intensively and collaboratively with three academic departments (one from each academic division) as they implement a substantive “assessment loop” in relation to a central leaning goal for their academic major. The following excerpt from the proposal provides the rationale for this targeted approach:

> We adopt this targeted focus in terms of the actual assessment work—three departments at each institution, each pursuing a single assessment loop—because we want to ensure that participating departments will select a substantive topic with real utility for them, assess it in an iterative fashion using multiple methods, and devote adequate time to the task of applying what they have learned and of disseminating their experiences and findings more widely.

Moreover, we have critical institutional goals for the project that depend on academic departments having a positive and meaningful experience with assessment. Through the close involvement of other stakeholders—provosts, institutional research officers, and students—we intend to use these efforts as case studies for identifying and resolving the obstacles to a broader and sustainable implementation of effective departmental assessment. By sharing experiences amongst our Tri-college peers, whose institutions are similar enough and familiar enough to be relevant, while different enough to provide critical

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\(^\text{14}\) Appendix 7.10 (Teagle Proposal Narrative)
distance, we will deepen the “toolbox” of effective scenarios and useful perspectives.

Thus our broad goals for the grant are two-fold:

1. To support intensive efforts of selected departments to assess a key institutional learning goal(s) as it relates to their academic department, and to leverage these successful assessment models within, across, and beyond our campuses.
2. To create opportunities for close participation of non-faculty stakeholders in meaningful, useful department-level assessment efforts, and in so doing, learn to better evaluate and overcome the challenges to sustaining such work on a larger scale.

Our goal for the grant is to deepen the manner in which academic departments approach student outcomes assessment, by closely supporting with administrative resources a more substantive assessment effort than the departments might be willing to undertake within the regular annual procedure (see above) and to use these efforts as models for better understanding how to support this kind of deep assessment work administratively in the most cost-effective manner.

We envision that the activities of the departments participating in the grant will provide models of best practices for other departments in improving their own assessment work in the context of their annual assessment progress reports. We are particularly excited about the opportunities for meaningful collaboration across departments within the tri-college community. Indeed, a major impetus behind Bryn Mawr’s application for the grant was the expressed desire among our faculty for a better understanding of “what other colleges are doing” and of best practices for department-level assessment.

(ii) Periodic External Departmental Reviews

Bryn Mawr has long had periodic external reviews of its departments, analogous to the Middle States Commission’s periodic review of institutions. In preparation for these reviews, departments produce an extensive self-study of their curriculum and staffing, highlighting areas for improvement, and posing questions for consideration by the external review committee, which consists of faculty members from other colleges in comparable departments and other institutions. The committee reviews this self-study, visits campus over two days, interviews administrators, faculty and students, and produces a report for the department. The department then responds to that report and outlines any plans for change. The schedule and history of these reviews appears\(^\text{15}\) on the Provost’s web site.

\(^{15}\) [http://www.brynmawr.edu/provost/visiting.html](http://www.brynmawr.edu/provost/visiting.html)
This academic year, the Provost’s office conducted a full study of this external review process, and made several important changes to it. The first was to make the entire process much more goal-oriented from the outset. Under the new protocol, institutional liaisons from the Curriculum Committee (which reviews departmental requests for new courses and requests to discontinue courses) and from the Committee on Academic Priorities (which reviews departmental staffing requests) are assigned to each departmental self-study. Their role is to work with the Provost to ensure that the goals of the departmental self-study are aligned with the institutional goals.

Second, and most importantly, the Provost, the Dean of the College, and the liaisons from Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Academic Priorities are now closely involved in the departmental response to the visiting team report. This change is substantial, and it addresses a weakness of the old protocol, in which the departmental response and action plan for improvement was not always implemented uniformly. In some cases, academic departments failed to formally respond to the visiting team report at all, as there was no mechanism for “closing the loop” to ensure that departments implemented needed changes in response to the feedback.

Under the new protocol, after the department submits a written response to the external review team report, the Provost, the Dean of the College, the Committee on Academic Priorities and the full department meet to discuss the response and develop an action plan for the department and the administration. The action plan will play a key role in departmental planning over the subsequent ten years. Moving forward, the Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Academic Priorities will review all requested curricular changes and staffing requests in light of how they support the goals outlined in the departmental action plan. Departments will have the opportunity—again analogous to the Commission’s procedure for institutional accreditation—to present an interim report on their progress with their action plan. As of spring 2009, six departments—Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry, Cities, English, and Political Science—have conducted a departmental self-study under the new protocol.

As the new process for departments submitting annual assessment progress reports becomes regularized, and the departmental statements of learning goals are refined, the periodic self-studies will increasingly rely on evidence of meeting student learning goals as a basis for the departmental action plans.

7.1.3 Individual-, Course-, and Employee-Level

(i) The Teaching and Learning Initiative: Faculty Development Seminars
Perhaps the strongest example of how assessment can contribute to educational improvement is embodied in Bryn Mawr’s Teaching and Learning Initiative. Begun in 2006, the TLI is supported with funding from the Mellon Foundation and coordinated by Professor of Education Alison Cook-Sather. The TLI’s goals are:

- To establish new campus forums where all members of the College community—faculty, staff, and students—can interact as teachers, learners and colleagues;
- To create collaborative relationships that depart from the traditional roles faculty, staff and students play at Bryn Mawr;
- To link everyone within the college community to educational opportunity and the opportunity to foster it for others.

With respect to Standard 14, the relevant components of the TLI are the Faculty Development Seminars, the New Faculty Seminars, and the Student Consultants program. The central innovation in all of these programs is to move teachers and learners—in this case faculty and students—outside of their traditional roles by having students serve as teachers or consultants, and faculty as learners.

These seminars have been offered since fall 2007 and, to date, 25 Bryn Mawr and Haverford faculty members have participated in them. Seminars specifically for new tenure-track faculty began in fall 2008, and are now a part of new faculty orientation, for which the new faculty receive a course release. Current continuing faculty seminar participants receive a $5,000 stipend for participation.

The basic model of both seminars is a weekly seminar with other program participants, allowing participants to “step back” from a particular course and discuss issues of pedagogy with other faculty. In addition, the TLI trains student consultants to serve with each faculty member. These consultants also receive a stipend for their participation, and they sit in on the faculty participant’s classes weekly, and provide invaluable feedback on pedagogy, teaching style, and classroom dynamics.

