

**MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
PERIODIC REVIEW REPORT**

**Presented by:  
The State University of New York College at New Paltz**

**May 25, 2006**

**Chief Executive Officer:**

**Steven G. Poskanzer, President**

**Commission action which preceded this report:  
Reaccreditation, 2001**

**Date of the Evaluation Team's visit:  
April 2001**

# Table of Contents

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<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>List of Appendices</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 1: Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 2: Responses to the Recommendations</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Recommendations from the Visiting Team .....	9
Outcomes Assessment .....	9
Increasing Faculty Diversity .....	13
Technology .....	16
Organizational Effectiveness .....	18
Recommendations from the Self Study .....	18
Student Support Services .....	18
Programs to Foster General Intellectual Skills .....	19
High Quality Curricula .....	22
Library and Instructional Technology .....	24
Assessment Policies and Procedures .....	25
Physical Facilities .....	26
<b>Section 3: Major Challenges and Opportunities</b> .....	<b>27</b>
Increased Reputation and Selectivity .....	27
Increasing the Full-Time Faculty .....	30
Improving Student Outcomes and Graduation Rates .....	32
Technological Demand .....	34
Facilities Challenges .....	35
Development and Fundraising .....	37
<b>Section 4: Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections</b> .....	<b>39</b>
Enrollment .....	39
Finance .....	42
<b>Section 5: Assessment Processes and Plans</b> .....	<b>45</b>
Institutional Assessment .....	45
Student Learning Outcomes .....	49
Support for Assessment .....	60
Summary and Suggestions .....	60
<b>Section 6: Linked Institutional Planning and Budgeting</b> .....	<b>64</b>
Overall Planning and Budgeting .....	64
Budget Development/Resource Request Process .....	66
Planning and Budgeting at the Division Level .....	68

## List of Appendices

---

<b><u>Appendix:</u></b>	<b><u>Page:</u></b>
<b>A. Periodic Review Report Certification Statement .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>B. Middle States Institutional Profile .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>C. Memorandum of Understanding between SUNY System Administration and the College at New Paltz .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>D. Institutional Assessment Materials .....</b>	<b>126</b>
D1 Administrative and Academic Support Assessment .....	127
D2 SUNY Board of Trustees and SUNY Paltz General Education Learning Outcomes .....	144
D3 Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education .....	153
D4 General Education Summary Report .....	156
D5 Academic Major Assessment Plan Progress .....	162
D6 Music Department Assessment Plan .....	165
D7 School of Business Presentation Skills Rubric .....	177
D8 School of Education, Professional Education Unit Framework Rubric .....	179
D9 English Department Composition Assessment .....	188
D10 Chemistry Department Assessment Plan .....	223
<b>E. SUNY Budget Report .....</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>F. New Paltz Budget Process Guidelines .....</b>	<b>307</b>
<b>G. 2001 Middle States Visiting Team Report to SUNY New Paltz .....</b>	<b>311</b>
<b>H. SUNY New Paltz Organizational Chart .....</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>I. URL for Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs .....</b>	<b>332</b>

## **Section 1**

### **Executive Summary**

#### *Introduction and mission*

SUNY New Paltz is a comprehensive, Master's level college, one of the 65 campuses of the State University of New York system. The college is located in scenic New Paltz, situated halfway between Albany and New York City and nestled in the shadows of the Shawangunk Mountains. In the proud tradition of SUNY, the State University of New York at New Paltz's mission reflects a commitment to providing high quality, affordable education to students from all social and economic backgrounds. We are a faculty and campus community dedicated to the construction of a vibrant intellectual/creative public forum, which reflects and celebrates the diversity of our society and encourages and supports active participation in scholarly and artistic activity. SUNY New Paltz is an active contributor to the schools, community institutions and economic/cultural life of our region. We are selective in admitting students who show promise of thriving in a learning environment, which is challenging, student-centered, and personalized.

Undergraduate enrollment has grown at a slow but steady rate over the past several years and currently approaches 6,500. More influential than the enrollment growth is the increased selectivity the institution has experienced. While many institutions strive to attract far more student applications than can be accepted, New Paltz has attained a level of academic reputation and cost effectiveness that has afforded it that success. Graduate enrollment, which has decreased slightly over the past five years, is approximately 1,200.

SUNY New Paltz is comprised of six academic schools: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Education, the School of Fine and Performing Arts, the School of Science and Engineering, and the multidisciplinary Graduate School. Founded in 1828 as a classics school, New Paltz became a state normal school in 1885 and teacher preparation continues to hold an important role on campus. The NCATE-accredited School of Education grants an average of approximately 400 Master's degrees per year, and has several hundred undergraduates in teacher certification preparation programs. Because liberal arts education is a foundation of the SUNY New Paltz mission, all education students have long been required to complete a major in an academic discipline and most students do so through our distinguished College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The largest School on campus, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, has more than 2,000 undergraduates and approximately 200 graduate students enrolled in more than 22 academic departments and programs.

Our School of Fine and Performing Arts is nationally recognized and accredited, and offers a variety of graduate and undergraduate degrees in art, art education, art history, music and theatre arts. The school is the home of the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, as well as the renowned Piano Summer Institute and Festival under the direction of Vladimir Feltsman. The School of Science and Engineering offers students opportunities for collaborative research with distinguished faculty in a range of physical sciences and engineering. The school is quite involved in advocacy and environmental efforts in the Mid-Hudson community. Finally, the School of Business, with about 850 students, has grown in both size and reputation, and is currently working toward national accreditation. The school has extensive involvement with the

business community and extra-curricular activities help to develop the skills needed to prepare students for today's business environment.

The Graduate School encompasses study in each of the schools and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Graduate study at New Paltz is rigorous and respected. New Paltz granted more than 500 advanced degrees last year, however, there is room for some enrollment growth in the institution's graduate programs. More than 60% of our graduate students are in the School of Education. We now offer advanced degree programs in 22 subject areas as well as two post-master's certificates of advanced study for school administrators.

As a residential campus—about half of the college's undergraduates reside on campus—the college offers a variety of student programming and extra-curricular activities. Known for having a diverse student body, the college was an early leader in international education. New Paltz has more foreign students attending classes here and more New Paltz students studying abroad than any other SUNY college. The campus was also an early leader in recruiting and graduating significant numbers of minority students. Another hallmark of the campus is its numerous articulation agreements with nearby community colleges.

### *Structures*

The college is governed, as all SUNY campuses are, by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York and is supported by System Administration in Albany. A local College Council is comprised of nine members appointed by the governor, plus the president of the Student Association, and ex-officio faculty and ex-officio alumni representatives. The Council has the authority to conduct presidential searches and recommend presidential candidates to the SUNY Chancellor and the Board of Trustees. The Council also approves regulations regarding student conduct and the naming of buildings and grounds.

The college president has a Cabinet consisting of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Administration and Finance, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and the Executive Assistant to the President, which makes managerial decisions for the campus.

New Paltz has an active system of Faculty Governance, which addresses matters of faculty organization, tenure and reappointment, promotion and salary increases, personnel and grievances. The Academic Senate receives reports from its standing committees, committees of the Academic Senate, the President of the College, SUNY Senators, and the Presiding Officer of the Faculty, and, where necessary, acts upon them.

Student Government on campus is the responsibility of the Student Association. Funded by the mandatory activity fee, the Student Association operates an annual budget of \$1.3 million, which supports extracurricular programming, about 140 student organizations, campus events and field trips. The Residence Hall Student Association is a representative body that provides resident input into all phases of residence hall life. Through RHSA, residents work together to program activities, have a voice in the University administration, and recommend changes in residence hall policies.

Two structures provide financial support to the campus. The SUNY New Paltz Foundation, founded in 1976, raises private contributions from alumni, friends and corporations. Campus Auxiliary Services (CAS) is a nonprofit corporation that provides major services on campus, including dining services, the campus bookstore, ID cards, vending, laundry, cable, rentals and conference services. All CAS profits are returned to the students through capital improvements, programming and scholarships.

### *Preparation of the Periodic Review Report*

This Periodic Review Report has been a collaborative effort between leaders of the administration, particularly those responsible for areas highlighted in the PRR guidelines, faculty and administrative members of the College Wide Assessment Advisory Committee, representatives from the last Middle States Self Study steering team, the Presiding Officer of the Faculty and the Executive Assistant to the Provost. PRR steering committee members were:

Kristen Bachaus, Associate Professor of Business  
Mary Beth Collier, Executive Assistant to the Provost  
Johanna D'Aleo, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Laurel Garrick Duhaney, Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School  
L. David Eaton, Vice President for Enrollment Management  
David Lavalley, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, PRR Chairperson  
Kelli Parmley, Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning  
David Rooney, Vice President for Student Affairs  
John Vanderlippe, Chair of the Faculty Governance  
Shelly Wright, Executive Assistant to the President

Information and feedback was gathered from a variety of appropriate offices on campus, such as Institutional Research and Planning, Information Technology, University Police, Residence Life and Admissions. The appendices have been collected from previous planning documents, committee reports, and financial statements. A draft copy of this Periodic Review Report was posted on the campus web portal, *my.newpaltz.edu*, for comment from faculty, students, administrators and staff.

### *Highlights of the PRR:*

Since the decennial accreditation, New Paltz has continued to increase in selectivity and, to a lesser extent, in enrollment. President Roger Bowen resigned in September 2001 and Steven G. Poskanzer, initially serving as Interim President, was named to the presidency in May of 2003. Although New Paltz continues to be a vibrant and evolving campus community, no changes have been made which would compromise the College's ability to meet the accreditation standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Detailed discussion of the changes, challenges and opportunities ahead for SUNY New Paltz is included in this Periodic Review Report.

Section 2 of this report outlines SUNY New Paltz' responses to recommendations from the last decennial self study and Middle States team visit. The primary concern identified by the visiting team was the college's assessment efforts, which were limited and uncoordinated. A new

associate provost position was created in the Office of Academic Affairs to coordinate and strengthen assessment across academic departments, the general education program and in academic support units. This individual has responsibility for helping to define, plan, develop, and oversee assessment efforts and she works closely with a broad range of academic administrators, faculty, committees and support staff.

After extensive and collaborative efforts here on campus, New Paltz had its comprehensive assessment plan for General Education approved by the SUNY System Administration General Education Assessment Review board in the spring of 2005. These and other college assessment programs fall under the purview of the Associate Provost, who offers consultation, guidance and resources in support of assessment. Each academic department at the college now has an assessment plan in place and assessment measurements are underway, albeit at varying levels of development. Each academic program must submit a program review to SUNY System Administration every five years that includes a description of assessment findings and resulting program modifications. Additionally, 14 academic programs are accredited by professional organizations in their discipline, each of which requires assessment as part of their extensive accreditation procedures. Descriptions of all departmental assessment programs are included in Section 5 of this report.

As is the case with any campus that is embarking on the implementation of a comprehensive approach to assessment, there are areas where additional progress needs to be made. New Paltz is aware that its efforts to develop a culture of assessment and a more formalized assessment reporting structure must be continued. Overall, much progress has been made in assessing student learning outcomes and the use of assessment data has been a key factor in several academic and student affairs initiatives on campus.

Section 2 also discusses progress made in addressing other recommendations from the decennial accreditation process. Excellent progress that has been made in increasing the diversity of its faculty, a recommendation made by the visiting team. New full-time faculty hired between 2000 and 2005 were 53 % female and 21% were of non-Caucasian origin. This has brought the representation of women on the full-time faculty to 47%, a 12% increase since 2000, and the representation of non-Caucasian faculty members to 17.5%, an increase of 36% over the 2000 level. Not reflected in these numbers are five African American scholars who have accepted positions on the faculty for the upcoming year. In response to accreditation recommendations, New Paltz has developed a strategic plan for information technology, made the college catalog more comprehensive and more user-friendly, and has expanded opportunities for student research, honors experiences and financial support.

Section 3 of this PRR explores the challenges and opportunities ahead for SUNY New Paltz. Since the last Middle States visit in 2001, New Paltz has continued to enjoy a rise in undergraduate applications and a commensurate increase in selectivity. While this creates an enviable opportunity for the college, one that has come to New Paltz through widespread effort and distinction, it also creates some challenges. To continue this path, we must develop and maintain high quality facilities, technological resources, student support services and, perhaps most importantly, faculty. New Paltz has, as a cost saving strategy during difficult financial periods, developed an over-reliance on part-time faculty. The institution must improve the full-time faculty ratio and increase students' access to advisement, mentoring and research

opportunities. Additionally, we must improve student graduation rates to a level more appropriate to the caliber of students admitted. In addition to more faculty and careful departmental planning, this will require enhanced advisement and information technology. New Paltz is in the early stages of a Banner software implementation to improve administrative communication and efficiency.

As each of these initiatives are costly, it will be important to New Paltz to marshal its resources carefully. Section 4 of this report outlines enrollment and finance trends for the five years since the decennial accreditation and projections for the future. As noted, New Paltz has far surpassed its undergraduate selectivity goals while increasing undergraduate enrollment by 10%. The 2005 freshman class was the most academically prepared class to date. The ratio of full-time to part-time students has changed significantly, shifting sharply toward full-time students. The resulting increased demands on faculty, classroom space, library and other instructional resources, technology, residence halls, food service areas and parking have led New Paltz to operate at capacity. There are no plans for undergraduate growth, although further increases in selectivity are expected. Graduate enrollment, on the other hand, has declined somewhat and is an area targeted for development in the upcoming years.

Financial trends have demonstrated more variability over the past few years, as state appropriated allocations have varied dramatically, even though the overall operating budget approved by our system administration has not varied significantly. In large part, this stems from divergent funding strategies advocated by the governor and the New York State legislature, and how these differences play out politically each year. We are optimistic that a new budget allocation plan within the SUNY system will provide more support to the comprehensive colleges like New Paltz over the next few years, while recognizing the need to expand external funding sources. Salary and utility costs are the areas most likely to increase significantly, although increased staffing costs are somewhat mediated by state subsidization of employee benefits.

The final section of this PRR discusses planning and budgeting processes at SUNY New Paltz. A major planning document for New Paltz is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SUNY System Administration, defining the mission of the institution as well its programs, challenges and initiatives. An interactive project undertaken every five years, the most recent iteration of the MOU is in what we believe to be the final stages of review and approval at the system level and is included in the appendices of this report. Budgeting priorities are linked to the MOU as well as other planning initiatives and assessment data on campus. For example, for the next two or more years, New Paltz plans to increase the size of the full time faculty and strengthen advisement resources as part of a strategy to improve graduation rates. The length of time it takes students to complete their degree has been identified as a concern both in the MOU and in campus outcomes assessment data.

## **Section 2**

### **Response to Recommendations from the 2000-2001 self-study and visit.**

SUNY New Paltz has continued to thrive since the 2000-2001 decennial self-study and visit. Among the college's most prominent characteristics are its strong and growing academic quality; its deep connections to the culture and economy of the Mid-Hudson region; the comprehensiveness of its academic programs; and its diverse student campus community. The many areas in which SUNY New Paltz has developed programs of distinction have enhanced its ability to attract strong and intellectually engaged students and distinguished faculty whose teaching is informed and enhanced by scholarly research and creative endeavors.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE VISITING TEAM**

The 2000-2001 self-study was a collaborative process that helped the institution reflect on its strength, challenges and plans for the future. The visiting team, led by Dr. Sheila Kaplan, President of the Metropolitan State College of Denver, made few recommendations. Those that were made focused primarily on issues of campus assessment process, an area in which New Paltz has been slower than many campuses to formalize its processes. Those recommendations, as well as the visiting team's recommendations on increasing faculty diversity, planning for technological growth, and institutional effectiveness are addressed below. We believe that significant and influential progress has been made in most of the areas of concern identified by the visiting team, and submit this report with a commitment to further improvement and continued excellence.