To date there has been no formal assessment of the program as it directly relates to the improvement of student learning outcomes. But to the extent that effective teaching and engaged classrooms are a logical prerequisite to student learning, there is every reason to believe the program is achieving this goal and then some. A few representative comments from faculty participants include:

“Our forum for discussing pedagogy has been a real asset for me this semester and has forced me think more critically about the classroom and my role in it. Hearing about other members’ experiences also has helped me feel part of a

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16 http://www.brynmawr.edu/tli/
larger group and has given me a wide a range of strategies and ideas.” (New Faculty Member)

“The most telling moment for me has been the discovery that although I’d been thinking my pedagogy was discussion-based ... and open-ended, in fact I went into most of my classes with an agenda—my agenda—for the entire class, so I was always more in control than I ever let the students be. So this has been an important discovery and has led to crucial adjustments in my pedagogy.... I find my role as facilitator of discussion is far more engaging and effective than my role as opening lecturer, followed by questioner and leader of discussion. I thought I was facilitating discussion effectively in my previous approach to teaching. Now I feel I’m doing it far more honestly and effectively.” (Experienced Faculty Member)

Faculty TLI participants frequently use mid-course evaluations to improve their pedagogy. Complementing the end-of-term standardized course evaluation form (see below), they have developed their own customized course evaluation form to be administered roughly at the midpoint of the semester. Faculty members report that the responses they receive from these evaluations enable them to adjust course contents, to change pedagogical techniques, and to focus on areas with which students have difficulty. Recognizing the benefit of a mid-course evaluation, most TLI faculty members continue to use it after their participation in the TLI.

Students who serve as consultants, far from merely being “employees” of the program in service of faculty development, indicate that they benefit directly from the opportunity to step outside of their usual role as “learners” in the classroom setting. In short, they say this experience has taught them to be better learners:

“I think that this project has helped me a lot in thinking about myself as a student, what works best for me, and how to work within a structure that a professor has set up to get the most out of the learning experience.”

“Participation in TLI has really made me feel more responsible for my own education. I no longer think that professors are responsible for having all the answers and making a class perfect...it is up to the entire community to make learning spaces function...”

The Mellon Foundation recently renewed its grant funding for the TLI, which has become a model for faculty development programs at liberal arts colleges nationally.

(ii) Course Evaluations

The course evaluation form is an area that the Working Group on Assessment (see chapter 1, section 1.4) identified as a potential area for improvement. The college has a
standard evaluation form\textsuperscript{17}, and the use of this form in all courses is mandatory, with the exception of independent research and senior seminars. We believe there is much to be gained from considering a redesign of the form itself, as well as changes in the manner that the form is administered and managed.

One difficulty stems from the fact that two major functions course evaluations currently serve in a faculty member’s life at the College can be at odds with one another. For, on the one hand, the course evaluation is designed as a tool for improving one’s own pedagogy. At its best, in this role the instrument permits faculty to be innovative in their pedagogy and to assess what works and what doesn’t from the point of view of student engagement.

On the other hand, the evaluation form provides a performance evaluation that could hardly be higher stakes for faculty, as the cumulative data across multiple classes are used by the Committee on Appointments to determine suitability in the area of teaching for faculty promotion and tenure. In this role the course evaluation process can, for reasons too obvious to mention, be said to stifle pedagogic innovation and experimentation.

Because the course evaluation process is such an efficient way to collect student assessment data, one that is close to the activities we associate with student learning, we wondered whether these two roles might be separated. The Working Group on Assessment discussed the possibility of creating two types of evaluation form, one that produced basic student satisfaction data and student comments on instructor quality, to be used in the tenure and promotion process, and another for more detailed and even course-specific, instructor-designed data on student engagement.

Because the instrument is so high-stakes, any change made to it or to the processes by which data from it are managed and analyzed necessarily requires a faculty-wide conversation. Nevertheless, it is one we strongly recommend that the Faculty should have. This recommendation has been sent to the Committee on Appointments and they are considering changes to the form and the process.

\textit{The Course Evaluation Form}

The evaluation form that Bryn Mawr currently uses to evaluate faculty members is of limited usefulness for its intended purpose. One key limitation is the lack of structured scales using standard response scales for items that are well-suited to quantification. For example, the current final item, which asks whether students “would recommend” the course to other students, is excellent content-wise, but the response format begs for a structured response scale (in addition, perhaps, to a qualitative comment option).

\textsuperscript{17} Appendix 7.11 (Course Evaluation Form)
In other cases, the response scales are poorly defined or fail to meet the criteria of exhaustiveness and mutual exclusivity. For example, questions about student preparation and attendance ask whether students attended “most”, “many” or “some” classes, with no option for “all” or “few/none” and with no further definition of these terms (e.g., percentage attendance).

As per the *Faculty Handbook*, course evaluation data are a major component of the Committee on Appointments’ (CA) deliberations for tenure and promotion for individual faculty members. As such, revision of the form is a task for the faculty and the administration to determine. We recommend that faculty members undertake a review of the form, and to consider the following as they do so, with an eye toward making the instrument a much more effective tool for assessment:

- **Utilize quantitative response scales in addition to open-ended items.** This suggestion is not to question the value of qualitative comments—indeed qualitative comments are likely to capture many nuances that can help faculty improve their own teaching. But it can make it more difficult to detect changes over time, or to compare data across course types. In addition, qualitative data make summarizing across the hundreds of forms a candidate is likely to submit to CA challenging. Finally, using structured items would ensure that students comprehensively consider all elements of course quality, rather than focusing only on areas they happen to spontaneously identify as strengths or weaknesses.

- **Add more items that directly assess the classroom experience.** Some elements of what define a “good course” are by definition self-report: Would you recommend the professor? How well did the instructor organize the course? By contrast: How many hours a week did you spend *outside of class* on this course? and, How often did you meet with the instructor outside of class? are good examples of questions that *directly* assess behaviors associated with course quality. Other questions of this type would permit CA to evaluate pedagogical practices directly as a context for student self-reports about their experiences. Examples include: What proportion of class time was devoted to lecture? How many times did you participate in class discussion in a typical week? Did the instructor provide a syllabus? Did the syllabus clearly define objectives for the course?

*Management of Course Evaluation Data*

Currently the paper evaluation forms are collected by the Provost’s Office and then, after grades are submitted, returned to the individual faculty member. The faculty member is responsible for maintaining the original copies of the original course evaluation forms, and submitting them to CA when eligible for tenure or promotion. We recommend consideration of the following options for administration of the forms and the data from them:
• Administer online or use computer-scanned forms. The fact that the information contained in the evaluation forms is not in electronic form limits the ways that it can be used. This applies to the intended purpose of the forms, for evaluation of tenure and promotion (data not easily summarized and interpreted, no backup for lost paper forms, etc.), but also to the ways that the data from this process could be used to support other assessment activities at the college. For example, this model could be applied to assess any course-level innovation—comparing data from lecture versus discussion courses, or project-based versus survey courses, etc.

• With proper controls for confidentiality (and assuming some of the form redesigns described above), academic departments could enlist these summary data from course evaluations to assess their departmental curricula in various ways. For example, a recent HHMI grant involved the development of a separate course evaluation form for an introductory biology course. Were the standard evaluation administered online, adding items to the form for that course would be a simple matter.

• Centralize data management. Much could be gained from developing some standard guidelines for presenting the data on course evaluations. Standard reports could be developed so that quantitative data could be summarized virtually automatically once the information was stored in electronic form. Such a procedure need not supplant a more individualistic, qualitative analysis of the data and student comments, but would rather supplement it by providing a consistent context for it.

7.2 Institutional Effectiveness

7.2.1 Institution-Level

The character of Bryn Mawr is best distilled in the statement that surfaced within a market positioning study commissioned in 2006 by the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid:

A Bryn Mawr woman is defined by a rare combination of personal characteristics:

• an intense intellectual commitment;
• a purposeful vision of her life; and
• a desire to make a meaningful contribution to the world.

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18 Appendix 7.12 (Intro Biology Course Evaluation (Example))
19 Appendix 7.13 (2006 market positioning study by J/K Generations)
Many colleges have so-called “branding statements”, but these often fail to take hold as organizing principles, either because they are so bland as to be uninspiring, or because they emphasize one aspect of the college at the expense of another. By contrast, the concept of the “Bryn Mawr woman” has gained currency across all constituents of the College because it truly does capture much of what is unique about the institution and its mission. The statement distills the essence of the institutional mission statement (see chapter 1, section 1.1), as well as the thrust of several key strategic planning initiatives.

In a very real sense, the characteristics of the Bryn Mawr woman could just as easily describe the institution itself: intellectually committed to providing rigorous liberal arts education, purposeful and continually reflective to a fault about its mission, with a strong sense of history and current orientation toward social action.

(i) Task Force Model

The characteristics outlined above informed a number of key strategic planning efforts undertaken in the last 10 years, most notably the Plan for a New Century (Appendix 1.1). The implementation of the Plan prompted institution-level evaluation and assessment across a range of areas. The College has been evaluating its overall effectiveness by carefully examining the sustainability of new initiatives while maintaining and more improving established ones.

One of the accomplishments born of the Plan for a New Century was the establishment of the task force model, designed to assess College offices and programs. A typical task force comprises a cross-section of trustees, faculty, administrators, and often students. These task forces deeply examine particular issues concerning the College and make recommendations for improvement. The life cycle of the task force closely mirrors the four stage assessment cycle: goal formulation around a particular topic in the context of the wider institutional mission, thorough evaluation of that topic, decision-making and change, and follow-up assessment (see chapter 2).

The task force model has worked well over this ten-year period, and has improved clarity in the areas of governance and resource planning and allocation. The success of these efforts owes much to their inclusive nature and transparent decision-making, and to the fact that they were organized to focus on and improve well-defined areas of the organization. Strategic planning at the institutional level has been inclusive, mission- and data-driven, and comprehensive, and has led to numerous significant changes in organization and governance (see chapter 2 for more detail).

A key recommendation of the last of these task forces was the creation of a central, standing strategic planning committee to oversee these institution-level assessment efforts, to integrate and establish priorities among their various recommendations, and to ensure accountability for monitoring the results of decisions made. President Jane
McAuliffe has endorsed this recommendation and is currently in the process of implementing it in consultation with campus constituencies.

We recommend that the college continue this work, and strongly endorse the creation of a standing strategic planning committee to better coordinate institution-level assessment and planning, and to better ensure accountability for decisions made.

(ii) New Modes of Accountability

Since the last decennial reaccreditation, Bryn Mawr has made significant investments in providing mechanisms for better assessment and accountability. Importantly, Bryn Mawr created an Office of Institutional Research in 2000-01 to support internal planning, analysis, and assessment, and to oversee reporting for external accountability. The office has served a key role in supporting data-driven decision-making among all College constituencies, and the work of the office is evident throughout this self-study.

The first director of Institutional Research, who left Bryn Mawr in 2007, was replaced by a new individual who was hired for his expertise in assessment. Over time, these two directors have enhanced several data collection and processing procedures, the most significant of which are discussed below.

Data Warehousing for Institutional Reporting

The establishment of a data warehouse for generating reports stands out as the most significant accomplishment of the Office of Institutional Research, since the College’s previous decennial reaccreditation. Prior to 2001 the College used an operational data store, which could be use for simple queries on small amounts of data, for institutional reporting and analysis. One of the first tasks of the first Director of Institutional Research was to expand the College’s data storage and query capabilities by establishing standard census files for key biographical and enrollment data.

The next Director of Institutional Research expanded the data warehouse to include information on course enrollments, financial aid, admissions, athletic participation, grades, graduation, and employees. In addition, the data warehouse was transferred from the PeopleSoft administrative system to an offline Access database, with established protocols for future expansions of the warehouse. Another transfer took place in the winter of 2009, when the data warehouse was moved to a more powerful SQL Server database, in order to facilitate multi-user access and reporting as well as the ability to dynamically update web content.

This resource represents a considerable investment of staff time on the part of Bryn Mawr to develop an accurate, transparent, and powerful tool for institutional accountability and assessment. The advantages of the data warehouse as opposed to simply using the operational database are, among others, as follows:
• Enhanced accuracy and consistency (data elements do not change);
• Enhanced documentation and user-friendliness (simplified “dummy” codes added for frequently used variables);
• Longitudinal validity (“frozen” data are equivalent across years, changes in data definitions across years are addressed);
• Transparency (reports and flat files are dynamically linked to record-level data; external and internal summary reports are aligned and easily reproduced from record-level data);
• Flexible platform (ability to dynamically export and import data in multiple formats to other reporting tools, e.g. Excel, SPSS);
• Comprehensive (standardizes and simplifies linking of “official” data across multiple areas, e.g., enrollment, admissions, and financial aid).

Bryn Mawr has only just begun to exploit this resource to its full potential, but it has already benefitted significantly in the following areas:

• Improved the accuracy of enrollment projections (see Appendix 6.1);
• Improved the accuracy of course enrollment reports20 used by the Committee on Academic Priorities (see above);
• Strengthened a major study on undergraduate retention by linking graduation rate data with information on admissions, enrollment, and external surveys (spring 2009; see Appendix 6.5);
• Simplified procedures for financial aid reports;
• Provided information for a major study on criterion validity of SAT test21 which led to a decision to move to a “flexible testing” option for admission in 2009;
• Allowed for a thorough evaluation of the Posse22 program, which served as the basis for renewing the College’s contract with Posse (fall 2008);
• Provided analysis of athletic recruitment and performance23 (summer 2009);
• Departmental self-assessment report, providing academic departments with department-level data summaries and benchmarks on key student characteristics related to diversity, student aptitude, grading, and enrollments (Planned spring 2010);
• Generated live “dashboard” of key indicators on entering class statistics as the class is shaped over time by admissions decisions and student applications and deposits (fall 2009; see Appendix 6.3).

Currently planned research projects for the future include: analysis of yield patterns among “middle income” admitted applicants, linking admissions and other survey data;

20 Appendix 7.3 (Course Enrollment Report (Sample))
21 Appendix 7.14 (SAT Validity Report)
22 Appendix 7.1 (Posse Assessment)
23 Appendix 7.2 (Athletic Recruitment and Performance)
modeling undergraduate alumnae giving in the first five years (linking development and institutional data).