### **OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

The 2001 Middle States Decennial team report made the following recommendations pertaining to assessment endeavors at SUNY New Paltz:

- *Appoint a staff member to help define, plan, develop, coordinate, and oversee assessment efforts to keep moving the process forward*
- *Develop and implement a comprehensive outcomes assessment plan*
- *Design a clear structure for the reporting and use of assessment data to monitor and improve academic and student affairs programs*
- *Relate assessment to the establishment of institutional budget allocations*

While each of these areas is addressed in detail in Section 5 of our Periodic Review Report, a summary response to each of these recommendations follows.

- *Appoint a staff member to help define, plan, develop, coordinate, and oversee assessment efforts to keep moving the process forward*

SUNY New Paltz recognized and concurred with the visiting team on the advantages inherent in having one person to serve as the coordinator of campus assessment efforts, particularly if that person was in a position of institutional leadership. A new associate provost position was created in the Office of Academic Affairs to coordinate and strengthen assessment across academic departments, the general education program and in academic support units. The position has been filled since spring of 2004 and the incumbent has made significant progress in guiding assessment efforts within the academic areas of the institution. This individual has responsibility for helping to define, plan, develop, and oversee assessment efforts and works closely with a broad range of academic administrators, faculty, committees and support staff. In particular, she works closely with the College Wide Assessment Advisory Council, the General Education Board (a sub-group of the Curriculum Committee) and with the Deans and Associate Deans of each of the five schools within SUNY New Paltz.

The Associate Provost also maintains an active relationship with SUNY System Administration, which has significant expectations for programmatic and general education assessment efforts on all SUNY campuses. New Paltz had its comprehensive assessment plan for General Education approved in the spring of 2005 after extensive and collaborative efforts here on campus. Each academic department at the college now has an assessment plan in place and assessment measurements are underway, albeit at varying levels of development. These and other college assessment programs fall under the purview of the Associate Provost, who offers consultation, guidance and resources in support of assessment.

- *Develop and implement a comprehensive outcomes assessment plan*

Following the decennial self study and the 2001 visiting team report, President Steven G. Poskanzer convened an Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) with the explicit goal of developing a proposal for “a campus-wide assessment plan and process that ‘makes sense’ for New Paltz - that is rigorous, thoughtful, and reflective and supportive of our campus culture and needs.” The ASC proposed a set of recommendations, approved by faculty governance in spring of 2003, which included significant attention to assessment at the institutional level, helping the institution to identify strategic objectives and action plans for change.. The full report of the Assessment Steering Committee can be found at <http://www.newpaltz.edu/assessment/documents.html>.

The Committee’s recommendations covered four main areas: (1) the identification of principles, goals, processes, and mechanisms for implementing assessment in administrative and academic support units; (2) establishment of a campus-wide body to monitor overall campus progress in implementing a culture of assessment; and (3 and 4) establishing and measuring student learning outcomes in the major and in General Education (GE). Each of these is discussed briefly below, with reference to where in the full report the goal is addressed in detail. The college’s progress in implementing this comprehensive approach to assessment is described in further detail in Section 5 of this report.

1. Develop a Plan for Administrative & Academic Support Assessment
2. Establishment of a campus-wide body to monitor overall campus progress in implementing a culture of assessment

The ASC recommended that the president establish a short-term assessment committee to develop, facilitate, and coordinate assessment efforts in academic and administrative support units until such assessment processes were fully established and self-sustaining. This group, the Administrative Assessment Support Committee (AASC), included representatives of a number of major administrative offices on campus and received assessment training primarily through the Office of Institutional Research.

Training programs and consultation were subsequently provided for administrative and academic support offices across campus, better enabling them to create an assessment plan for their own programs. AASC provided feedback to about a dozen of these assessment plans and these departments were encouraged to collect data and communicate their findings to their supervising vice presidents. The Sojourner Truth Library, for example, has collected significant amounts of data and incorporated their findings into programmatic changes such as an increased investment in online database resources.

In part due to temporary but extended staffing shortages in Institutional Research and in part because this committee had been intended as a short-term resource, the committee has not met in 2006. At this writing, vice presidents of the college are supervising administrative assessment efforts for departments that report to them. These efforts remain an area in need of attention and development, but significant improvements have been made.

### 3. Develop a General Education Assessment Plan

A SUNY New Paltz General Education Board, a sub-committee of the faculty governance Curriculum Committee, was constituted in May 2002 following approval of our “GE III” program. The ASC recommended that the GE Board develop an assessment plan for presentation to faculty governance early in the Spring 2003 semester. This plan was developed and approved not only by the faculty at SUNY New Paltz but by the SUNY System General Education Assessment Review group in the spring of 2005. More information about the assessment of general education is included in Section 5 of this report.

### 4. Implement an Assessment Process in the Academic Major and Program

The ASC recommended that the president charge the provost and the deans with implementing an assessment process within each of the Schools. Departmental assessment plans have been submitted as part of the departmental annual reports in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and each school has been involved in creating meaningful assessments of student learning outcomes as part of their regular operations. A summary of these efforts is included in Chapter 5 of this report. However, SUNY New Paltz recognizes that this is the area of assessment in need of most improvement on campus. At the first faculty meeting for the 2005-2006 academic year, President Steven G. Poskanzer noted that creating a culture of assessment with faculty as its champions must be a focal effort for New Paltz. Assessment of student learning outcomes remains a work in progress on campus.

- *Design a clear structure for the reporting and use of assessment data to monitor and improve academic and student affairs programs.*
- *Relate assessment to the establishment of institutional budget allocations.*

As is the case with any campus that is embarking on the implementation of a comprehensive approach to assessment, there are areas where additional progress must be made. New Paltz is aware that its efforts to achieve these goals need to be continued. Progress has been made, however, and use of assessment data has been a key factor in several academic and student affairs initiatives on campus.

Because the assessment process is in a developmental stage at SUNY New Paltz, we felt the best approach would be to utilize standardized survey instruments that measure student expectations, experiences and satisfaction across a broad range of the college's programs and utilize the results to target further analysis and action. We administered the College Student Expectation Questionnaire (CSXQ) to incoming students for the Fall 2004 semester. We are in the process of administering a related survey, the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) this semester. Additionally, we are administering the SUNY Student Opinion Survey, an assessment instrument required every three years for all SUNY institutions. These instruments will allow us not only to get a sense of students' intentions and expectations for their studies at SUNY New Paltz, but also how well we are meeting those expectations. Considered to be reliable instruments for measuring educational practices that affect student outcomes, the CSEQ and the CSXQ address student behaviors, campus environment, facilities, services and instructional issues. Those areas where we do not find alignment will be targeted for further assessment and action as appropriate.

One key area in which we already have identified problems, both based on CSXQ and our own ongoing assessment efforts, is in the length of time it takes students to complete their degrees. From the CSXQ, we know that most students, rather unsurprisingly, enter the college expecting to complete their degree in four years. This has only happened for approximately one third of our students. Both SUNY New Paltz and SUNY System Administration have identified this as an issue for concern. We have been focusing considerable assessment energy into exploring the factors associated with a longer time to degree completion.

Some of the most influential assessment data on graduation rates have been developed through collaborative relationships between the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, Information Technology, and Records and Registration. In the past two years, we have conducted a thorough analysis of the enrollment, retention, time to degree and graduation deficiencies of two cohorts of entering students. Significant contributing variables include the number of credits accumulated before a student declares a major, advisement issues, certain general education and major requirements, and characteristics of freshmen students upon initial enrollment.

The initial findings from this broad assessment have been the basis of numerous campus discussions, policy initiatives and have been used to focus additional assessment efforts. The Academic Affairs Committee of the faculty governance structure, the Academic Deans, and the Academic Affairs office under the Provost's leadership are working collaboratively to revise policies and practices related to increasing graduation rates. Resources have been allocated to enhance the tools available to advisors and students, such as an improved degree audit system that better manages transfer courses and an interactive, web-based college catalog.

We have conducted an initial review of specific factors cited for students' graduation deficiencies: degree requirements that were incomplete at the point at which students thought they had all requirements completed. This has given us some ideas about problems in the tools and processes for student advisement. We have allocated money to improve the computer support for transfer evaluation and are conducting further analyses to see where else that we may improve the advisement process.

Assessment has also been closely tied to resource allocation in terms of faculty hiring. New faculty lines are allocated specifically to those areas where the data indicates high need: to increase the availability and array of General Education courses and in departments where a disproportionate number of core courses were being taught by adjunct instructors. An insufficient ratio of full time faculty in a department has also been associated, both here at New Paltz and in the national research literature, with reduced time and effectiveness of the faculty advisement individual students receive, potentially affecting the length of time it takes them to graduate. In his state of the campus address for the current academic year, President Poskanzer set hiring more full time faculty as a high priority for SUNY New Paltz. We are beginning involvement in the *Delaware Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity* and will be using data on course distribution, enrollment and expenditures to help guide future academic budget expenditures.

Student Affairs, a comprehensive array of student services and co-curricular educational programs, has been increasing not only its systematic collection of assessment data but also their implications for further study and action. The major standardized assessment tools we use, such as the SUNY System Student Opinion Survey and the CSEQ, focus heavily on residence life, student support services and other co-curricular aspect of students' experiences at the college. The results of these instruments, administered approximately every three years, are given careful attention by Student Affairs leaders and, again, are used to inform and leverage further assessment and campus changes. The college's internships and career advisement services, along with issues pertaining to intramurals, fitness and wellness facilities, have been identified as pressing concerns. In both of these areas, staff levels were increased with the specific charge of increasing opportunities for student engagement. Student Affairs departments continue to assess student needs, expectations and outcomes and make use of that information for planning and budget allocation.

### INCREASING FACULTY DIVERSITY

Recommendation:

***“The college and the Middle States Steering Committee have developed a list of possible new strategies for recruiting minority faculty. These and other initiatives must be developed and implemented and New Paltz needs to continue to try to increase minority representation in the faculty.”***

## New Faculty Hires

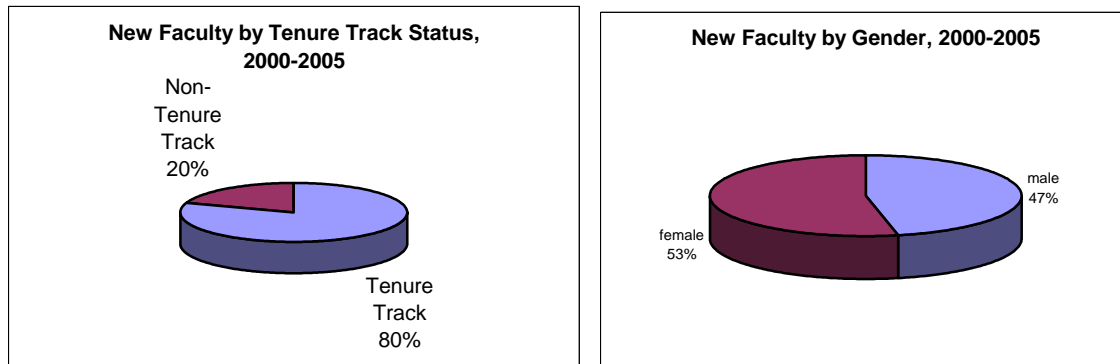
In the five years since our Middle States visit, SUNY New Paltz has put in place several initiatives to enhance faculty diversity. These actions have included increased training for search committees, targeted faculty lines to encourage departmental diversity, and funding and support for female and minority faculty members. These initiatives, discussed in more detail below, have helped us achieve a stronger and more diverse faculty.

First, we have instituted an annual meeting of the chairs of all of the departmental search committees at which, in addition to describing our expectations for fair and open searches, we emphasize the importance of achieving a broad, diverse pool of candidates. We continue to provide departments with labels for mailing information to recent and prospective minority and women doctoral recipients in their disciplines as well as listings from *Black Issues in Higher Education* and *Hispanic Outlook* of the graduate schools that produce the largest numbers of minority doctoral recipients. This has resulted in a higher level of diversity among finalist candidates and, as seen below on Chart 2.1, of candidates hired in the past five years.

When the budget has permitted, we have also made an offer to several departments with little diversity and strong student demand that the administration would make a line available if a strong candidate were recruited who would diversify the department. These “diversity searches” have been helpful to a number of academic departments. In some cases, we have also been able to create “target of opportunity” lines when we found ourselves in the enviable situation of having more than one very strong candidate in the interviewing pool. The opportunity to recruit a candidate that would add to faculty diversity has been a strong factor in creating one of these positions.

New full-time faculty hired between the academic years 2000-01 and 2005-06 were 53% female and 21% of non-European origin. SUNY New Paltz competes with competitive colleges and universities across the nation to attract new faculty from a limited pool of minority candidates. We are pleased to note that we have hired five more African American faculty members for the upcoming year; diversity advancement not reflected in the information below. A series of figures comparing results of recruitment over the past five years is presented below.

**Figure 2.1 Demographic characteristics of new faculty, 2000-2005**



**Figure 2.2**

New Faculty Appointments, 2000 - 2005 (based on new, full-time faculty appointments made in the fall semesters of each year)														
DIVERSITY FACTORS	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		totals	
	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
Total	23		23		8		18		18		26		116	
Female	9	39.1%	12	52.2%	6	75.0%	10	55.6%	9	50.0%	16	61.5%	62	53.4%
Non-European	5	21.7%	5	21.7%	0	0.0%	6	33.3%	4	22.2%	4	15.4%	24	20.7%

APPT. TYPE	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		totals	
	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
Total	23		23		8		18		18		26		116	
Tenure Track	19	82.6%	20	87.0%	6	75.0%	16	88.9%	12	66.7%	20	76.9%	93	80.2%
Non-Tenure	4	17.4%	3	13.0%	2	25.0%	2	11.1%	6	33.3%	6	23.1%	23	19.8%

**The Diversity of the Faculty as a Whole**

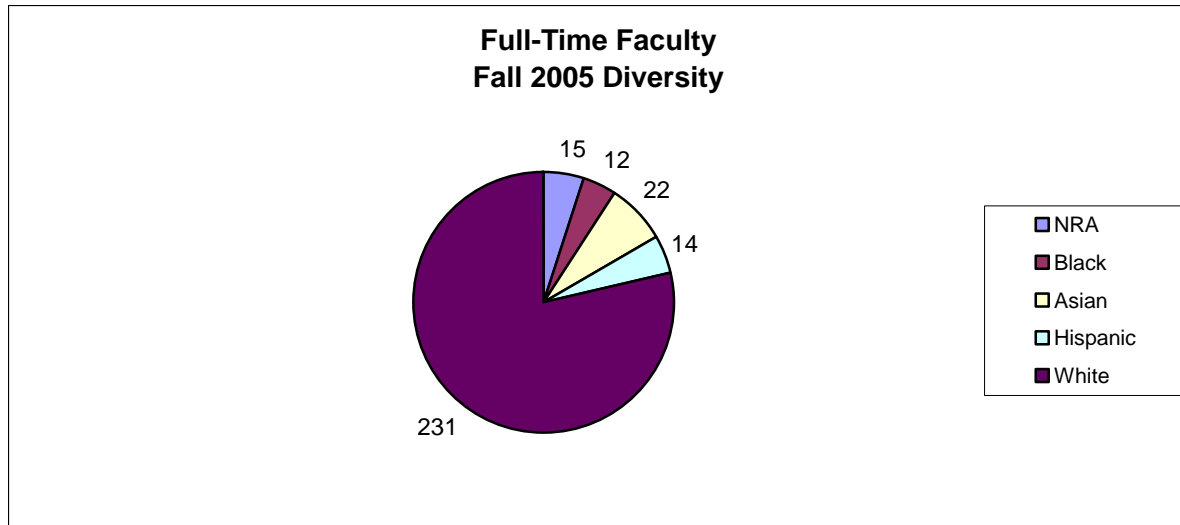
At the time of the last Decennial Self Study in 1999, the percentage of women on the full-time faculty was 41.9%, an increase from 31.7% in 1991. The representation of women has improved significantly, such that women now comprise 47% of the full-time faculty. The ethnic diversity of the faculty has improved as well. In 1999, 13.1% of the full-time faculty was non-Caucasian, as compared to 17.5% in the fall of 2005. The proportion appears even more impressive at 21.4%, if non-resident aliens are included as is required by the federal government for IPEDS faculty diversity reporting.