Again the point to be made here is less about the specific assessment work of the office, but rather to highlight Bryn Mawr’s considerable investment in laying the foundation within institutional research for critical assessment and strategic planning work that is of institution-wide relevance.

As an additional indication of the College’s commitment to laying a strong foundation for institutional research and assessment, the Office of Institutional Research has recently had a new position approved. A new Assistant Director of Institutional Research will be hired in the spring of 2010 (the job ad is in print as of this writing). The Assistant Director will conduct and support research in the areas of enrollment management, assessment of student learning, and strategic planning. The new hire will also fulfill most of the data management and regular reporting demands, thus freeing the Director of Institutional Research to utilize these data more directly in support of strategic planning.

_Institutional Factbook_

One of the most important projects that grew out of data warehousing is an institutional factbook24, a reporting tool that is dynamically linked to record-level data. Bryn Mawr’s previous factbook, “Bryn Mawr Facts”, was coordinated by the Office of Institutional Research, but most of the summary data in each section was populated by the administrative office most closely affiliated with the data area.

The development of the data warehouse in fall 2007 made it possible to centralize responsibility for the institutional factbook and, importantly, to standardize data definitions across multiple areas. In response to this opportunity, the Director of Institutional Research, together with data managers in other administrative offices, developed standard protocols for populating the data warehouse and generating reports from it. In some cases this was a very iterative process, as data managers in respective areas sought to translate their intuitive rules for reporting into a logic that could be written down and hard-coded into the data warehouse reporting rules.

The end result of this process has been to simultaneously alleviate the regular reporting burden in a number of administrative areas, notably the registrar’s office, financial aid, admissions, and the Provost’s office, and to greatly increase the consistency and transparency of reporting for internal and external accountability. Now, rather than serving as a coordinator of reporting occurring in multiple offices, institutional research is able to centrally complete the factbook, IPEDS, and other external reporting (Common Data Set, guidebooks, data sharing, etc.), with every number backed directly by record-level data. In addition, because most elements of the factbook are dynamically updated

24 [http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/bmcfactbook/20082009.html](http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/bmcfactbook/20082009.html)
when new data are appended to the data warehouse, the net institution-wide resources (staff time) spent on the preparation of the factbook has also been dramatically reduced.

To further external accountability, the College decided to make the factbook and the Common Data Set\(^{25}\), as well as information on post-graduate activities, including the receipt of the Ph.D.\(^ {26}\), available to the public. Not only does this decision increase the College’s transparency, it reinforces the centrality of the factbook and the Office of Institutional Research in the collection and dissemination of official data for internal and external audiences for “official” data.

**Institutional Indicators Performance Dashboard**

Another significant innovation since the 1998-99 decennial reaccreditation has been the employment of an institutional indicators dashboard (Appendix 6.3), a tool to facilitate trustee oversight. The first dashboard was developed in 2003, and has been modified regularly since then. In 2008 the dashboard underwent an overhaul to add new indicators as well as 10-year trends and peer institution data for most indicators. By bringing attention to College strengths or areas in need of improvement, this tool has provided data that can inform conversations between trustees and senior administrators.

(iii) **Other Key Topical Institution-Wide Assessments**

In addition to the topics covered by the various Task Forces and the activities reviewed above, the College has initiated or completed a number of assessment activities in other institutional domains. These activities attest to Bryn Mawr’s consistent use of data in assessment to inform its mission-driven planning.

**Diversity**

The Diversity Leadership Group was formed as a presidential committee in 2004 to advise the president of the College on diversity-related issues, in order to develop a supportive climate for diversity on campus. Specifically, the group advised the president about:

- recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students from underrepresented groups;
- attention to diversity in the curriculum;
- monitoring and improving campus climate;
- supporting programs that foster and sustain diversity.

\(^{25}\) [http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/cds.html]

\(^{26}\) [http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/phd_productivity.html]
In 2006 the Diversity Leadership Group, with the Office of Institutional Research, began developing the Campus Climate Survey. The survey was implemented in fall 2008, and obtained a roughly 50% response rate. As of this writing, the results had been analyzed by the Director of Institutional Research and presented to the Diversity Leadership Group, the Diversity Leadership Council (a broader group focused on diversity and representing all areas of the college), the General Faculty and the trustees.

Having reviewed the results of the Campus Climate Survey, the Diversity Leadership Council is facilitating a broader campus discussion of these survey results in 2009-10. With each new entering undergraduate class, these discussions will be renewed, and the survey instrument and analysis will provide an important mechanism for ensuring continuity in these discussions for the next several years.

*Enrollment Management*

Enrolling the class: Analysis of applicants, admits, and matriculants

Bryn Mawr contracts the services of Brian Zucker from the Chicago firm Human Capital, for research and analysis supporting admissions. The Institutional Research and Financial Aid offices supply Human Capital with data files at each stage of the admissions process. Human Capital spends several days on campus at the height of the admissions season projecting outcomes, modeling various admissions scenarios and financial aid policies, and generally supporting the efforts of the admissions office to manage competing priorities, including the maintenance of an overall undergraduate discount rate of 40%.

The college is quite satisfied with this arrangement, and with the broad perspective that Human Capital provides on the larger landscape of college admissions.

*Projecting enrollment FTE*

One of the key “unknowns” in medium-range budget modeling at Bryn Mawr is undergraduate FTE. One of the key operational changes at Bryn Mawr, described in our Periodic Review Report of June 2004, was the development of an enrollment model to project the average undergraduate FTE for the fall and spring semesters of a given academic year.

The model made accurate projections, generally with an error of approximately 1-2%, but it had some limitations:

- Reports were static, not dynamically linked to enrollment data;

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27 Appendix 7.15 (Campus Climate Survey (Paper Form))
28 Appendix 7.16 (Trustee Presentation (Final))
29 To be made available to the visiting team in the document room. Also available at: http://www.brynmawr.edu/provost/faculty_and_staff/reports.html
Model was able to project only one or two semesters in advance;
Model required a rather large “fudge factor” (20.0 FTE) to extrapolate financial FTE from enrollment data;
Forecasting errors had to be diagnosed separately, rather than within the model itself.

In spring 2008 the Institutional Research data warehouse made possible the development of a new enrollment model that addressed these issues. This new model facilitates long-range enrollment modeling based on information about entering class, retention, and study abroad levels. Perhaps most importantly, the model provides direct feedback on the source of forecast errors such as unusual changes in study abroad rate or retention rate.

It has been said of enrollment modeling that model projections meet one of two possible fates: either they are a little bit wrong, or they are a lot wrong. The new model has not been in place for long enough to assess its operational accuracy, but a simulated validity test for the last six years verified an error rate in forecasting academic year undergraduate FTE of less than one percent.