Professional development for female and minority faculty members is a priority here, as well. SUNY New Paltz is proud to work in collaboration with UUP to actively facilitate and support the Dr. Nuala McGann Drescher Affirmative Action/Diversity Leave Program. Since the last visit, 17 SUNY New Paltz faculty members have been awarded a Drescher leave, a significant portion of the funding for which has been contributed by the college. A number of these recipients have also received supplemental funding to cover research and creative activities not funded through the Drescher program. New Paltz faculty members continue to receive a disproportional number of the Drescher awards. Although eligible faculty from all 64 UUP campuses in New York State may apply, 12% of the awards last year went to New Paltz employees. We believe that this success, which is similar or even somewhat reduced from that

achieved other years, stems in large part from the collaborative effort, care and efficiency afforded Drescher application preparations here on campus.

We are happy to have shown significant success in diversifying our faculty over the relatively brief time since the last Decennial visit. We are keenly aware that there is more work to be done toward this important institutional goal, as developing a diverse faculty and student body is a vital component of the SUNY New Paltz mission. We remain committed to further efforts and success in the future.

**Figure 2.3**



## TECHNOLOGY

### Recommendation:

***A comprehensive strategic plan for the area of technology needs to be developed. In particular, the plan needs to address staffing, space, infrastructure, funding, and assessment in terms of need, impact and utility; and it needs to provide for consultative decision making. Finally, a senior level administrator needs to coordinate and oversee this most important enterprise.***

Shortly after the last Middle States visit, the department of Instructional Technology and Information Systems developed a comprehensive strategic plan. A copy of this plan has been included in the appendices section of this report. Tied closely to the mission and planning process of the college as a whole, the plan addresses the manners in which instructional technology, media services, and information systems can best contribute to the efficient and effective operation of the academic and administrative functions of the campus. Highlights of the strategic plan and critical ensuing developments follow:

- A senior administrator, the Assistant Vice President for Technology and Information Systems, has been vested with considerable authority and responsibility for this area.

The Strategic Plan cited network support and database administration as two areas requiring additional staff support. These have been addressed. Since the report was written there has been continued growth in the use of technology, especially in support of instruction. Additional staff has been added, predominantly in academic support areas to keep pace with the growth in student labs and the deployment of instructional technology. Administrative systems and the help desk have required additional personnel, as well.

- A critical goal identified in the Strategic Plan was to provide effective, efficient and accessible administrative systems. A major initiative launched in response was the development of a campus information portal called *my.newpaltz.edu*. This portal enables students, faculty and administrators access to personalized information and is integrated with our administrative system, e-mail and other web-based services. It has been widely used and well received.
- The Strategic Plan also identified a need to monitor the capabilities of peer campuses within SUNY to determine whether maintaining our legacy administration system puts us at a disadvantage. Increasing encouragement and financial incentives from SUNY System Administration has kept this issue in the forefront. After a great deal of discussion with campus administrators and end-users at all levels, the decision was made to convert to the Banner system. Banner implementation is underway and is a uniquely collaborative, consultative process. A number of representative work groups have been established to determine address the needs of each of the major administrative area. They are charged with examining our administrative processes and defining the myriad of validation tables and rules within the new system that will define how we operate. The Banner system is highly integrated and has been designed to facilitate a well disciplined and coordinated delivery of services. We have opted to expand beyond the base system to include packages to support workflow, end user reporting and close integration with a state of the art campus portal system.
- The increase in staffing to support academic computing reflects our increased use of educational technology. SUNY New Paltz is aggressively pursuing a schedule for introducing and maintaining classroom technology, including the introduction of additional smart classrooms every year and a schedule for replacing classroom technology and computer labs on a regular basis. Currently one-half of classrooms are equipped with network connectivity and instructor workstations with projection capability. The other classrooms are served with mobile equipment. With the renovation of key academic buildings, some of which are completed and some anticipated for 2010, over 75% of classrooms will be electronic. While fewer than 10% of classrooms are equipped with individual student workstations, this number is more than enough to satisfy instructor requests for such rooms. In addition, SUNY New Paltz has adopted the Blackboard platform and automatically enrolls every student and every course. Blackboard is heavily used across the curriculum and we are building onto this base with the addition of a Content Management system this fall. At this point, we estimate that close to 80% of faculty are utilizing Blackboard for discussions, posting of course materials and announcements. Resources to support these efforts (staff, hardware and specialized software) are funded primarily through the student technology fee funds and institutional budget allocations. The Student Computer Access Program supports our

most innovative projects and this faculty committee is charged with making consultative decisions on how these resources will be distributed.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

### Recommendation:

***New Paltz should publish the institutional mission statement with the college catalog.***

The college catalog is now published online, in both .pdf and web-based format. The institutional mission statement is included as a link, along with other important academic policies and advising procedures. The next online version of the catalog, to be unveiled this summer, will be highly interactive and will allow users to move back and forth freely between academic policies, program descriptions and requirements, advising information, course availability and departmental web pages. A print version will be available for accreditation agencies, our international partner universities and the like.

### Recommendation:

***The SUNY Board should revisit the enabling SED statute after a formal review of the work of the College Councils throughout the State. Barring that occurrence, it should provide guidance to Presidents on the extent to which information should be shared with the Council and to the Council members on the balance between oversight and micromanagement.***

At the time of the last report, there was a much more fractious relationship between the System, the campus and the College Council. Today, there is a completely different dynamic and almost all of the principles in this conflict are no longer in the same positions. Whereas the college has limited ability to influence the SUNY Board's review processes, we do feel that New Paltz has moved to a more appropriate and beneficial relationship with its College Council.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SELF-STUDY: MIDDLE STATES STEERING COMMITTEE, 2000 – 2001**

### **EXPAND ACCESS TO AND AWARENESS OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES.**

- ***To maintain current programs and develop new ones that enhance the diversity of the student population and encourage interactions among diverse groups of students.***

In the realm of diversity awareness and interaction, the New Paltz campus has enhanced a number of existing programs and developed an array of new programming. We have enhanced the living-learning options on campus to include a residence hall community for the Scholars Mentorship Program. This provides the opportunity to live together in a diverse environment,

schedule classes as a cohort, and maintain close contact with faculty and staff mentors. New Paltz has increased the diversity training that each paraprofessional staff member undergoes prior to assuming a position in the residence halls. This includes training sessions presented by community experts in areas such as cultural awareness, race relations, and disability issues. The Office of Student Development has established programming that encourages and strengthens the collaboration among the wide variety of spiritual student organizations registered on the New Paltz campus. The Disability Resource Center has enhanced its programming on campus to include a student advocacy group that enhances campus knowledge concerning the campus issues that affect students with disabilities.

- ***To maintain current programs and develop new ones that enhance the leadership and service opportunities available to students.***

With respect to leadership development, the opportunities for our students have greatly expanded. In addition to the resident assistant program, Residence Life has created additional positions designed to foster leadership experiences. Community Development Assistant positions are offered to residential students who have an interest in developing and presenting programming to students in the areas of health and wellness, personal safety, stress management, and many other topics. The new night host program provides an opportunity for lower-division students to gain experience in working with residential populations and gain experience for more responsible paraprofessional positions in their future. The Residence Hall Student Association sponsors the STARS (Self, Teamwork, Action, Responsibility, and Skills) Leadership Program each year. This program provides an opportunity for students to meet with student leaders and campus professionals for discussion on a variety of leadership topics.

The Career Resource Center has developed Peer Career Advisor positions wherein students are trained to work with undergraduates throughout campus on major/career choices and placement opportunities. In addition, the Career Resource Center now sponsors Dinner With a Difference, which is an afternoon and evening program dedicated to exposing students to the internship and career opportunities in the not-for-profit sector. Not-for-profit agencies from throughout the region are represented and this event has drawn hundreds of students over the past three years.

The Orientation program has expanded the number of involvement opportunities for students as well. Orientation leaders were once limited to summer terms for their positions. Now, orientation leaders work as mentors to those students whom they met in the summer throughout each student's first year. Students may also choose to become a program assistant in the residence halls over the summer and develop skills in new student relations, facility coordination, and peer mentoring. Our First Year Initiative program now offers a service-learning component that is comprised of a one-credit course that culminates in a volunteer placement in the community.

#### **CREATE PROGRAMS FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL INTELLECTUAL SKILLS.**

- ***To revise the General Education Program (GE II) to conform to the general education mandates of the SUNY Board of Trustees by Fall 2000.***

- ***To review the General Education program (GE IIA) with the dual intent of providing students with a broad-based liberal arts education while allowing them to complete their plan of study and graduate within a realistic and established time frame – with a Fall 2003 target for the implementation of GE III.***

The first two goals for fostering general intellectual skill development focused on the SUNY New Paltz and SUNY Board of Trustees General Education programs, which were both in a state of flux at the time of the self-study. At this writing, SUNY New Paltz is operating under “GE III,” which incorporates the SUNY Trustees’ requirements plus requirements for one additional course each in natural science, foreign language and diversity. Assessment of specific General Education student learning outcomes is discussed in some length in Section 5 of this report. One of the self-study General Education recommendations did raise an area of concern that remains pertinent today: that of the impact of GE on students’ ability to achieve a timely graduation. General Education requirements have been identified as a common reason for graduation deficiencies at New Paltz. We are aware that we are short the number of courses and seats needed in some areas of the General Education curriculum, particularly Mathematics, Science and Diversity. This shortage has been the target of hiring initiatives in some academic departments over the past two years. It continues to be the focus of concern and action by the Provost, the General Education Board and the faculty.

- ***To foster curricular and extra-curricular activities that reflect the diversity of U.S. society, that enhance understanding of the diversity of the campus community and that improve the meaningful and educational interactions of its constituent members.***

SUNY New Paltz has a long history of curricular and co-curricular activities that reflect the importance the college community places on diversity. As noted above, the faculty has designed a curriculum of General Education requirements that include taking one of approximately 20 courses specifically addressing diversity issues in the United States. In addition to these courses, New Paltz offers major and elective courses in many departments that address to varying levels the complex issues of diversity. Academic departments, the Honors Program, the School of Fine and Performing Arts, the Teaching and Learning Center and campus benefactors such as the Resnick Foundation have taken leadership roles in offering a dynamic variety of programs that support appreciation and awareness of diverse cultures.

Student organizations and Student Affairs offices have also actively promoted meaningful programs and opportunities for interactions among diverse campus constituencies, some of which have already been discussed in this report. Since 2001, The CARE (Cultural Awareness Residence Experience) has been active within Residence Life. CARE is a unique living option for students who wish to explore and share their cultural backgrounds. This experience offers students the opportunity to form close relationships with housemates while learning about diverse cultures and traditions. Residence Life has worked closely with the Office of International Programs and Academic Affairs to expand the number of international students at New Paltz and the resources available to support their diverse needs. The dual-diploma program has doubled the number of students from Turkey who study at New Paltz, with a target population of 300 students annually in the near future.

- ***To expand the possibilities for extra-classroom student/faculty learning experiences through mentoring programs.***

The expansion of faculty/student learning experiences outside of the classroom remains a priority for New Paltz and one to which significant resources have been allocated. Since the last decennial review, we have developed an active summer faculty/student research program with approximately \$25,000 a year available as support. This program is in the process of expansion to make another \$75,000 available throughout the academic year. The Faculty Senate has approved the general procedures for implementing this program and will soon guide the selection of someone to lead the office and work with the faculty advisory committee. Funding has been made by the President's Cabinet and will be administered through the Provost's Office.

- ***To continue and expand collaborative efforts of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to provide effective academic support programs that deal with the whole student.***

Collaborative efforts have been particularly evident in New Student Orientation, first year programming and in expanding the academic honors program into a residence hall environment. During the last three years, additional funding was provided to pay faculty advisors to meet with freshmen and transfer students during their Orientation programs. Representative from each school within the college helped students understand the requirements of their programs of study and guided them through the course selection process.

Collaboration among academic departments, faculty, the Offices of Academic Advisement, Student Development and Residence Life have enabled New Paltz to expand programs to ease the transition of first-year students to college life and enhance their education during the initial semester at this campus. These innovative programs include First-Year Interest Groups, living/learning arrangements, and various types of support services.

First-year Interest Groups ("FIGs") refer to small clusters of linked courses, with the same group of students in it. The instructors of these linked courses organize the material they teach around some common themes. FIGs feature collaborative teaching by instructors to reinforce the common themes of their linked courses and cooperative learning by students through their formation of study groups. "Pre-Major" FIGs can help first year students, who already know what field they will study, to develop a rapport with an instructor of that field as they complete the introductory course(s) of their major. "Thematic" FIGs can help first year students, who do not know what field they will study, to complete two categories of General Education as they take courses in different fields of study. The FYI Program is a living/learning community that allows students in particular FIG groups to live together in a residence hall. They have a Resident Mentor living in the hall with them and benefit from conveniently located evening workshops facilitated by faculty and staff.

- ***To support the Honors Center program as a significant aspect of campus strategies to recognize student diversity, to encourage interaction among students and with faculty in a variety of learning situations, and to foster pedagogical innovation.***

As noted above, the Honors Center has hosted a broad range of challenging seminars and lectures that address non-Eurocentric issues and that are open to the entire campus community. A small sample of offerings from the past two years include:

- \* A.J. Williams-Meyers, Black Studies Dept., "*Unearthing the Story of the African-American Burial Ground Through a Novel*"
- \* Elisa Davila, Foreign Languages Dept., "*Un tamal en la serpiente/Tamale in the Snake. Assimilation, Acculturation, or Mexifornia?*"
- \* Kathleen Dowley, Political Science Dept., "*Postcards from the Edge: Revisiting Serbia and the First Orange Revolution*"
- \* Susan Lewis, History Dept., "*Challenging Victorian Stereotypes*"
- \* Alice Wexler, Art Education Department, "*Outsider Art: Its Challenges to Art and Education.*"

Student Affairs has helped create a living/learning experience in one of the newest residence halls, where honors students can live and study together. The Director of the Honors Center has a satellite office in that residence hall. The Honors Center itself is well equipped with computers, study materials and comfortable study space, and a small kitchen area where students may share food, drink and ideas. The budget for the Honors Center has been increased to expand the opportunities for receptions, food and other shared experiences such as the popular weekend retreat to the Ashokan Reservoir in the Catskill Mountains. Faculty/student interaction, seminar and experientially based learning and innovative teaching styles continue to be important features of the Honors Center at New Paltz.

#### **PROVIDE UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CURRICULA OF HIGH QUALITY**

- ***To strengthen the position of the graduate school as a center for graduate professional education.***

New Paltz' commitment to intensifying the Graduate School's position as a center for graduate and professional education is evidenced by its commitment to providing academic programs of excellence that foster student competency and suitability for the workforce. Our graduate and professional programs are multi-faceted, of first-rate quality and are distinguished by national and regional accreditations. In the spring of 2003, our teacher education graduate programs were accredited by NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) with our Educational Leadership programs receiving exemplary recognition by NCATE and by ELCC (Educational Leadership Constituent Council).

SUNY New Paltz' graduate and professional programs are increasing in reputation, as well. Our graduate programs in the School of Fine and Performing Arts - MFA in painting, ceramics, sculpture, metal, photography, and printmaking - have national and international recognition attributable to the quality of the faculty who have international acclaim as outstanding scholars. The programs in science, engineering, and business are highly attractive to candidates from within the region and from overseas. Overall, the number of applications from overseas applicants has increased by 20 percent.