Persistence and completion rate

A Board of Trustee’s review of the institutional indicators dashboard prompted some concern about Bryn Mawr’s retention and graduation rate. Although retention rates at women’s colleges tend to be lower than those at similar co-ed colleges, Bryn Mawr’s retention rate is lower than the average at our peer women’s colleges. The Trustees thus requested a fuller analysis of the reasons why some students do not complete their degrees at Bryn Mawr. Bryn Mawr had hired a consultant to review data on retention rates in 2000, but the Trustees decided another review was in order.

A full report on Bryn Mawr’s retention rate (Appendix 6.5) was prepared and, at the time of this writing, was being reviewed by relevant cabinet members to inform planning in the 2009-10 academic year. The report considers the demographic characteristics of graduates and non-graduates from existing survey sources (the CIRP Freshman Survey and the COFHE Enrolled Student Survey) as well as a range of attitudinal characteristics that differentiate these groups.

The report recommends that the Office of the Dean of the College establish procedures to more routinely review retention statistics for currently enrolled classes in order to better assess and respond to retention-related concerns as they are emerging. In addition, the report recommends that the College institute a standardized, structured “exit interview” for departing students to assess their reasons for leaving. Information from these interviews will provide the College with a more accurate, deeper understanding of the factors involved. As a result, the College will know where to better focus its efforts in student retention.
Alumnae/i Survey

In spring 2009 Bryn Mawr administered the COFHE Alumnae/i Survey to all living alumnae. The survey was just completed at the time of this writing and had obtained a 52% response rate. This response rate was the highest of the 28 elite institutions that conducted the survey, a fact that is particularly remarkable considering that most of those other colleges surveyed only a single class year (typically just 10 years out). This response rate alone speaks highly of the commitment of the alumnae to our institution.

Analysis of information from this survey will be used to:

- Provide external accountability to prospective students regarding career and other life outcomes;
- Support planning and communication in the Alumnae/i Association with its alumnae/i. At the time of this writing, a preliminary report in support of this goal had been presented to the Executive Board of the Alumnae Association;
- Help the Resources Office better understand donor behavior by linking the survey data with actual donor behavior.

7.2.2 Assessment of Department-, Program-, or Unit-Level

In preparing this chapter, administrative department heads were interviewed to evaluate the extent to which they establish unit-level goals and implement assessment of them. These interviews revealed that, though administrative departments continually assess their effectiveness, the degree to which assessments are formalized, regularized, and used to inform practice varies significantly.

(i) Information Services

In 2009 the Office of Information Services (which includes College libraries) completed a comprehensive departmental self-study and external review. The self-study examined the following changes that have been made in the last eight years:

- Merging of libraries and computing services under a single Chief Information Officer (2001);
- Migrating the administrative database to PeopleSoft;
- Establishing information services “nodes” to support academic divisions (2001).

30 Appendix 7.17 (Alumnae Survey Presentation)
The self-study report\(^{31}\) itself represents an excellent example of department-level assessment and planning. The key recommendations that emerged from the self-study (see pp. 22-3) will serve the area well as it addresses challenges in supporting administrative computing, digitization of visual and other media, and the web. Many of the assessment activities within Information Services are more fully reviewed elsewhere in the self-study (see especially chapter 2) and so will not be repeated here.

The Bryn Mawr IS department has developed and implemented a standardized assessment tool, now also used by 33 colleges that have a merged information service structure similar to Bryn Mawr’s. This survey, called the Merged Information Services Organizations Survey (MISO)\(^ {32}\), provides both longitudinal and peer benchmarks for assessing faculty, staff, and student satisfaction with various aspects of information services.

The IS department uses these survey results to inform planning and resource allocation within the IS function. For example, an analysis of MISO satisfaction data played a significant role in the plan to support a new email client, to restructure staffing at the Help Desk, and to increase network speed and wireless access on campus. At Bryn Mawr, faculty and staff are surveyed bi-annually, and students have been surveyed three out of the last four years, and will be surveyed again in 2009-10.

(ii) Student Administrative Services Organizational Review

Following the recommendation from the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources, Bryn Mawr’s new President Jane McAuliffe in 2008-09 requested a comprehensive and systematic review of the administrative offices in the Student Services area (admissions and financial aid, registrar, bursar, career services, and student employment). The consulting firm KublerWirka was contracted to conduct this review, providing an important “third party” perspective.

The origins of the organizational review lie in the work of the Task Force on Balancing Mission and Resources. A core recommendation emerging from the work of that task force was to appoint a single Dean of Graduate Studies, one of whose responsibilities for the upcoming year would be to explore ways to restructure how Bryn Mawr delivers graduate education, including ways to integrate offices and services across the two graduate schools and the undergraduate college. This recommendation was the basis for initiating the KublerWirka review. Thus the study began as an effort to integrate graduate student services with the corresponding offices and services on the undergraduate side. However, it quickly evolved into a comprehensive review of undergraduate student services more generally, as it became clear that sensible plans for integration presupposed a clearer understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the undergraduate delivery of these student services.

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31 Appendix 7.18 (Information Services Self-Study)
32 [http://www.misosurvey.org/](http://www.misosurvey.org/) See also Appendix 2.4.
Their report recommends major organizational changes in these offices, which are described in detail in other sections of this report. Of primary relevance here are: (1) how the work of the KublerWirka consultants, extensively supported by administrative staff at the College, serves as an example of assessment in itself, and (2) how the effectiveness of the organizational changes it recommends will be assessed.

The review itself was based largely on 39 confidential interviews with campus administrative and faculty leadership, student focus groups, and with student administrative services personnel in the two graduate schools. The following quantitative reports served as context and background for the review:

- Analysis of first-year student responses to the 2007 COFHE Enrolled Student Survey;\textsuperscript{33,34}
- 2008-2009 Factbook;\textsuperscript{35}
- COFHE Non-faculty staffing survey 2005-2006;\textsuperscript{36}
- Trends in Social Work and GSAS admissions and enrollment;
- Student surveys at all three schools.

As such the report itself serves as a major example of assessment of institutional effectiveness. At the time of this writing, the specific restructuring recommendations are being reviewed by a transition team and several working groups. After examining best practices these groups will create an implementation plan for student services integration. The implementation of these recommendations will serve as another example of “closing the assessment loop”.

(iii) Dean of the College / Undergraduate Student Affairs

A number of other administrative departments associated with undergraduate student services report to the Dean of the Undergraduate College. Each of these offices monitors its effectiveness in various ways, though each varies in the extent to which it does so and in how intentionally it approaches this work as a four-stage assessment-planning cycle.

Department-Level Assessment Activities

The Career Development Office serves both Haverford and Bryn Mawr. Its brief mission statement is:

Maximizing two highly selective Colleges' resources, fostering career exploration, networking, outreach to employers and professional growth for students and alumnae/i.

\textsuperscript{33} Appendix 7.6 (First Year Findings Summary)
\textsuperscript{34} Appendix 7.19 (First Year Student Responses Report)
\textsuperscript{35} http://www.brynmawr.edu/institutionalresearch/bmcfactbook/20082009.html
\textsuperscript{36} Appendix 7.20 (COFHE Non-Faculty Staffing Study)
The office conducts a range of regular formative and summative assessment activities in support of their mission. First, the office conducts an annual survey of students’ career activities in the year after graduation (see section 7.2.1(iii) for more).