A hallmark of our graduate and professional programs is the high rate of collaboration with professionals in the field to deliver high quality educational opportunities for students. Program administrators and faculty work continuously with school districts, business leaders and other individuals who serve in an advisory capacity in the design and continuous improvement of our graduate programs. These individuals refer their employees and future leaders to our academic programs, provide program sites for cohorts in their respective regions, and participate in the evaluation of our programs. Particular attention is given to program design that can best capitalize on the foundation, strengths, and excellence of our undergraduate programs and that can meet the variety of needs of a regional constituency. These mutually beneficial collaborations promote the success of our graduate and professional programs as well as local business and educational institutions. Some examples of these collaborative programs include:

- Several school districts individually or through their BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) have formed a professional development school/university partnership with New Paltz. This alliance has allowed school districts to develop a cohort of prepared leaders with credentials tailored to the specific needs of each district or region.
- The educational leadership programs at SUNY New Paltz and at SUNY Albany are both enhanced by a partnership between these two institutions. A joint school leadership doctoral program with the University at Albany facilitates the transition of our CAS candidates into a doctoral degree program and into higher degree programs. It also services a great need for individuals in the Hudson Valley region who desire to pursue doctoral studies in this area.
- SUNY Buffalo intends to offer a Ph.D. in Nursing and beginning in fall 2006 plans to use New Paltz as a distance-learning site.
- New Paltz has a National Center for Music Therapy in End-of Life Care that is dedicated to providing music therapists with a dynamic educational experience to prepare them to serve individuals with a terminal illness and their families through the continuum of end-of-life and bereavement. Music therapists who complete the center's coursework earn a certificate in end-of-life care in music therapy and CMTE (Certification Board for Music Therapists) credits.

New Paltz offers a broad range of graduate programs. The more than sixty graduate programs that are offered are necessary to fill regional needs for professionals in education, liberal arts and sciences, engineering, computer sciences, nursing, communication disorders, and fine and performing arts. In addition, we offer a breadth of graduate programs because we are the only four-year graduate public institution of higher education between Albany and New York City in the Hudson Valley corridor.

- *To enhance the availability of financial support for graduate students.*

Although the level of such financial support to students is limited, we continue to explore funding opportunities to increase the amount of financial support available to students. For example, a Graduate School staff member received training in the use of the SPIN and SMART databases to assist graduate students with information about funding opportunities in a particular discipline. Other funding that we offer students includes:

- Graduate/Teaching assistantships are offered to a significant number of students. These students receive both a stipend and a tuition waiver. Sixty students serve as

- teaching assistants or graduate assistants. A small number of graduate students receive fellowships that allow them to waive six credits of their tuition.
- Sojourner Truth Fellowships are available to outstanding full-time graduate students from traditionally underrepresented groups. Our current annual allocation for this fellowship is \$75,000.
  - Graduate Opportunity Waivers are available to students who were part of undergraduate EOP or HEOP program. The current allocation for this fellowship is \$86,552.
  - The Graduate Students Research and Creative Projects Awards, instituted in 1999, provide modest support to graduate students for their research and creative projects.
  - A few graduate students serve as fellows on research grants administered by the Research Foundation.

The Graduate School has been working hard to expand financial support for graduate students, and will continue these efforts in the future.

- *To explore the question of the constituency of the Graduate Faculty.*

After considerable discussion by the faculty, the following was approved by vote to constitute the membership of the Graduate Faculty:

Members of the Graduate Faculty shall be teaching faculty who hold the academic rank of full professor, associate professor, or assistant professor and have earned a doctoral degree in the field of their major teaching responsibilities; or have other terminal degrees in the field in which they teach. At the recommendation of the Graduate Council and the Dean of the Graduate School, other teaching faculty or professional staff who have demonstrated in other widely recognized ways, their special competency in the field in which they direct graduate students also may be granted membership with the approval of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President of SUNY New Paltz.

A very active Graduate Council assists the Dean of the Graduate School with Graduate Faculty responsibilities. The Council reviews and makes recommendations regarding admissions, curriculum including new programs or major alterations to existing programs, academic standards and appeals, matters pertaining to Graduate Faculty membership and research and service functions at the graduate level. When requested by the Dean of the Graduate School, the Graduate Council also shall consider and make recommendations on administrative matters and matters of general policy.

#### **SUPPORT CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY WITH LIBRARY AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES.**

- *To actively engage the library, its staff and resources, in the curriculum and pedagogy of the campus, primarily but not exclusively through a program of Information Mastery.*

Librarians are actively included in the planning process for new programs and often consulted in the development of course content and assignments. This involvement takes place in a number

of ways. The collection development librarian serves as a permanent member of the Curriculum Committee to review new course proposals, as well as to ensure the adequacy and availability of library resources to support the proposed courses. The Library Liaison program, implemented in 2001, was designed to enhance communication with academic departments. A liaison librarian provides regular updates of new or changing library resources and services for a specific discipline and brings back recommendations and questions from the department back to the library. Currently, a total of 31 departments and programs have been assigned a liaison librarian. As a member of the Council of Deans, the library director attends monthly meetings of the Council, where changes in academic programs and campus policies are discussed. She shares such information promptly with the library faculty so library programs will be adjusted accordingly.

- *To provide technology resources adequate to support the undergraduate and graduate curricula.*

This has been addressed earlier in this report and in the technology strategic plan, which has been included in the appendices section of this document.

#### **DEVELOP INSTITUTION-WIDE ASSESSMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**

- *To continue and improve existing general academic assessment programs.*
- *To continue and improve existing general academic support assessment programs.*
- *To continue and improve existing general student life/campus environment assessment programs.*
- *To continue and improve existing general enrollment management assessment programs.*
- *To foster educational outcomes assessment strategies that are appropriate to individual academic programs.*
- *To create a program of educational outcomes assessment for all graduate programs that are not individually accredited.*
- *To review, and where possible implement, institutional policies that may encourage the development of a comprehensive educational outcomes assessment program.*

These recommendations were also made by the visiting team and have been addressed earlier in this report. They are addressed in detail in Section 5 of this report.

#### **CREATE EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES.**

- *To foster a campus governance system that is appropriately involved in campus decision-making and is an effective means of communication within the campus community.*

Organizational communication could always bear improvement and SUNY New Paltz is no exception. Technology has been an invaluable tool as constituencies on this campus have worked to enhance communication. Administrators and faculty governance groups routinely

post minutes, agendas and reports online in preparation for effective meetings. Formerly, these materials had been available in hard copy in the Library, making access more limited and laborious. Major campus planning documents are also posted online, allowing for broader review, commentary and input. A key example of this process is the Memorandum of Understanding (the interactive “mission review” process done with SUNY System Administration every five years). Information and ideas from across campus constituencies went into the recent iteration of the MOU, making it a challenging and collaborative project.

Regularly scheduled meetings and discussions occur between the President, Provost, faculty governance leaders, union officials and student association representatives. When a concern arises, it is not uncommon for differing constituencies to meet for an exchange of ideas or suggestions. It is also not uncommon for these constituencies to feel frustrated with each other and their respective levels of communication and influence. New Paltz has been in a period of significant change over the past several years, which has placed a commensurate level of stress on the relationship between some stakeholder groups. Yet it is not incorrect to say that effective communication has improved and continues to be a priority across the campus community.

#### **PROVIDE PHYSICAL FACILITIES THAT ENHANCE CAMPUS PROGRAMS.**

- *To establish a secure campus that is supportive of a student/learning centered community, on which the potential for crimes against individuals and property is reduced and where conditions that enhance personal safety are preserved and improved.*

The University Police Department and Student Affairs departments offer a number of educational programs in the Residence Halls addressing topics such as domestic and relationship violence, Operation ID, Stop DWI / Drunk Busters, date rape and club drug prevention programming, “Face Book & Cyber Stalking 101” and identity theft. The Police Department also offers “R.A.D.,” a women’s self defense course several times a semester for students and twice a year for faculty and staff, and plans to expand this programming in the fall of 2006 to include other groups and techniques. The Police Department also runs a student escort service that runs from 9-2am whenever classes are in session. Students may call for an escort anywhere on campus.

One of the most successful initiatives has been the “Park, Walk and Talk” program, established in 2004. Through this program, all campus police officers are expected to get out of their vehicles and walk designated areas and residence halls, to encourage better communication with students and a more obvious presence on campus. We have seen a decrease in reported crime since implementing all of the above programs, with reported burglaries dropping consistently over the past three years.

## Section 3 Challenges and Opportunities

SUNY New Paltz is a dynamic institution, positioned well to face both the challenges and the opportunities ahead of it. Since the last Middle States visit in 2001, New Paltz has continued to enjoy a rise in undergraduate applications and a commensurate increase in selectivity. While this is an enviable position for a college, and one that has come to New Paltz through tremendous and widespread effort and distinction, it also creates some challenges. To continue this path, we must develop and maintain high quality facilities, technology, student support services and, perhaps most importantly, faculty. As each of these facets can be costly, it will be important for New Paltz to marshal its resources carefully. The following section of this report addresses in detail several inter-related major challenges and opportunities, including:

- Maximizing the opportunities inherent in our increased reputation and selectivity
- Improving the full-time faculty ratio and increasing students' access to advisement, mentoring and research opportunities
- Improving student graduation rates
- Developing a stronger culture of assessment on campus
- Enhancing information technology and campus facilities to meet evolving instructional, administrative and student needs
- Broadening institutional development and funding sources

### MAXIMIZING THE OPPORTUNITIES INHERENT IN OUR INCREASED REPUTATION AND SELECTIVITY

For nearly 180 years, New Paltz has striven to be an innovative teaching and learning institution committed to excellence and diversity, and these core values will be sustained into the future. The College ranks tenth among best public universities (and 50<sup>th</sup> among public and private universities) in the North in *U.S. News and World Report's* rankings for *America's Best Colleges 2005*, and was named one of best 151 schools out of 718 in *Princeton Review's* 2005 student opinion survey of colleges in the Northeast. The College is the second-largest employer in Ulster County, and infuses \$195 million annually into the region's economy.

#### **Undergraduate admissions: balancing increased selectivity and student body diversity**

##### ***Selectivity***

New Paltz has been very successful in not only achieving but also greatly surpassing its selectivity goals. The 2005 freshman class was the most academically prepared class to date. Six years ago, 59% of our freshmen came from the top two SUNY quality groups, a measure of strong selectivity. This year 94% came from those groups. The mean SAT score for the fall 2005 cohort was 1160, up from 1100 in fall 2000 at the time of our last visit.

New Paltz' ability to exceed its selectivity goals is driven in large measure by the College's increasing popularity. Since 1996, freshman applications have increased by 48%, and in the last

four years, by 28% (from 8,950 to 11,455). The academic quality of the pool has improved significantly. The expected drop in freshman applications as unqualified candidates reacted to rising admission standards has not yet materialized.

New Paltz strives continuously to raise yield rates (prospect-to-applicant and accept-to-enrolled), and has sought to establish realistic and attainable selectivity goals. The campus envisions incremental steps to continue this progress although the pace of improvement will be slowed from that achieved in the last few years. Current levels of state support and local endowments make it very difficult to compete for top students. This argues for SUNY adopting a forward-looking tuition policy that includes, as one element, differential tuition.

### ***Student diversity***

New Paltz is currently operating at capacity in undergraduate enrollments, as was the case at the time of our visit in 2001. The campus is at capacity in terms of what full-time faculty can teach as well as in the facilities. New Paltz also has a strong tradition of diversity within its student population and strives to maintain this diversity in the future. Over the past 20 years, under-represented students have increased from approximately 12% in the early 1980s to an institutional high of 18.7% in fall 2004. Because undergraduate students represent a broader geographic area of origin, the undergraduate population is more diverse than the more regionally-centered graduate school population; approximately 23% of undergraduates are from traditionally under-represented groups, and this level of diversity has remained relatively constant for the past 10 years.

In fall 2004, New Paltz enrolled 76% of all full-time students from its region and almost 17% from the “rest of New York”; the “U.S. Non New York” population was 3.2%, and the international student cohort was 4.1%. In common with the national trend, New Paltz has experienced some shift in gender diversity during the past decade. We are finding that the gender imbalance is exacerbated by rising selectivity for undergraduates; male applicants are less likely to meet more rigorous admissions criteria than their female counterparts. By 2010, New Paltz aspires to accomplish the following:

- 22-24% of undergraduates and 18-20% of all students will be from historically underrepresented groups.
- 90% of full-time students will be from New York State, 5% of full-time students will be from states other than New York and 5% of all full-time students will be international students.
- To engage in meaningful research and to develop and implement strategies to lead us to a more balanced distribution of gender among undergraduate students.

As we increase requirements for admission, we are drawing from a pool of students of color that is the target of vigorous recruiting from schools able to offer much more in the way of financial assistance. We will need to redouble our efforts at recruiting and do our best to ensure that the students we attract have a good experience. Undergraduate admissions recently added a staff member solely dedicated to recruiting minority students.

Our efforts to enroll classes that reflect our state's diversity and to retain those students through graduation include several types of initiatives. The first is our highly successful Educational

Opportunity Program,, which comprises about 550 students overall, about 110 new freshman each year. These students are economically disadvantaged and typically have SAT and high school averages that would be just below our normal acceptance range. By careful advising, tutoring opportunities and mentoring, our program (the second largest in SUNY) boasts graduation percentages at or above those of non-EOP students year after year. Our Multicultural Recruitment Program provides mentoring and support for all students of color throughout their time on campus. We feel that this program is a major factor that puts SUNY New Paltz among a very small number of non-HBCU campuses where black students graduate at a higher rate than do other students.

### **Graduate Admissions: increasing enrollment and attracting well qualified students**

Currently New Paltz' Graduate School has significant growth potential (perhaps as much as 20% by 2010 with additional faculty), largely because of the losses in this cohort over the past two years. The College has since undertaken a careful and comprehensive analysis of program offerings, student needs, and regional demand. Based on this analysis, some graduate programs will be revised and new programs will be added that improve enrollment and maximize existing, financial, and material resources.

New Paltz will respond to new expectations in the teaching profession by offering broad, but not duplicate, master's programs in various teacher education fields. For example, The School of Education expects to add M.S.Ed. programs in Literacy Education with certification in Childhood Special Education; Literacy Education with certification in Adolescence Special Education; Childhood Special Education with certification in Literacy; and Adolescence Special Education with certification in Literacy. The Special Education faculty will also develop a new M.S.Ed. in Early Childhood Special Education. Under exploration is an off-campus Certificate of Advanced Study in School Business Leadership aligned with the current School District Leader program. A needs assessment will be conducted.

In addition, New Paltz will continue to recruit international students, primarily at the graduate level, into programs of interest to that population and where the campus has capacity (for example, Electrical Engineering, Computer Science) and into programs that have traditionally attracted international students (e.g., M.B.A. and M.F.A. programs). Note: over the past five years, the College has established an M.B.A. program with three concentrations and, most recently, a track in Public Accounting.

In 1999, in seeking M.B.A. degree authorization, New Paltz reported that it was in its second year of AACSB pre-accreditation. Because of a number of constraints present in 1999, New Paltz withdrew from the accreditation process. However, with new accreditation standards and strengthened faculty and programs, New Paltz will be entering the pre-accreditation process in late 2006.

### ***Enrollment management plans***

New Paltz is currently involved in a brand marketing initiative that will produce an integrated marketing plan for the institution. A Branding Taskforce was established in spring 2004, and

recruitment strategies for 2005-2010 will be strongly influenced by the activities of the Taskforce. Some examples of recent improvements in undergraduate and graduate student recruitment include: increasing recruitment activity in Northern New Jersey; broadening coverage of the New York City area; enhancing Website resources for applicants; opening a graduate school admission center near the main entrance to the campus; increasing frequency and quality of campus visits by prospective undergraduates; soliciting endowed merit scholarships; and improving the physical appearance of the campus. Furthermore, through reorganization, a new office was developed in the Enrollment Management Division called the On-Campus Recruiting Office. This area will coordinate all activities associated with campus visits, including but not limited to coordinating the activities of and supervising the student ambassadors, managing the fall open house, spring accepted students day, group visits, daily tours and general information sessions, developing a seamless path for prospective students to interact with faculty and academic departments, and ensuring that first impressions of New Paltz are very positive.

## **FACULTY: DEVELOPING A STRONG, FULL-TIME FACULTY AND DECREASING OUR RELIANCE ON PART-TIME FACULTY**

### ***Faculty profile:***

New Paltz currently employs 688 faculty, of which 43% are full-time, 46% are female, and 19% are faculty of color. 19.6% hold the rank of Full Professor; 30.1% are Associate Professors; and 36.5% are Assistant Professors. Almost 14% hold the rank of Lecturer (non tenure-track); New Paltz is now hiring some full-time lecturers where traditionally part-time adjuncts have been hired.

New Paltz notes that over a 20-year period, the College has experienced a decline in the number of full-time faculty and increased reliance on part-time faculty. When budgets have been cut, faculty lines have been particularly vulnerable because of the relatively large turnover each year (for a full-time faculty of about 300, with a 20-year average service period, about 15 faculty leave each year) and the search/replacement period is very long (nearly a year).

Currently about 30% of classes (not including music lessons, student teaching supervision and other atypical types of adjunct appointments) are taught by part-time faculty. Additionally, students are enrolling for a greater number of credits each semester, requiring about 7% more courses for the same number of students over the past five years. To improve the full-time/part-time ratio and address the increasing need for course sections, New Paltz is placing a very high priority on increasing the number of full-time faculty over the next five years.

New Paltz' goal is to have tenure-track faculty coverage of each required sub-disciplinary area in each department and a sufficient number of full-time faculty in large departments to meet the need for advisors for majors and to provide curricular leadership. To determine minimum acceptable levels for each department, the campus has undertaken a retrospective study of number of majors, numbers of students served by each department for General Education, and the number of sub-disciplinary areas taught in each department.

Recruitment efforts have emphasized gender and ethnic diversity as positive factors (over the past five years New Paltz has hired very nearly the same numbers of female and male faculty and about one-quarter of new faculty are of non-European origin). Some departments have seen a large turnover so some faculty members have been hired at the Associate Professor level to provide a range of levels of experience for the department. There was a long period (early 1980's to late 1990's) when very few faculty members were hired. Student enrollments shifted significantly over that period. Therefore, faculty members who have retired or resigned have not always been replaced in the same department. Accreditation requirements have also influenced hiring decisions.

The decision to limit growth at the undergraduate level mitigates the need to develop new majors that would require substantial resources. However, there are opportunities to configure new programs that take advantage of the interests of extant faculty, such as the majors in Asian Studies and in Environmental Geochemical Sciences.

At the graduate level, New Paltz wants to develop new programs to offset significant enrollment declines that have resulted from a number of factors such as changes in certification regulations by the Board of Regents, difficulties foreign students have in obtaining visas, tuition increases and job market fluctuations. Development of new programs will focus on meeting regional needs and on programs in which there is a significant base of existing faculty expertise and for which there appears to be strong demand. For example, the campus is currently exploring the possibility of a master's degree program in guidance counseling that will involve faculty in psychology and in the School of Education. Faculty lines will be added in order to initiate such programs if sufficient funding is available.

Over the past four years, New Paltz has promoted greater equity in workload, and has reduced the number of very large classes (those over 50 students). When hiring new faculty, areas where strong demand has led to class sizes over 35 will be emphasized. "New" faculty lines are and will continue to be, for the most part, replacement lines for faculty who retire or resign. Additional lines can be provided to some extent from the difference in salary between new and departing faculty, but we are seeking greater state support to augment this strategy.

***Hiring and retaining faculty who are serious about both their scholarship and teaching:***

New Paltz faculty must be gifted at and care about their teaching. However, they will also be meaningfully and consistently engaged in scholarship and creative activity that is shared with (and evaluated by) scholars and critics in the broader intellectual community. The pace and volume of such scholarly/creative activity will be more modest than is the case for faculty at a research university, but the quality will still be high.

Given these goals, we have been placed a high value on previous teaching experience when hiring new faculty. It is our practice, for example, to have candidates discuss their teaching philosophy, successes and challenges during their interviews with faculty and academic administrators. In nearly all cases, candidates also present a lesson to a group of students.

Once hired, we encourage regular dialogue about effective pedagogy through the programs of our Teaching and Learning Center, and we provide access to modern teaching technology and to information that helps teachers teach and students learn. Part of our teaching responsibility is

assessing whether students are in fact learning and growing at the high levels envisioned by our curriculum.

As a basis for judging a candidate's potential to contribute on a continuing basis to peer-reviewed intellectual discourse, we do our best to determine their readiness to undertake independent scholarly or creative work. We review each candidate for tenure at least three times through an extensive process and the tenure review itself requires external reviews of the candidate's scholarly and/or creative accomplishments and plans for the future.

Through our faculty's research and creative activity, new knowledge will be created and a richer understanding will emerge of our world and lives. This will raise both the profile and reputation of individual faculty and the stature of the college, which, in turn, enhances our ability to recruit more talented faculty and students.

***Faculty development:***

New Paltz has a number of ongoing programs to encourage research and creative activity and to recognize faculty accomplishments. Some examples are: funds for faculty travel; fellowship leaves (sabbaticals) and pre-tenure research leaves; recognition in the form of appointments (Distinguished Professor, for example); small grants program; and summer research support for projects involving students. The College requires reports on all internally-funded research activities, and faculty members who do not report sufficient progress or activity are unlikely to receive further support.

For the future, New Paltz hopes to do more to support and recognize the work of its faculty as resources allow. A fundraising priority for the New Paltz Foundation is money to support faculty development.

### **STUDENT OUTCOMES: IMPROVING GRADUATION RATES**

Since 1998, New Paltz has met and exceeded the retention and graduation rate goals that we had negotiated with our system administration: First-year retention increased from 76.1% to 83.9%, second-year retention increased from 63.1% to 75%; and third-year retention increased from 60.4% to 68.4%. In fall 2004, first-year retention (2003 cohort) was 84%; the 6-year graduation rate was 54.3% (1998 cohort). These improvements in retention have driven the institution's AAFTE dramatically higher during this period even though the total number of entering students has remained basically flat. The College believes that increased retention will lead to further improvement in graduation rates, but additional measures will undoubtedly be required. New Paltz' achievements in retention and progress-to-degree are the products of a five-year effort by the institution's Retention Taskforce. The Taskforce's comprehensive efforts to improving retention included:

- Expansion of the office of the Dean of Academic Advising
- Expanded efforts to help new faculty improve teaching skills
- Distributed courses more evenly across time zones and days of the week to provide needed courses in sequence
- First-Year Initiative
- Block Scheduling for First-year Students

- Welcome Week
- Orientation Leaders Mentorship Program
- Scholar's Mentorship Program, fostering the educational, social and developmental growth of incoming, non-EOP, students of color.
- 40Days/40Nights, which "front-loads" Residence Life programs during the crucial first six weeks of the fall semester.

Our graduation rates, although higher than national averages for comprehensive public colleges, is still considerably lower than the rates of other colleges with our student qualifications and selectivity profiles (Education Trust website data). There are some reasonable explanations for the low 4-year rate, such as the fact that we have a relatively large Educational Opportunity Program cohort for which a five-year academic plan is standard. We have an engineering program (albeit small) that typically requires five years and some of our most extensive secondary education programs are difficult to complete in four years (particularly mathematics and the natural sciences).

Our Office of Institutional Research has recently completed an extensive study of the factors correlated to extended graduation times that provides indications of actions that might lead to improvement. Most significant is the clear relation between time at which a major is declared and time to graduation. Those who declare by 60 credits have a much greater chance of graduating on time.

Our current policy is that students are expected to declare a major by sixty credits but are allowed to register without a declared major until they have achieved 75 credits or more. Students have been allowed to change majors at any point. A majority of our students intend on majoring in disciplines that have relatively high GPA entry requirements at 60 credits or above (including, in approximate order of magnitude, education, business, communication and media, psychology and art education). Students who do not meet requirements to declare the major they would like typically declare a major without such requirements (a shadow major) but continue to take courses in the intended major and/or courses they feel will help them improve their GPA until they meet the entrance requirements for their intended major. This practice, coupled with our data that show that students persist in "pre-major" status in some majors well past 75 credits without having met entry requirements, has led us to investigate changes in major declaration policies. We will forthwith advise students at 60 credits of what they would need to do to qualify in the major they would like (and whether it is actually feasible to do so in one additional semester) and require students who are not qualified to pursue a different course of study. Other areas we are investigating include improving tools available to advisors and students themselves (a more extensive degree audit program, training sessions and improved web-based information). By Summer 2006 we expect to have a much-improved web-based catalog with eight semester programs of study in all majors as well as four semester course offerings. Students are also interested in developing a means of evaluating advising processes and individual advisors.

Figure 3.1 below provides New Paltz' retention and graduation rate goals through 2010.

**Figure 3.1 Projected Changes in Retention and Graduation Rates**

	<b>Current</b>	<b>3-Year Goal</b>	<b>5-Year Goal</b>
First-Year Retention Rate	83.9%(2003)	85.4%	86.0%
Six-Year Graduation Rate (Baccalaureate Degrees)	54.3%(1998)	56.0%	60.0%

***Transfer success:***

For decades, New Paltz has been a leader in promoting easy and successful transfer for community college students. The College is proud of this legacy and intends to continue it. New Paltz’ top five transfer feeder schools are: Dutchess Community College, Ulster County Community College, Orange County Community College, SUNY Albany, and Sullivan County Community College. New Paltz overlaps heavily with Albany in freshman applications, and it seems that students who were either not admitted to New Paltz as freshmen or who initially chose Albany over New Paltz return to New Paltz as transfers a year or two later.

New Paltz has a comprehensive articulation agreement (“The Door Is Open”) with seven alliance community colleges (Columbia-Greene, Dutchess, Hudson Valley, Orange, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster) which identifies the equivalent course offerings in all fields. AA and AS degree holders from the seven alliance community colleges, when transferring directly after receiving their degree, have been guaranteed admission to New Paltz with full junior standing. A.A.S. degree holders have not been guaranteed admission to New Paltz and are admitted on a competitive basis. The marked increase in our applications for admission both at the freshman level and by transfer students, fueled in part by increasing enrollment at our largest community college "feeders" is now making it impossible to guarantee admissions except to those students who are in jointly registered programs. We must now pool all our applicants and admit those with the best records. Students with fewer than 45 credits will be admitted based upon their high school record and SAT scores as well as their community college records.

Over the next several years, we will focus attention on the graduation rates of our transfer population and respond appropriately to ensure timely progress to degree. Enhancing information technology and campus facilities to meet evolving instructional, administrative and student needs will help. Based on the outcomes data we have been tracking, we have identified a need to include commonly transferred courses into our Degree Audit Report system and are implementing that project at this time.

**TECHNOLOGY: KEEPING UP WITH INCREASING DEMAND**

New Paltz is aggressively pursuing a schedule for introducing and maintaining classroom technology, including replacing classroom technology and computer labs on a regular basis and the introduction of additional smart classrooms every year. In our Teaching and Learning Center

a full-time staff member offers an ongoing program of very popular workshops to introduce faculty to the latest methods of using technology to enhance their teaching. New Paltz has adopted the Blackboard teaching and learning platform and automatically enrolls every student and every course. Blackboard has proved to be very successful and is heavily used across the curriculum.

Currently one-half of classrooms are equipped with network connectivity and projection capability; other classrooms are served with mobile equipment. We are adding 15 more electronic classrooms in Spring 2006, due to the recent renovation of the building that houses our School of Business and the Department of Nursing, VandenBerg Hall, and four to five more electronic classrooms in other buildings before the beginning of the Fall 2006 semester. With the renovation of the building that houses our School of Education, Old Main, anticipated for 2010, over 75% of our classrooms will become electronic. Fewer than 10% of classrooms are equipped with individual student workstations; however, this number is more than enough to satisfy instructor requests for such rooms.

In the coming years, New Paltz expects to spread network access, both wired and wireless, across the campus and into virtually every classroom. The speed and resilience of the network infrastructure will continue to be improved and will support the anticipated increased reliance on technology as a means of delivery. These tasks require substantial funding to implement and recurring funds, typically three years out, for replacement and upgrades. Thus far, the campus has funded the majority of the projects through the local technology fee, which has had to be increased on a regular basis. The campus' reliance on key technology services has grown to the point where 24x7 support is required which puts a significant strain on existing staff. For the future, in addition to an incremental increase in staff, New Paltz will be relying on improvements in redundancy and remote monitoring capabilities to provide a more stable and recoverable environment.

SUNY New Paltz has begun the lengthy and challenging process of converting its primary administrative software to the SCT Banner system. As we install Banner, we will have to define hundreds of elements (major codes, admissions categories, etc.) and then write rules to implement local policies. For example - we will define student levels and we will define course levels - then we will be able to write rules restricting or allowing certain levels of students access to certain level courses. The system can address almost all of what we do, but to we may need to change the way we do some things. In some cases, people's roles and responsibilities will change as well. Other SUNY campuses who have been through the process in the recent past have the same tale to tell: moving to Banner will involve some hard work, there will be many technical challenges along the way, with collaborative effort and communication, there are real benefits to be reaped by students, faculty and administrative support staff alike.

#### **FACILITIES: TODAY'S NEEDS IN YESTERDAY'S BUILDINGS**

Like most of our sister campuses in the SUNY System, financial exigency has forced New Paltz into an extended period of deferred maintenance. The toll on buildings and utility systems has been serious in some areas but we are working to address these problems. The high-pressure hot

water system, which heats all campus buildings, is being repaired at a cost of over \$2 million. The campus electrical system is ill equipped to meet the needs of today's technological demands and climate control problems in some of our older classroom buildings has understandably been the source of great frustration among students and faculty. The campus recently contracted for an in-depth study of options for air-conditioning these buildings and increasing our overall energy efficiency. We believe a viable solution has been found and are moving toward its implementation by installing a very large chiller unit that can service several buildings.

The college has an urgent need for more classrooms and more faculty offices. We have just completed the renovations for one major academic building and are in the planning stages for a renovation on Old Main, pending SUNY budget support. As noted in other parts of this report, in addition to the fundamental space and utility services for classrooms, we need to furnish them with technology, equipment and furnishings to meet modern instructional demands.

Non-academic buildings on campus also present a number of challenges and opportunities. The Department of Residential Life offers an on-campus living/learning environment for more than 2,800 New Paltz students. More than 50% of the undergraduate population now lives on the New Paltz campus, and there are plans to expand our facilities. There are certainly capacity issues faced by the College. Though in recent years the undergraduate enrollment numbers have stabilized, New Paltz continues to meet backlog of demand for on-campus housing. Despite the opening of Esopus Hall in 2001, freshmen continued to experience some tripling, and housing requests from transfers went unmet. Lenape Hall added an additional 183 beds in the fall semester of the 2004-05 academic year. Tripling was minimal, and the campus was able to accommodate additional transfer student requests for housing. The campus believes it has now met the demand for lower-division undergraduate housing, but remains committed to providing a quality living environment for upper-division undergraduates, transfers and graduate students who would prefer the convenience of living on campus. This apartment-style housing project is currently in the early phases of design.

Maintaining the existing physical plant of residence halls is a difficult challenge. This is particularly true as the majority of our facilities are 35 to 45 years old. The Department of Residence Life is working collaboratively with the Facilities Operations Center to assess existing physical plant needs of the residence halls, as well as design a long-term aesthetic improvement plan. Scheduled for the next five years are renovations to fire safety systems, building entries, windows, bathrooms, lighting, lobbies, carpeting, and electrical upgrades to individual rooms. Annual reviews with Facilities and Residence Life staff provide for adjustments to the renovation schedule as needed.