The office has one full-time individual supporting another key resource for formative assessment, the E-Recruiting database, otherwise known as OCEAN (Online Career Exploration and Networking). The database allows the office to track all events, recruiting visits, workshops and so on, and to monitor the number of participants in each. Currently they are working with the Registrar’s Office to allow the system to import data directly from the administrative database (from which it is currently separate).

The office also administers a counseling session survey, now provided online to all participants in career counseling sessions. The survey grew out of findings from the senior exit interview process (see above) that indicated student dissatisfaction with this service. Information from the survey, completed right after the counseling session, is now accessible to the career counselor in the office, who uses the immediate feedback to improve services.

At the conclusion of the school year, all graduating seniors are offered the opportunity to take a general satisfaction survey about the Career Development Office services. In June of each year, the office staff schedules a two-day retreat to examine the results from this survey, as well as the data on event attendance from the OCEAN database, and plan accordingly for next year.

Some results of such meetings from past years have included:

- Due to low student attendance, a very good but rather expensive outside speaker was not re-invited;
- Due to low attendance at workshops, some important presentations were made accessible online.

The Office of Intercultural Affairs regularly surveys and conducts focus groups with students who participated in its activities and events. For example, after the annual Tri-Co summer program\(^\text{37}\) (designed to orient first-years to issues of race, class, and gender in a selective liberal arts college environment), all program participants and organizers are surveyed for their opinions on different elements of the program. These results are used to improve next year’s program.

In 2004, the Praxis Office (service learning) and the Community Service Office merged and became the Civic Engagement Office. The office’s assessment practices, which

\(^\text{37}\) [http://www.brynmawr.edu/intercultural/trico.html](http://www.brynmawr.edu/intercultural/trico.html)
derive from its service learning mission, are oriented toward addressing the questions, “What?” “So what?” and “Now what?” which loosely approximate the familiar planning-assessment cycle.

In 2006, faculty members Alice Lesnick and Jody Cohen interviewed Praxis faculty advisors on issues related to advising and student mentoring, paying specific attention to improving Praxis office support for Praxis courses. The assessment produced a written report that led to changes in how the Praxis office supports Praxis courses.

Also in 2006, Kelly Strunk (a graduate student at the GSSWSR) and Elena Bernal (Director of Institutional Research) conducted a comprehensive assessment of the Praxis Program. This assessment included:

- an examination of the historical development of the program;
- an analysis of field supervisor and student evaluation survey data collected over a three-year period;
- collection of demographic data regarding student and faculty participation in the program (departments involved, class level/race/majors of participating students, student grades);
- design and implementation of a survey of faculty members who had taught Praxis courses.

Recommendations from this assessment continue to inform planning and progress toward program goals.

While the 2006 assessments provided a comprehensive view of the Praxis program from the perspectives of students and faculty, the Praxis Steering Committee soon recognized that the voices of alumnae and Praxis field supervisors at community-based organizations were absent. In 2007, members of the Praxis Steering Committee undertook two assessments that aimed to gather qualitative data from these constituencies through interviews and to analyze these data in order to gain a fuller understanding of the Praxis program and improvements that might be necessary. The following year, the community partner assessment was expanded to include survey and interview data and is now conducted on an annual basis. In addition, the Praxis program currently administers a community partnership scorecard, which, through extensive surveys, gathers data about the state of particular campus-community partnerships from the perspectives of college faculty, staff and students and of staff at community-based organizations. The data gathered inform improvements to community partnerships.

In addition to these larger assessment efforts, the Praxis program regularly collects survey data from participating students and field supervisors at community-based organizations. At the end of each semester, they complete short surveys about their experiences with the Praxis program, and Praxis field coordinators compile data for each
course and produce a comprehensive assessment, which informs subsequent iterations of that course. In 2008, Amanda Root (a student) initiated an assessment project to aggregate the contents of the field coordinator Praxis course assessments, to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the Praxis program’s community partnership goals. The results were used to change the ways that Praxis relates to its community partners.

Student Activities, Intercultural affairs, Off-campus Services, and Residential Life all conduct regular assessment of their services and programs through a combination of formal satisfaction surveys, attendance monitoring, and more informal interviews and focus groups. The results of these assessments are rarely “written up” in any formal assessment and planning report; rather, they are used in an ongoing manner to continuously realign programs and services offered with student needs.

Health and Counseling Services

The Health Center and Counseling Services office evaluates its effectiveness through a variety of continuous, annual, and periodic assessment processes. In 2004-05 the department conducted an extensive self-study and external review to benchmark organizational practices and staffing in the office. The report led directly to major changes in the facilities and staffing plan for the office, and provided a roadmap for an extensive and somewhat overdue investment in this function.

Since that time the office conducted two major student satisfaction surveys, the first in 2005 and another in 2008, to evaluate the effectiveness of changes made after the department’s self-review. The results of these surveys led to a number of significant modifications in the delivery of student health services. Some examples include:

• Changed reception procedures from walk-in appointments to same-day appointments in order to reduce wait-time, which students frequently voiced as a concern in the midst of their busy academic schedules. This same change was made for prescription pick-up services.

• Began to require office staff members to regularly update waiting-room patients on the likely wait-time, to decrease uncertainty.

• Changed procedures to better preserve patient confidentiality: Redesigned front office so that waiting room and patient check-in occur in separate spaces, placed a television in the waiting room tuned to CNN, and installed sound machines throughout the building to limit the ability to inadvertently overhear conversations.

The self-study also led to the implementation of a new computer-based practice management system (NueMD) and database to facilitate service delivery. Appointment scheduling is a major function of the system, but the reporting functions provide a powerful tool for “continuous” assessment of services. For example, the NueMD system
is used to monitor illness types in real-time, and it also automates the tracking of missed appointments and their follow-ups.

Plans for 2009-10 and Beyond

In many of the offices reporting to the Dean of the Undergraduate College, there is a great deal of monitoring and data collection, and this data is used to inform improvements to programming and service delivery. However, in most of these offices, this assessment work would benefit from being more intentionally aligned with the familiar four-stage planning-assessment cycle.

In 2009-10, the current Dean of the College changed the annual reporting structure for her direct reports. Under the new protocol, offices will submit annual progress reports on assessing institutional effectiveness within the mission statement of their department. The Undergraduate Dean will collaborate with departments that lack clearly defined, explicit, and measurable mission statements to develop such statements.

Departments will focus these annual reports on a single office goal or mission-related issue, and conduct a formal assessment of their effectiveness with respect to it, producing a “progress report” summarizing the data and analysis they have brought to bear on that issue during the previous year. For most departments, these reports will simply represent a formalization (and archiving) of assessment activities they had already been undertaking. The reports will provide a meaningful opportunity for the Dean to integrate these activities into her regular management practices, and to coordinate across areas to create joint initiatives.