The New Paltz residence halls are not the only co-curricular buildings on campus that need attention with regard to usability and aesthetics. The Elting Gymnasium was built in 1964. Since that time, the New Paltz campus has had no additions or improvements to its indoor athletic facilities. The campus has just opened a new 57,000 square foot athletic and recreation building. This air-conditioned facility includes a gymnasium floor and 2,000-seat arena, an indoor running track, a free-weight exercise area, and a cardio-vascular exercise area. Other improvements to the athletic and recreational facilities include a new soccer field, a new softball field, a new track, and the addition of two intramural fields. Plans for the installation of an all-season artificial turf surface inside the new track are underway. Programming constraints imposed by

the lack of space will be relieved, and the Athletic Department has already begun to expand offerings in both intramural sports and recreational programming. In addition to expanding its athletic and recreational programming on campus, the college has expanded programming to take advantage of the geography of this region. Hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing and skiing are now part of the recreation programming offered to campus community members.

The Student Union Building, built in 1970, also has had no substantive work done to it since it opened. The campus has recently secured \$10 million in state capital funding for the construction of an addition to the original building. The addition will provide much needed space for on-campus programming. Planning for this addition is underway.

#### **INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING: PROVIDING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO THE CAMPUS.**

New Paltz' fundraising is growing in sophistication and achieving solid results. Most importantly, the campus culture (including alumni expectations) is slowly changing to recognize the reality that private support - at increasing levels - is essential to the College's long-term fiscal health and programmatic success. The campus reports that, in academic departments, there are good initiatives in some units but ongoing resistance to fundraising in others.

The College has established a small set of fundraising priorities, all focused on long-term campus needs: 1) endowed recruitment scholarships (both need- and merit-based aid); 2) research support (including faculty scholarship/creative activity support and faculty-student research support); building a meaningful endowment for the College's Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art.

Fundraising leadership is expected from the SUNY New Paltz Foundation—and, in particular, the Foundation's Board of Trustees. In 2002, Board members set annual giving expectations for themselves. Since then, 100% giving from Foundation trustees has been achieved. College fundraising and alumni relations staff (currently five full-time "in the field" professionals, with additional financial and gift processing staff) devote the bulk of their effort to the identification and qualification of new donors, the cultivation of existing donors, and conducting successful annual fund drives.

Results to date are encouraging. Preliminary numbers indicate that New Paltz has raised more than \$2.5 million in cash, stocks and gifts in kind during fiscal year 2005, and a total of \$7.2 million since October 2001. These totals do not include unpaid cash pledges, which total an additional \$292,000

*Fundraising Progress benchmarks:*

*Since Fiscal Year 2001-2002:*

- Raised more than \$2.3 million for above priorities over three years
- Increased endowment nearly 50%, adding more than \$2 million in gifts over three years

*Change 2002-2003 to 2003-2004 Fiscal Year:*

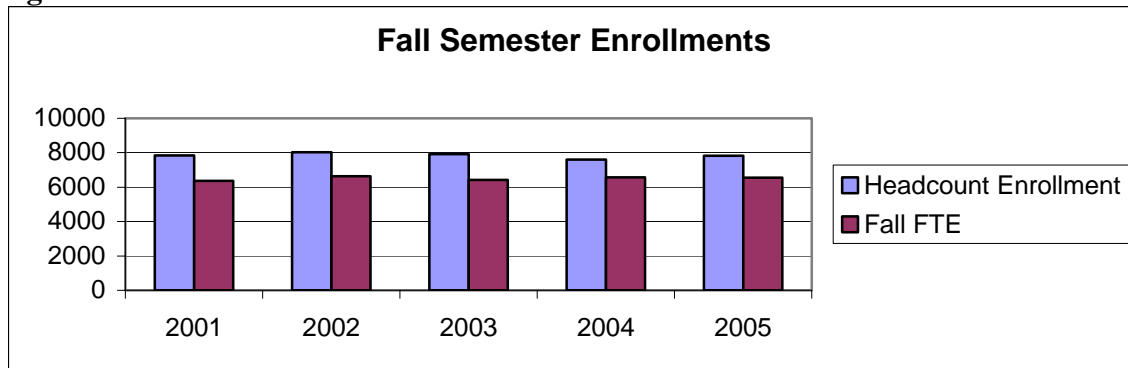
- Increased alumni giving participation: 25%, to 7.7%
- Increased endowment per FTE student 11%, to \$802
- Increased total number of donors 17.5%, to 4,878

## Section 4 **Enrollment and Finance** **Trends and Projections**

### **ENROLLMENT**

The first order of business for enrollment management is to ensure sufficient enrollments exist in order to meet and hopefully to exceed budget requirements of the institution. During the past five years, New Paltz has operated near capacity enrollment levels and has experienced stable enrollments, ensuring financial stability on the revenue side of the budget. The following chart illustrates rather steady-state nature of headcount and FTE enrollments.

**Figure 4.1**

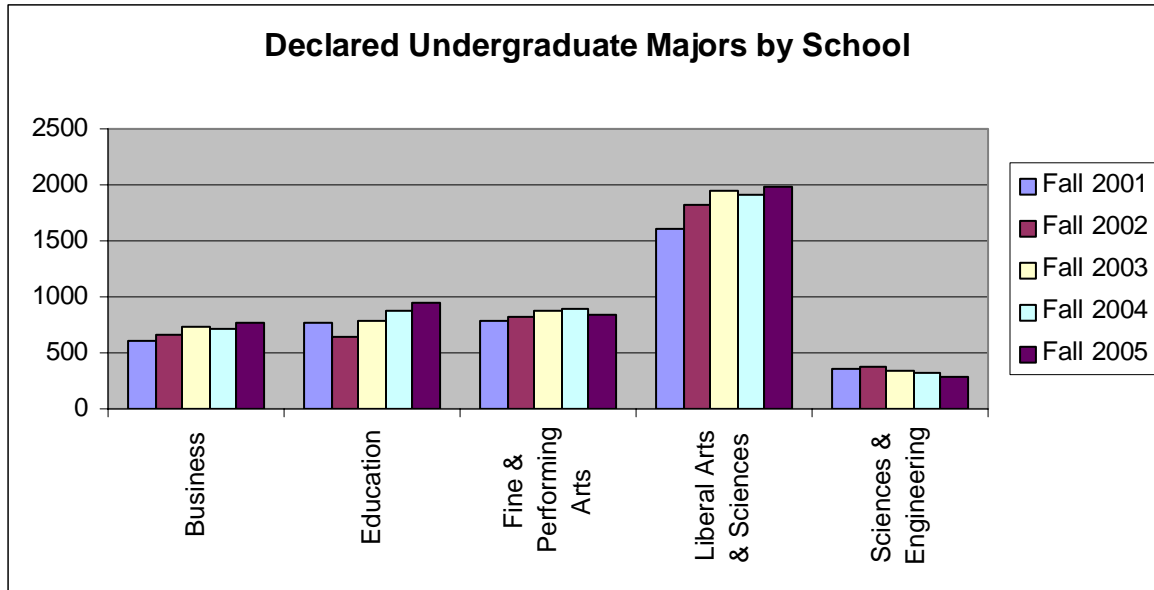


The major changes that have occurred in enrollments have been in terms of the enrollment mix and the characteristics of new students. The most significant changes in the mix are outlined below:

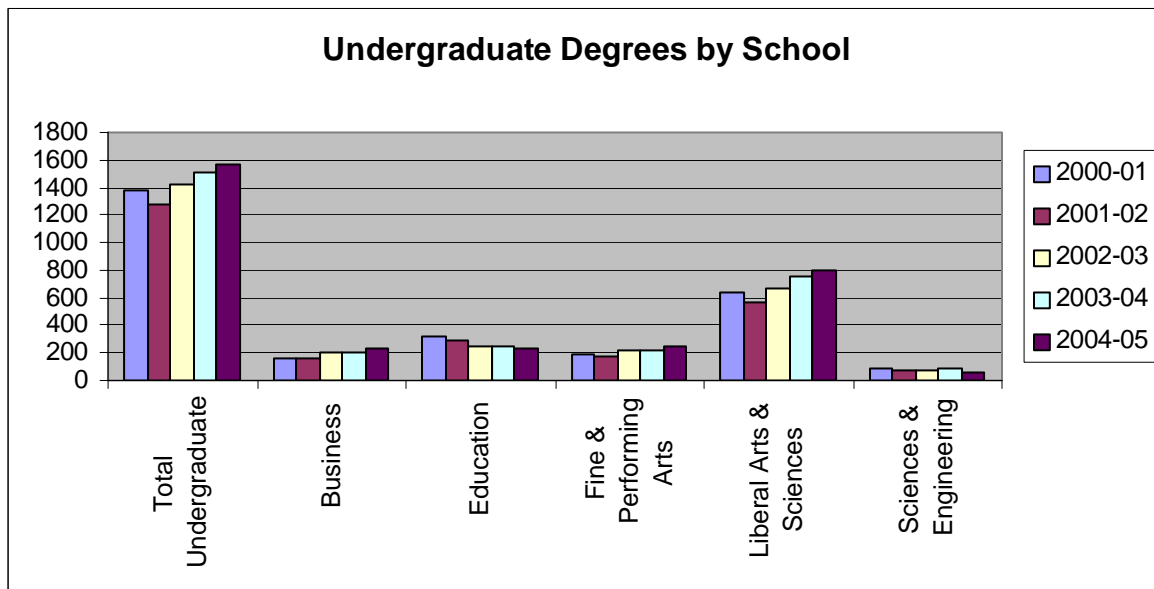
#### ***Undergraduate Students***

During the period of 2001 to 2005, undergraduate headcount increased by 6%, from 6,053 to 6,408. Within this growth, the number of full-time undergraduates grew by 10%, from 5,192 to 5,715. Since 1998, the number of full-time undergraduates has increased by 22%, breaking institutional records consecutively in seven of the past eight years. Conversely, part-time student enrollments have plummeted from a high of 1,756 in 1990 to 703 in 2005, posting an 18% decline in just the past five years. This not only represents a fundamental change in campus mission, but also has had an enormous impact on the delivery of undergraduate courses. To have more students enrolling in a greater number of courses has increased demand on faculty and classroom resources to near absolute potential. Additionally, other campus resources, including the library, residence halls, lounges, food service areas, recreational facilities, and parking are being fully utilized. At the undergraduate level, the institution is operating at capacity, with no room for growth.

**Figure 4.2**



**Figure 4.3**



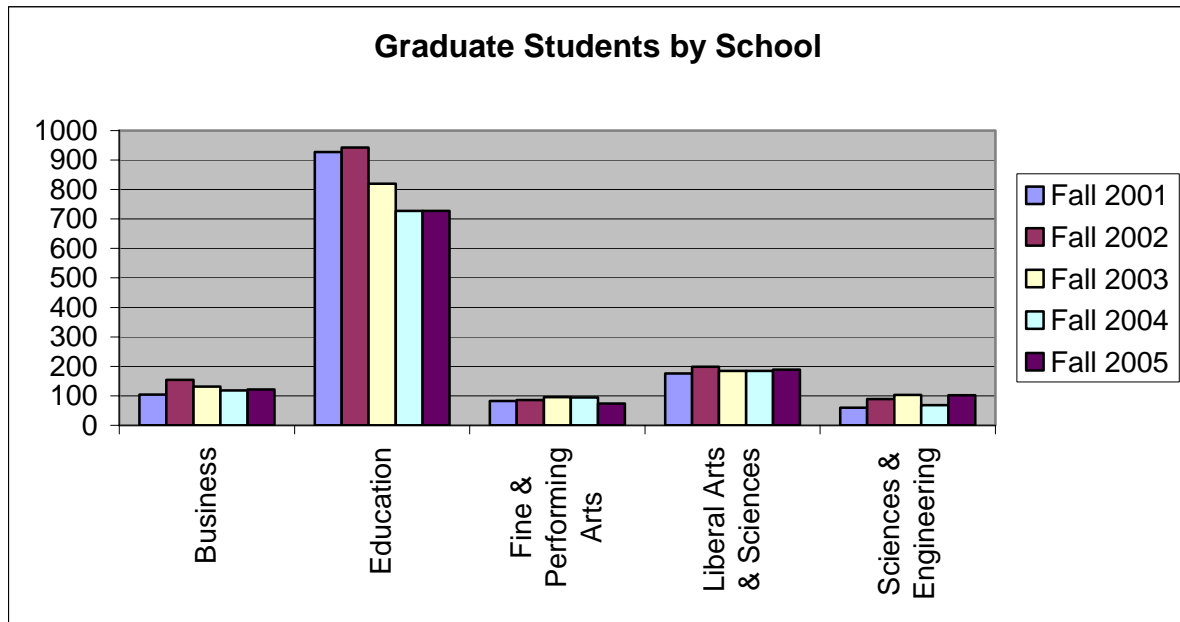
**Graduate Students**

Growth at the undergraduate level was both a byproduct of and accommodated by a major decline in graduate student enrollments. In 2002, graduate enrollments hit a 15 year high of 1,832 and declined by 2004 to a 20 year low of 1,412, producing a 23% decline in a mere three years. The shift was primarily in the School of Education and occurred because an artificial enrollment bubble developed between 2000 and 2002, which coincided with a deadline imposed by the New York State Education Department relative to changes in teacher certification requirements. People accelerated time to degree in order to meet the deadline and a portion of the continuing market evaporated as a result. Demand for graduate level teacher certification is

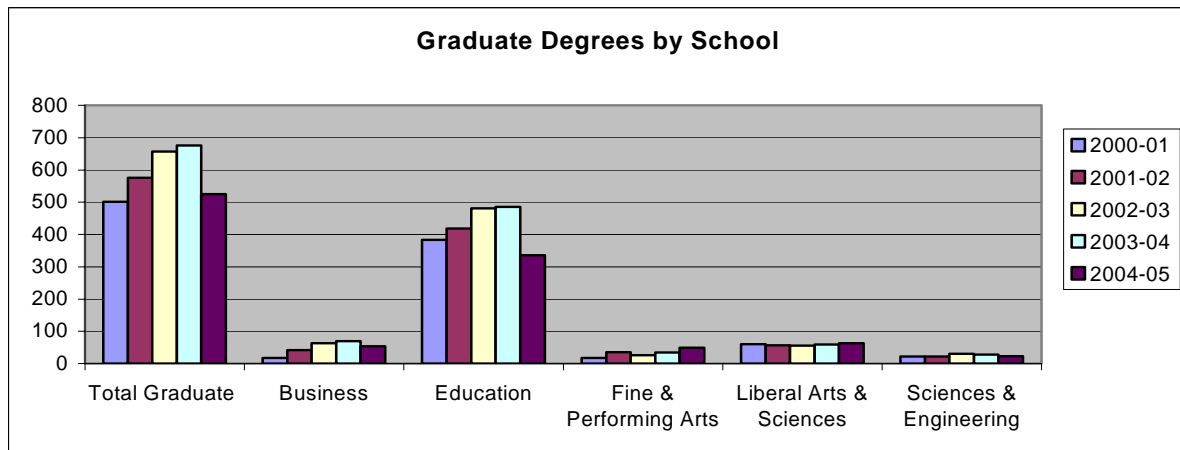
expected to rebound over the next several years. However, within graduate headcount enrollments, the full-time/part-time mix has changed. In 2001, 22% of graduate students were enrolled on a full-time basis – in 2005, despite declines in headcount enrollment, 32% were full-time, which mitigated the impact of such decline.

One of the factors contributing to this change is the increase in international graduate students, who are, by definition, full-time students. The significantly higher tuition paid by international students also ameliorated the financial burden of graduate enrollment losses. The full-time international enrollments are primarily in Computer Science, Engineering, and Business. Post 9/11 visa restrictions have retarded growth potential in these programs, although their growing popularity in international markets has given them some measure of resilience to the declines in international graduate students experienced elsewhere in the nation.

**Figure 4.3**



**Figure 4.5**



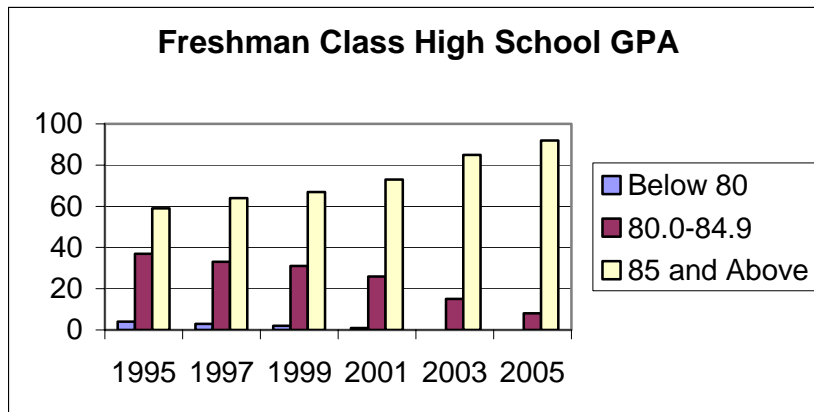
### ***Selective Admissions***

A major change that occurred since the 2001 Middle States review relates to freshman admissions. Since the fall of 2000, the academic quality of the entering class has continued to improve, quite dramatically. Selective admissions can only occur in an environment where many more students apply to an institution than it can accommodate. Clearly, the more popular an institution, the more selective it can be. For New Paltz, there are typically 10 or 12 applicants for every seat in the freshman class. For this reason, the college is one of a very small number of institutions of higher education in the country that offers admission to less than 50% of its applicant pool. The applicant pool itself has grown significantly since 2000, from 8,954 freshman applications in 2000 to 11,483 for fall 2005. The last three years have consecutively set new records for freshman applications.

The benefit of growing popularity is directly reflected in the academic quality of the incoming student. Relative to standardized test scores, the mean composite for the freshman class was 1109 for fall 2000 and has risen steadily to 1162 for the most recent incoming class of 2005. The mean high school averages during the same period rose from an 86 to a 90. Figure 4.6 captures the decade long trend in improved high school performance among New Paltz' freshmen.

New Paltz is fortunate to have the breadth of major programs, location, and a community of students, staff and scholars who collectively make the institution a top choice among college-bound high school students in New York State and beyond. The college's recruiting and admission performance over the past five years illustrates a continuing trend of growing popularity and attractiveness to well-prepared students.

**Figure 4.6**



## **FINANCIAL TREND ANALYSIS**

In the State University of New York system funds are acquired on an annual basis from several sources. Income sources are described below followed by Figure 4.7, showing the figures for the state allocation items over the past five years and a discussion of the trends in each source over the past five years.

- State appropriated allocations directed to the campus. For the past several years the major portion of these funds for the comprehensive sector of the state university (the bachelor's and master's degree campuses as distinct from doctoral-granting university centers, the technology campuses and the community colleges) has been determined by a formula based on enrollment in a specific type of degree program, relative instructional cost of that type of degree program and level of the student (lower division, upper division or graduate). Lesser amounts are allocated as line items.
- State allocated funds managed by the system administration in Albany. For the comprehensive colleges, the largest amount of these funds covers employee fringe benefits. In addition, the system administration provides funds for much of the undergraduate admission process, for university-wide library access projects and other areas that are often the responsibility of individual campuses in other states.
- State allocated funds managed by the State University Construction Fund. The state allocates funds for a comprehensive list of specific projects in five-year cycles for new construction, large-scale renovations and infrastructural improvements. These projects are under the complete control of this body, which functions independently of the system or, in effect, the campuses.
- Tuition. Campuses keep tuition they generate. However, most (or for many campuses, all) of the tuition is built into the overall campus budget approved by the system administration as the so-called "tuition target." All tuition received by the campus is forwarded immediately to Albany and is then redistributed back to the campus. If the campus fails to make its tuition target the system administration can reduce the expected state fund allocation. (The state also builds the entire system's tuition target into its allocation. In fact, New York claims it has made a large increase in the "state" budget for its university system each time tuition is raised and the amount from tax revenue remains level or even decreased.) If campuses exceed their tuition target (up to 2%) they can keep the funds but get no additional tax-based allocation. Tuition receipts over 2% of the target are retained by the system administration.
- Fees. The college sets fees annually for such activities as intercollegiate athletics, the health center and technology that directly benefits students. Increases must be approved by system administration and are closely watched by the state legislature. Income from these fees must be spent directly on the specific activity and these expenditures are closely monitored by system administration.
- College auxiliary services. The college derives modest revenue from the operation of food and vending services, the bookstore and so forth. All of these activities are fulfilled by independent contractors that are coordinated and evaluated by a quasi-independent body that is chartered to do so to the benefit of the campus.
- Fund raising. The SUNY New Paltz Foundation, working with the President of the college and the director of development, is responsible for raising and managing voluntary gifts to the college.

**Figure 4.7**

<b>State Allocated Funds for SUNY New Paltz</b>							
<b>All figures in thousands</b>							
		<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
<b>Personnel, Full-time</b>							
	Instructional	14,515	15,918	15,778	15,826	16,418	16,943
	Non-instructional	16,687	17,767	17,921	18,181	19,729	20,703
	Retirement Incentive					697	404
<b>Personnel, Part-time</b>							
	Instructional	2,615	2,392	2,404	2,424	2,832	3,249
	Non-instructional	428	850	475	493	572	612
<b>Supplies, Travel, Contracts, etc.</b>		3,830	3,170	2,948	3,705	4,727	4,433
<b>Utilities</b>		2,236	2,815	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,665
<b>Total Approved Budget</b>		<b>40,310</b>	<b>42,911</b>	<b>42,333</b>	<b>43,591</b>	<b>47,474</b>	<b>48,965</b>
<b>Tuition &amp; Fees Target</b>		26,256	24,437	24,808	32,428	32,000	32,149
<b>Net Allocation, Tax Levy</b>		<b>14,054</b>	<b>18,474</b>	<b>17,525</b>	<b>11,163</b>	<b>15,474</b>	<b>16,861</b>

State appropriated allocations directed to the campus. As is obvious from the bottom line of the Table, the funding provided by the state of New York from general tax levy funds has varied dramatically since 2000-01 even though the overall operating budget approved by our system administration has not varied a great deal. The overall reason for this dichotomy is the nature of the New York State budgeting process. Over the past several years, there has been an annual struggle between the governor, who often proposes cuts to the state tax allocation with tuition increases to offset the cuts, and the legislature, which abhors tuition increases but is often reluctant to fund the university's budget even at a level that includes only increases needed for mandatory pay increases (if that).

With regard to the specific numbers in Figure 4.7:

- a) Instructional full-time costs reflect an increase in 2001-02 due to addition of full-time faculty to reverse a downward trend in the number of full-time faculty, followed by a decrease in the number of full-time faculty in 2002-03, when 2/3 of our faculty searches were canceled due to a

1.1 million decrease in net allocation, followed by a resumption of the increase in full-time faculty lines in 2004-05.

b) The increase in non-instructional salaries reflects contractual increase and a relatively stable number of staff. There have been some shifts in staff (for example, to a higher number of technically trained staff in computer services) that also requires higher salaries.

c) The campus is assessed costs associated with retirement incentives.

d) Part-time costs have increased both due to the increase in stipends for part-time instructors and the need for additional sections as students take higher average loads (currently about 16 credit hours/semester vs. about 14 five years ago) and class size reduction, particularly with some of the changes involved in the new general education program that began in 2004-05.

e) The funds available for "Other Than Personnel Salaries" were cut significantly in 2001-02 and 2002-03 to balance the overall budget. Contractual costs have increased and restoration has been made to faculty and staff travel funds, but we still need to be able to better fund our supplies and equipment portion of the budget.

f) Utilities costs have been maintained by increasing tight control of energy use but we have recently added new buildings and the increase in oil costs are likely to cause significant increases in the near future. (Note that this figure, as well as all of the other figures above, does not include residence hall or food service area costs, which come from student housing and food plan fees, a completely separate budget. That budget, called the Dormitory Income Fund Reimbursable or DIFR account, operates effectively with a modest reserve for unexpected occurrences).

g) Total approved budget figures have reflected, for the most part, a level budget plus contractual salary increases (note that in 2002-03 the contract had not been settled so there was no increase).

h) The tuition and fees target has been quite stable with a very significant rise (1/3) in 2003-04 when tuition was increased by about 1/3 for undergraduates and 40% for graduate students and the state allocation cut to offset the increased revenue from tuition.

For all but one of the years shown our actual tuition and fees revenue has exceeded the target between 1 and 2%. Those funds have been placed in a reserve that we have used for small alteration projects (budgeted at about \$250,000/year), minor categorical budget over-expenditures in the allocated budget and to acquire our new campus management system from Banner.

## Section 5 Assessment Processes and Plans

### **Background**

Following the 2000 Middle States Decennial Report, SUNY New Paltz engaged in a significant process to explore, define, and make recommendations to implement assessment campus-wide. Our efforts to document our effectiveness as an institution of higher education, to improve accountability, and to generate and utilize meaningful data further energized our focus on assessment at all levels.

This chapter addresses the campus's progress in effecting the Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) recommendations discussed in Section 2 of this report. The institution's comprehensive outcomes assessment plan, its processes for reporting and using assessment data to monitor and improve student learning outcomes as well as academic and student affairs programs, its linking of assessment to the establishment of institutional budget allocations, and its ongoing support for assessment are discussed. We also make recommendations for continued progress.

### **INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT**

Institutional Assessment (Middle States Standard 7) at New Paltz has two important dimensions: the assessment of institutional effectiveness and of administrative and academic support. While key measures for assessing the first dimension, institutional effectiveness, were not explicitly identified in the Assessment Steering Committee report, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) is charged with gathering institutional level data to gauge campus progress in areas such as mission and goals, planning and resource allocation, and critical administrative processes. The second dimension, academic support assessment, involves the development of individual administrative and academic support unit assessment plans, including decentralized data collection efforts aimed at continually improving policies, decision-making, and operations in those areas.

### **Measures of Institutional Effectiveness**

In his Fall 2005 State of the College Address, President Poskanzer specified four key areas of institutional importance in which OIR has begun or is beginning to initiate data collection efforts to support campus decision-makers in developing or revising policy. These four areas - graduation rates, student expectations and experiences, placement and experiences of alumni, and resource allocation - are also central to the campus' response to the SUNY System Mission Review II (MOU) process, which is entering its final stages at this writing.

### ***Graduation Rates***

A key institutional effort involves improving four-year graduation rates at New Paltz. As such, OIR undertook a major project to improve the quality and constancy of and the level of detail for tracking freshmen cohorts. This project provided statistics that allow the campus to analyze retention data for a greater number of sub-populations and leveraged a recent thorough analysis of the factors contributing to extended graduation rates for the 1999 and 2000 freshmen cohorts. As a result, the deans and vice presidents have had extensive discussions about major policy

initiatives that could improve four-year graduation rates. Given that transfer students comprise a substantial portion of our undergraduate population, OIR has also begun to craft more systematic and comprehensive data on the retention and graduation rates of transfer students. Lastly, OIR is targeted to participate in a national benchmarking project - the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE) - to lend an external, comparative perspective on graduation rates and retention rates in the second, third, and fourth years.

### ***Student Expectations and Experiences***

Over the course of the last six years, New Paltz has substantially increased the quality of its incoming freshmen. Understanding the expectations of our students, both in terms of administrative services as well as in terms of their in-class and out-of-class needs, OIR has engaged in two information-gathering endeavors. The first effort began in May 2003 with the implementation of an on-line graduating senior survey. The data from this survey yields important information to campus policy makers and assists in identifying the strengths of the New Paltz experience. In particular, it has prompted discussions and actions in areas related to advising, course availability, and the offering of internship/fieldwork opportunities. A report of the results from the first round of the survey can be found at

<http://www.newpaltz.edu/oir/gradsrsurveyreportmay03.pdf>.

The second data collection effort measures student expectations and at the same time benchmarks those expectations against other peer institutions. Institutional Research and Student Affairs administered the College Students Expectations Questionnaire (CSXQ) to incoming freshmen and transfer students for Fall 2005. The data from this survey was received this fall and will be used by Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to identify potential changes in policy and programs. It is anticipated that the survey will be administered on a three-year cycle to gauge improvement on important metrics from the survey. The companion to the CSXQ, the College Students Experiences Survey (CSEQ), is being administered in Spring 2006 to the freshmen who completed the CSXQ and a sample of upper division students. This will enable us to analyze the correspondence between freshmen student expectations versus their actual experiences. We will also be able to compare the experiences of freshmen with those of upper division students to identify campus strengths and potential areas for improvement.

### ***Placement and Experiences of Alumni***

The Office of Alumni Affairs and the Career Resource Center, with the support of OIR, has implemented an alumni assessment process that surveys undergraduate students six-eight months after graduation. Data from the survey is primarily intended to identify the placement success (in both employment and graduate school) of our students and to obtain some limited information about their experience at New Paltz. Complementing this effort, funds have been aside for Academic Affairs to work with each of our five Schools to develop a campus-wide alumni survey schedule to obtain more detailed, assessment-oriented feedback from graduates to support program assessment and accreditation.

The Professional Education Unit - comprised of the School of Education and the departments of Art Education, housed within the School of Fine and Performing Arts, and Communication Disorders, within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences - is participating in a SUNY collaborative assessing teacher education programs using surveys developed and scored by Educational Benchmarking Inc (EBI). They include exit, alumni, and employer surveys that

examine the preparation of graduates for careers in teaching. Candidates graduating in the 2005-2006 academic year are being surveyed now and will be followed up in two years. At that time employer satisfaction surveys will also be administered for these same graduates. Analysis of the results should indicate areas of strength and areas that can be improved.

### ***Resource Allocation***

New Paltz employs a substantial cadre of adjunct instructors. While they perform an important role on our campus, an important area of future improvement will be to increase the number of full-time faculty who deliver both the General Education and non-General Education curricula. OIR is in the process of developing a more systematic and consistent set of data to identify the distribution of teaching assignments at various levels. In order to lend a comparative perspective, OIR will use this local data in the instructional benchmarking part of the Delaware Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity. A description of the nature of the Delaware Study can be found at: <http://www.udel.edu/IR/cost/index.html>.

### **Administrative and Academic Support Assessment**

Pursuant to the ASC recommendations, the Administrative Assessment Support Committee (AASC) was formed. AASC is comprised of administrative and academic support staff and aims to facilitate and coordinate the development of assessment plans in administrative and academic support units. The committee convened in the Spring of 2003 to define its scope, develop an assessment plan template for administrative and academic support departments, review assessment plans and provide constructive feedback, and encourage broader understanding of assessment by offering workshops for departments. The committee has completed its work and the responsibility for further implementation of assessment will reside with each of the vice presidents. The progress in implementing assessment, facilitated by this committee is described below.

#### ***Assessment Efforts in Academic and Administrative Support Units***

Significant progress has been made toward integrating assessment into the practices of academic and administrative support units on campus. AASC has been the primary force in advancing this progress. It has offered training and education opportunities, has created a program assessment template to facilitate the development of assessment plans, and has provided feedback on plans as they have moved toward completion. The Office of Institutional Research has also served as a resource on every aspect of assessment, from staff education to plan development to data collection.

Of the 44 support units at New Paltz, 70% have participated in assessment workshops or have worked individually with OIR to improve their understanding of assessment and learn how to implement assessment activities in their areas. The next “phase” of participation was for departments identified within their divisions to submit the first part of their assessment plan (steps I – IIA of the local program assessment template) to AASC for review and feedback. As of November 2005, 36% of all administrative departments had submitted their partial proposals to AASC. Another 11% of departments are in the process of completing their proposal for review, bringing the percentage of departments actively involved in assessment plan development to 47%. In addition, 27% of the departments have progressed to the point of

completing their initial data collection. A summary chart of the progress of the various administrative and academic support departments, and two sample plans, can be found in Appendix D1 of this report.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

The process for implementing student learning outcomes assessment, also recommended by the Assessment Steering Committee, has two fundamental components. First, the responsibility for implementing assessment in the academic major resides with each of our Schools, each with a slightly different approach and environment. Second, the implementation of general education assessment is a combined responsibility of the GE Board and the Provost's Office. An additional component of our assessment of student learning outcomes is an emphasis on rigor and comprehensiveness and a process that is accountable to peers.