Every five years, each department will conduct a more comprehensive assessment and self-study report focused on their departmental mission. These periodic “self-studies” will summarize the assessment work conducted annually through the annual progress reports, and form a basis for planning the next several years of assessment work.

(iv) Admissions and Financial Aid

The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid is the administrative office in which assessment of effectiveness is most organically integrated. The key metrics used by the Office of Admissions to gauge effectiveness are application counts, admit rates, yield rates, and discount rates. Indeed, the centrality of these metrics for gauging the effectiveness of this office was reinforced by the work of the 2003-2004 Task Force on Enhancing Competitive Position. Since the College’s previous MSCHE decennial reaccreditation, with the added focus provided by this important work, the College has increased its application count 40%—from 1,618 in 1999 to 2,267 for the class of 2013. Bryn Mawr’s admit rate declined from 57% in 1999 to 44% in 2006, though it has crept back up to 49% for the most recent entering cohort (2009), while at the same time the
yield rate remains unchanged at 33% from 1999 to 2009. Taken together these changes represent a dramatic shift in selectivity over the last 10-year period.

Until this most recent admission’s year, significant progress had been made on lowering the discount rate—which had peaked at 43% in 2003—to under 36% for the entering class of 2008. At the current time, owing to the economic situation, the discount rate for the entering cohort of 2009 is 55%, a level that is not sustainable. At the time of this writing, a new Task Force on Competitive Position has been convened to examine this and other related issues (see chapter 6, section 6.1.2 for further discussion).

The Office of Admissions contracts the services of the consulting firm Human Capital for the purposes of yield and financial aid modeling. This firm modeled the projected impact of a merit aid pilot study initiated in Fall 2005, and also provided the analysis that led to discontinuing the pilot (as it did not have the desired impact on institutional selectivity).

The Office of Admissions also provides data on student outcomes to prospective students and their families, and to the public at large, through their admissions materials, which highlight Bryn Mawr’s excellent graduate school admission rates, Ph.D. rates, high participation of women in science, as well as employment outcomes.

(v) Athletics and Physical Education

The Athletics and Physical Education Department aims to “...offer a variety of opportunities promoting self-awareness, confidence, and the development of skills and habits that contribute to an ongoing healthy lifestyle” and seeks to offer programs that, “...enhance the quality of life for the broader campus community” (from the department’s mission statement). Within this broad mission, the department has a series of well-crafted objectives for the intercollegiate athletics and physical education programs.

In support of these goals, the department administers and analyzes data from the following evaluations, implemented by the new Athletics Director (hired in 2007).

- Student evaluations for physical education courses;
- Evaluations of the intercollegiate athletics program from student athletes;
- Student evaluations of wellness courses and programming.

These materials are annually reviewed by the Director in consultation with her direct reports (coaches) in planning for subsequent years.

The recent decision to overhaul the current fitness center was very much data driven. Admissions data had long indicated that our athletic facilities were not a significant draw among prospective students, but more recent data suggested that it was becoming a negative factor in prospective student decision-making. In addition, our
current students—even those who reported using the fitness center frequently—expressed that they were relatively unsatisfied with it.\(^\text{38}\) This represents another example of how data and assessment played an important role in decision-making and resource allocation.

(vi) Resources (Development Office)

The primary mission of the Resources program is to generate philanthropic funds in support of the operating budget, endowment and academic programs of the College. The office engages in “best practices” benchmarking to measure its accomplishments relative to peer institutions and participates in a number of outside annual surveys that generate and distribute comparative data. These include: Voluntary Support for Educational Data, US News and World Report, and SMOG Papers (measures annual giving, compiled by Occidental College). The data from these sources are regularly reviewed and used to inform planning and resource allocation within the office.

Formal program audits and assessments are conducted by the College as part of the standard campaign-planning-execution cycle. Previously, the College worked with Grenzebach, Glier & Associates to conduct a campaign “readiness” assessment that outlined the steps necessary in establishing the priorities and staffing for a comprehensive capital campaign. This was then followed by a campaign feasibility assessment of donor interest and capacity, which guided the trustees in the campaign planning process. The success of the campaign was examined and reviewed in a post campaign report, consisting of personal interviews with campaign volunteers and donors as well as pre- and post-campaign data analysis.

(vii) Alumnae/i Association

The Alumnae/i Association (AA) has a range of documents and materials that serve to define and communicate its mission:

- Statement of Purpose;
- “Big Hairy Audacious Goals”;
- Core Values;
- Annual Goals;
- A logo and motto.

Each year, the Executive Director works with the AA Executive Board in a collaborative process to evaluate (and update as needed) these items, which are published annually in the Key Directory of the AA.

In 1999, just after the College’s previous decennial reaccreditation, the AA conducted quantitative surveys of its programs and volunteer organization to assess their relevance.

\(^\text{38}\) Appendix 7.21 (Athletics Facilities)
to alumnae. Survey questions were based on independent interviews and focus groups with alumnae. The survey results were used to conduct an in-depth strategic program review. As part of the process, the Executive Director developed a Program Evaluation Grid, which is continually updated.

The results of the 1999 surveys informed numerous changes to AA programs. The AA streamlined and clarified the purpose of its programs, as the survey results indicated that program quality suffered because they were trying to do too much at once. In addition, many alumnae were unfamiliar with most of the services/programs offered. Examples of changes informed by survey results include:

- Eliminated Bed and Breakfast program;
- Transformed regional scholarship program into an internship program;
- Closed book stores;
- Revised volunteer organization to reflect the fact that most women now have full time jobs and less time to commit to volunteer work.

The survey also indicated disengagement with the College by underrepresented minorities. This finding spurred focus group discussions in seven major cities facilitated by Raymond Albert (Diversity Leadership Group) and two African-American alumnae trustees and resulted in a conference for African American alumnae held on the campus in 2008.

The AA routinely distributes questionnaires to alumnae after major events, such as reunion. The AA has modified Reunion programming in response to these surveys. The AA also hired Market Street Research to conduct a satisfaction survey on the Alumnae Bulletin, which led directly to a redesign of the magazine.

The COFHE Alumnae/i survey, administered in spring 2009, provides the basis for AA’s latest round of planning and evaluation of service impact. Unlike the 1999 effort, the 2009 survey permits comparison of Bryn Mawr’s survey results to those of similar peer institutions, providing a new lens through which to evaluate AA programs and services.

(viii) Summary of Department-Level Institutional Effectiveness Assessment

Though several administrative departments at Bryn Mawr do engage in periodic comprehensive self-study, this is not a required or regularly scheduled process. Rather, comprehensive self-study—the most recent examples being the Student Services review, Information Services self-study, and the review of Graduate Education (within the context of the Balancing Mission and Resources task force)—tends to occur at Bryn Mawr on an ad hoc basis, similar to the task force model of assessment used at the institutional level (see section 7.2.1(i), above).

7.2.3 Individual- or Employee-Level
(i) Performance Coaching

Bryn Mawr’s primary tool for assessment of institutional effectiveness at the level of the individual employee is the *Energage* performance coaching process, first implemented at Bryn Mawr in 2007-08. The *Energage* coaching process is essentially an employee-level “self-study” of individual past-year accomplishments and goals for the next year, in which the supervisor serves as the employee’s “external reviewer”.

The process begins with the employee completing a structured self-interview “coaching input” form (aka “yellow sheet”) outlining his or her past year’s performance and goals. This form is reviewed by the supervisor, after which an employee-led meeting occurs. At a subsequent meeting, feedback from the supervisor is given to the employee through the “coaching feedback” form (aka “blue sheet”). The employee has the opportunity to provide comments on the blue sheet form itself. The employee and the coach then agree on goals and work plans for those goals in the upcoming year.

(ii) Salary Benchmarking Study

In 2007-08 the office of Human Resources hired the consulting firm Watson Wyatt to clarify the current organizational hierarchy of the College, to review job descriptions, and to provide salary (ranges) for each position based on market benchmarks. This was the first major effort of its kind at the College. The information is made publicly available to current and potential employees on the web, and has greatly increased transparency about salary-setting at the college.

(iii) Staff / Student Educational Programs

Though not an assessment program *per se*, Bryn Mawr instituted staff / student learning programs within the broader *Teaching and Learning Initiative* (see section 7.1.3(i), above) to support staff-student partnerships in skill development. One element, *Empowering Learners*, involves pairing staff and students in mutual interchange of areas of expertise. From the 2007 interim assessment of the program:

> The mission of the staff-student educational programs is to build community and create inclusive opportunities to learn that connect all members of the campus community to the educational mission of the College...to strengthen participants’ access to their own and to one another’s knowledge and experience as well as to formal education. They deliberately challenge the traditionally rigid role structure in which expertise is understood in exclusively hierarchical terms and some people’s work solely supports others’ educational opportunity.

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39 [http://www.brynmawr.edu/humanresources/Internal/PerfCoach.shtml](http://www.brynmawr.edu/humanresources/Internal/PerfCoach.shtml)
40 [http://www.brynmawr.edu/humanresources/Internal/JobDescriptions/DepartmentList.shtml](http://www.brynmawr.edu/humanresources/Internal/JobDescriptions/DepartmentList.shtml)
As of this writing, there have been 123 partnerships between staff and students in service of this mission. The 2007 interim assessment\(^42\) of this innovative approach to community building and skill-development identified the following benefits to staff:

- Staff members gain access to the College’s computer-mediated communication systems, in many cases accessing email and the Internet for the first time;
- Staff members gain access to other College resources such as computers, the library, the Writing Center, and course offerings;
- Staff members gain opportunities to share their areas of interest and expertise with students and the broader campus community;
- Staff members, like students and faculty members, gain access to new friendships, settings of the College, areas of knowledge, and goals.

### 7.3 Appraisal and Recommendations

As this and other chapters of this self-study demonstrate, a tremendous amount of assessment work is already underway at Bryn Mawr College. To summarize briefly, some of the key activities already implemented include:

- Regularizing academic departmental external reviews;
- Regularizing annual assessment practices and progress reports in academic departments and in administrative departments of student services;
- Developing cost-effective models for deepening assessment at the level of the academic department through the Tri-College Teagle assessment grant;
- Continuing and expanding faculty development activities sponsored by the Teaching and Learning Initiative;
- Establishing a standing strategic planning committee, chaired by the President, to oversee institution-level planning and assessment of institutional effectiveness;
- Assessing first-year undergraduate student writing in the Emily Balch seminars;
- Monitoring and assessing graduate programs (see chapter 5).

We strongly endorse all of these commitments. Moving forward, we recommend that the College consider taking the following steps:

- Improve the course evaluation form as an instrument for assessment of student engagement and learning at the class level of analysis;

• Administer the course evaluation form electronically and centralize data management;
• Review and benchmark administrative staffing requirements for support of current and planned assessment functions;
• Evaluate the utility of establishing a standing assessment committee comprising faculty members and administrators;
• Design a mechanism and protocol for internal sharing and communication of assessment reports and results.
Conclusion

Since our last decennial reaccreditation review, the College has experienced significant development and change. We completed a capital campaign that raised more than 232 million dollars. We created a strategic plan, called the *Plan for the New Century*, and have completed most of its goals. We overhauled both faculty and trustee governance, and moved to a model where all constituencies are more active in the decision-making and planning operations of the College. We also created and implemented a task force model for tackling large institutional issues, and the assessments and recommendations of these task forces have had a substantial impact on institutional change.

Despite all that we have accomplished, it is not the “Bryn Mawr way” to rest on our laurels. We feel compelled to engage in critical reflection, assessment and strategic planning, particularly at a time when the viability of the small liberal arts college model is being questioned, and these concerns seem especially pressing for a women’s college.

In response to these challenges, we are involved in several efforts that will be the focus of our attention until the time of our next periodic review. One important task is to complete the curricular renewal. While we initiated some curricular changes, more proposals are both in development and in the pilot phase. We need to maintain momentum through to completion of this work. It will be equally important to assess the changes once they have been made, and to revise our work in accordance with the results of these assessments.

The institution regularly engages in assessment at all levels and across all academic and administrative departments. Going forward we must consider how best to coordinate and centrally support these efforts. We will explore the idea of a standing assessment committee that is charged with coordinating assessment activities and managing the communication and discussion of assessment results. A new staff position in Institutional Research will allow the Director to devote even more time to developing, supporting and sustaining the strategic use of assessment in the College’s planning efforts.

As a community we are committed to transparency and collaboration in institutional decision-making. We know that we must continue to develop trust among campus constituencies and to communicate the value of shared governance. As our shared governance model matures, we need to improve our ability to be inclusive and consultative without reducing our ability to be nimble and responsive to the changing landscape of higher education.
The President’s “Thinking Forward Group” will be an important next step in pushing the community to envision the future of the College and think strategically about institutional priorities and resource management. A group that attempts to think boldly about the College’s future ventures will surely face challenges, but if our past is any indication, the benefits will be well worth the effort.

We opened this self-study report with an introduction of the concept of a Bryn Mawr woman—someone with a deep commitment to intellectual rigor, a purposeful vision of her life, and a strong desire to make a meaningful contribution to the world. In many ways, these characteristics of a Bryn Mawr woman also describe the institution that educates her. Our self-study process reinforced for us that as an institution we are strongly committed to intellectual rigor, have an intensely purposeful vision of our institutional goals and mission, and an encompassing commitment to offering curricular and co-curricular opportunities that help our students become agents of change in an increasingly interdependent, global world.

The College community looks forward to the external team’s visit in April 2010 as an opportunity to continue our self-study process and hear the team’s perspective on the present and future of Bryn Mawr College.