Our strategy for assessing our academic programs, both in GE and the major, with a particular focus on the student learning outcomes those programs are producing, is in keeping with the nationwide discussion regarding the value of assessment in improving teaching and learning. Our strategy is also responsive to the priorities of accrediting bodies, the public's demand for accountability in colleges and universities, and the heightened scrutiny of institutional effectiveness by public officials and state agencies.

### **General Education Assessment**

#### **Background on GE III**

The faculty of the State University of New York at New Paltz is committed to providing its graduates with a challenging and well-rounded education. Since 1983, this has meant that all students are required to complete a program of general education in addition to an academic major. Every ten years, the faculty of New Paltz has reviewed and fine-tuned its GE requirements to ensure that they continue to include the essential skills and knowledge base that every college graduate should possess. The first program, GE I, exposed students to courses in the natural and social sciences, the arts, mathematics, languages, and western civilization. In 1993, GE II was unveiled. It included an additional course in mathematics, as well as new requirements in non-western civilizations and cultures, American society and its institutions, and under-represented groups in the United States. New Paltz faculty was in the midst of its usual ten-year review when the SUNY Board of Trustees passed a SUNY-wide general education mandate. To comply with the mandate, while continuing with its own internal review process, GE IIA was adopted for a short time (Fall 2000-Spring 2003). GE IIA was essentially GE II with slight modifications to comply with the Trustees' mandate.

Our current program, GE III, went into effect in Fall 2003 and was designed with assessment in mind. The General Education Task Force, which spent four years developing the new program, had consciously included expected learning outcomes for the program's eleven content and four competency categories. The specific New Paltz GE III learning outcomes and their alignment to the SUNY Board of Trustees learning outcomes are identified in Appendix D2. In Fall 2001, the

General Education Board, having been charged with ongoing oversight of the GE program, wrote course approval guidelines that required faculty members to state explicitly how their course objectives related to category learning outcomes, as well as to describe the activities they would use to capture student performance. The Board held several open forums and workshops to assist faculty members in rethinking their courses in light of these new requirements. Each course then went through a review and approval process. The Curriculum Committee was the final body that ensured that each course in GE III had assessable learning outcomes and relevant activities. Having clearly articulated, assessable learning outcomes is one of the hallmarks of the GE III program at New Paltz. Another is the way in which critical thinking skills are infused into content courses. The SUNY New Paltz faculty is confident that integrating essential skills with broad-based knowledge, and assessing student learning of those skills and knowledge, is the best means of preparing our students for life after graduation.

**Figure 5.1**

<b>The Structure of General Education III</b>			
<b>Knowledge Areas</b>			
<b>Arts &amp; Humanities</b>	<b>Scientific Investigations</b>	<b>The United States and Its Traditions</b>	<b>Global Perspectives</b>
Composition (two courses)	Mathematics (one course)	United States Studies (one course)	World Civilizations & Cultures (one course)
Humanities (one course)	Natural Sciences (two courses)	Western Civilization (one course)	Foreign Language (one or two courses depending on placement)
Arts (one course)	Social Sciences (one course)	Diversity (one course)	
12 Credits Minimum	12 Credits Minimum	9 Credits Minimum	6-9 Credits Minimum

The Critical Thinking competencies that are embedded in the Knowledge area courses are: Systematic Inquiry (SI), Effective Expression (EE-Written, EE-Oral, EE-Aesthetic), Information Literacy (IL), and Ethical Reflection (ER). While students are not required to complete a

minimum number of courses with these designations, students who are interested in developing these skills are encouraged to seek out courses with those stated emphases.

### **GE Assessment Plan Implementation**

New Paltz lagged behind the other SUNY campuses in implementing GE assessment since we had requested an extension of the assessment deadline until our GE III program was in place. Campuses in SUNY are required to develop a plan that would assess all areas of the GE program within a three-year cycle.

To begin, we did pilot assessments in GE categories where a single department taught most courses. Our rationale was that these assessments would be easiest to accomplish, since limited numbers of faculty would be involved. In Fall 2003 and Spring 2004, we performed pilot GE assessments in our categories of ART, COMP (Freshman English Composition), and MATH. Our original plan also called for a pilot assessment in our FLNG (Foreign Languages) category, at the same time as the others. However, for a variety of reasons, implementation was deferred for one year. In Spring 2005, FLNG was assessed for the first time and it will be assessed again in Spring 2007. While the data obtained was not uniformly perfect, we did learn a great deal from the experience. One key insight was that course-based assessment works best for our campus. Around this time, we also standardized a number of sampling issues. Our current system is that at least 20% of all sections (or students) are assessed in the spring semesters on a three-year cycle. Departments are free to assess a greater amount, and some do. Once we have more experience with this system, we will consider improvements to it.

The second cycle of GE assessment was implemented in the Spring 2005 in four additional categories: HUM (Humanities), NSCI (Natural Sciences), SSCI (Social Sciences), and WEST (Western Civilization). The second cycle involved a much broader scale implementation of our course-based approach to assessment. While there is a minimum 20% sample required in a GE Category several of the colleges assessed 100% of the students in their GE courses undergoing the assessment. Such a broad scale effort is not without its challenges, but the faculty should be commended for their efforts in the Spring 2005. While New Paltz met the external reporting requirements for SUNY, several issues and challenges emerged and will be addressed as we focus our internal effort toward improvement of our General Education program. These include:

- Improved communication with faculty and departments about how the sampling process works.
- Better information and professional development opportunities to address issues of validity and reliability in assessment methods.
- Better information and greater efficiency in how we collect the assessment data from individual faculty.
- Offering more opportunities for dialogue about what the assessment data means and how to make changes to the curriculum as a result.

Appendices D3 (GE Campus Report) and D4 (GE Summary Report) show the Spring 2005 GE III assessment of student learning outcomes results reported to SUNY System.

The remaining GE categories will be assessed for the first time in Spring 2006, together with two competencies. The categories to be assessed include USST (United States Studies) and WRLD (World Civilizations and Cultures). Though our campus also has a GE category called DIVR (Diversity, meaning the study of historically under-represented groups in the United States), which is not required by the SUNY Board of Trustees, we do not plan to assess it at this time, as the SUNY-mandated GE categories take precedence. We will incorporate this category into our GE assessment schedule in the future.

The two competencies that are up for assessment in Spring 2006 are IL (Information Literacy, meaning the ability to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively, corresponding to the Trustees' Information Management requirement) and SI (Systematic Inquiry, corresponding to courses giving intensive coverage to critical thinking skills). Since there are only a few courses with the IL competency being offered in the spring, all of them will be assessed. The situation with SI is more complicated, as many more courses have designated this competency. (Almost all Math and Science courses are SI courses, for instance, as well as others). To simplify implementation, we will perform the SI competency assessments in courses at the same time that their content category assessments are done. Thus, courses in USST and WRLD with the SI competency will be assessed in Spring 2006, but this competency will not be assessed in other courses until their content category assessments are due.

In the course of completing these initial phases of GE assessment, we have learned quite a bit about how to best approach the process. We now solicit and evaluate many departmental assessment plans well before the courses involved are scheduled to be assessed. Increased involvement of faculty governance in assessment planning is another improvement in the process. Assessment plans now go to our faculty GE Board for approval, where they are examined for the validity and reliability of the assessment processes proposed. Our ultimate goal is to have complete assessment plans on file for all GE courses offered by all departments.

Our current assessment schedule, which will be repeated in a three-year cycle, is:

- Spring 2007: ART category, COMP category, FLNG category, MATH category, and courses in ART, COMP, FLNG and MATH for the SI competency.
- Spring 2008: HUM category, NSCI category, SSCI category, WEST category, courses in HUM, NSCI, SSCI and WEST for the SI competency.
- Spring 2009: USST category, WRLD category, courses with the IL competency, courses in USST and WRLD for the SI competency.

From the time that GE III was adopted, we have conducted workshops and forums each year to help faculty learn more about assessment-related issues. These have been very effective in helping faculty to implement assessment throughout the GE categories.

Our assessment process could best be described as consultative. Although such a process is deliberative and time-consuming, it results in greater understanding and commitment on the part of those involved. Through this consultation, we have developed a finer understanding of our

assessment philosophy and clarified the level of detail that is most meaningful to internal and external constituents.

In GE assessment, one significant success is that the faculty Curriculum Committee, using guidelines that focus on aligning course objectives with GE learning outcomes, has approved all GE courses. Although curriculum design is not a direct measure of student learning, it is a necessary step in effective assessment. The committee's review process, albeit painful at times, has established a solid foundation for the face validity of our assessment methods and measures.

An aspect of GE assessment that we are working to improve is the development of measures of student learning that provide credible evidence of the extent to which students have achieved the stated outcomes or skills. In judging the appropriateness of assessment plans, we rely on answers to the following questions:

- Does this plan measure the objective it is intended to measure (i.e., does it have reasonable *face validity*)?
- Does this plan provide assurances that the measure is *reliable*, particularly with respect to the ability of two independent scorers to rate it similarly (i.e., does it have inter-observer reliability)? This issue is less important for objective measures (e.g., multiple choice exams), but critical for qualitative approaches (e.g., portfolios).
- Will the data reported be representative?
- Does the plan include standards to which student performance relative to the learning outcomes in the objectives can be compared (i.e., defining what level of student performance the faculty considers “exceeding,” “meeting,” “approaching,” and “not meeting” standards)?
- Are mechanisms identified for sharing assessment results with appropriate faculty and for making programmatic improvements based on the assessment results?

Despite achievements in our assessment efforts, further improvements are needed. Departments must adopt more direct measures of student learning. A clearer process for departmental reporting of formal assessment results is required. We also need to continue to find ways to encourage and persuade those faculty who continue to resist full participation in assessment. There remains, therefore, a need to offer continued professional development opportunities and to schedule these sessions during times when faculty have time to participate.

### **Assessment in the Academic Major**

This section of the Periodic Review Report describes: (a) the overall process for developing assessment plans for academic majors in all the Schools; (b) the extent to which student learning outcomes have been identified and assessed; and (c) successes achieved and challenges revealed. An overview of New Paltz' progress in this area is in a summary chart in Appendix D5. Where appropriate, information for external accrediting bodies is referenced. For example, all teacher education programs at SUNY New Paltz conduct outcomes assessment in accordance with the

national accrediting body, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), submitting reports to their specialty professional associations. These reports assess teacher candidate performance against standards defined by the professional association and must be supported by assessment data collected and reviewed for each standard.

## **School of Fine and Performing Arts**

### **Background**

All departments in the School of Fine and Performing Arts are nationally accredited by their respective, interrelated, accrediting bodies. All of these organizations require a learning outcomes-based assessment program for all programs within the major. The National Association of Schools of Theatre re-accredited the Theatre Department in Spring 2005. In 2003, the Art Department and the Art History Department received re-accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). (Art Education, as part of the Art Department is accredited under NASAD, as well as NCATE). The Music Department was re-accredited in Spring 2004 by the National Association of Schools of Music, and the curriculum for Music Therapy was reviewed for a ten-year renewal, with a pending March 2006 approval date, through the American Music Therapy Association. That is to say, assessment has a ten-year history within the school and is widely held to be important. We are now in the process of creating a second set of assessment plans that will encompass the national association requirements and simultaneously satisfy the State of New York. The School of Fine and Performing Arts has completed related program assessment plans aligned with state requirements for the Art Department and the Music Department. The Art History Department is in the process of revising its initial assessment plan with completion targeted for the end of the Fall 2005 semester. The Theatre Department will be preparing a plan in the immediate future.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Development**

Art: Through individual art projects and written assignments, as well as group and individual critiques, faculty prepare students to exhibit their work or pursue independent projects in capstone experiences. Student learning outcomes are directly measured through the evaluation of portfolios (visual and written), formal exhibitions, and capstone projects.

Art History: Students' comprehension of material is assessed through a variety of written assignments (e.g., response papers, in-class comparisons, reviews, research papers, essay-style midterms, and final exams) and a reading and discussion of majors' assessment portfolios (submitted by all majors during their final semester, comprising three term papers written for art history).

Music: Students' command of the subject is measured through the evaluation of recitals, compositions, written assignments, self-evaluations, and internships. See Appendix D6 illustrating student learning outcomes and their measures for Music.

Theatre: Student learning is most accurately measured through the exhibition and performance of student work at the end of the semester. Virtually every performance class (i.e., acting, directing, speech, and singing) has a public performance during finals week where all of the departmental faculty can see the students' efforts and growth on display. Likewise, in the design and technical

areas, students' work is presented in a design/technical exhibition for the department. These performances and exhibitions allow the faculty to reflect on teaching and learning in the departmental curriculum.

### **Successes and Challenges**

The accreditation of each department by reputable national organizations is certainly a success. Internal assessment programs are well underway within the School, but must be completed for each department. Additional budgeting in support of assessment is still needed. The greatest challenge within the school is aligning the assessment plans required by national accrediting agencies with the related, but slightly different criteria required by the State of New York to avoid duplication of effort and bifurcation of goals.

## **School of Business**

### **Background**

The School of Business is a single unit comprised of the disciplines of Accounting, Finance, International Business, Management, Marketing, Operations Management, and Quantitative Analysis. At the undergraduate level, majors include Accounting, Finance, General Business, International Business, Management, and Marketing. At the MBA level, concentrations include Accounting, Finance, International Business, and Management.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Development**

The School of Business has developed an assessment plan at the undergraduate level. Learning objectives have been identified for the undergraduate core (the courses taken by all majors) and for each undergraduate major. Faculty have developed a number of assessment tools and begun either pilot-testing or full implementation of them during the past two years. Over the course of these efforts, certain assessment tools have been found to be ineffective. For example, it was discovered that a pre/post-test writing assessment did not adequately address established learning objectives and a writing skills rubric will be developed instead. The assessment plan in Business relies almost entirely on course-embedded measures, as described below.

### **Assessment Plan Implementation**

An objective exam is used to assess student learning outcomes in the undergraduate core. Questions are embedded in the final exams of a number of core courses. Results from the first iteration of the exam were used to improve and develop new exam items. Since then, the exam has been used three times, and a pattern of data is now available for analysis. Course and curriculum improvements based on findings from the Spring 2005 data will be implemented in Spring 2006. This process will be continued over the next year at least, with continued program improvements.

A rubric to assess our students' performance in verbal skills, specifically Presentation Skills, has also been developed and can be found in Appendix D7. It is currently being tested and data from this pilot will be analyzed before officially implementing this assessment in appropriate core courses in Spring 2006. An analytical skills rubric is being developed for use with a case study in Strategic Management, our capstone course, and will also be implemented in Spring 2006. MBA assessments will begin to be developed in the spring semester, as well.

## **Challenges**

The strategy of the School of Business is to develop assessment tools one at a time to address specific learning objectives. Appropriate sampling frames and inter-rater reliability are the biggest challenges in developing an assessment plan in Business.

## **School of Education**

### **Background**

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) comprised of the School of Education and the departments of Art Education, housed within the School of Fine and Performing Arts, and Communication Disorders, within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, is nationally accredited through NCATE. As such, the PEU has an extensive assessment plan. Initially developed prior to the institution's first NCATE accreditation visit in 2003, it has gone through multiple revisions and is now being implemented. An electronic data management system is being developed simultaneously with assessment instruments to permit direct data collection from a variety of different sources. These sources include new institutional assessment instruments developed by PEU faculty, state licensing exams, as well as grades and other demographics from the SUNY New Paltz student records system. Data from these sources provides a full picture of each candidate, an aggregated view of programs specifically, and general PEU-wide trends.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Development**

The scope of the PEU's original assessment plan was very broad. In an effort to make that plan manageable and one that could be implemented, members of the PEU met several times during summer 2004 and developed the PEU Framework Rubric. This rubric restates the values and commitments that are the underpinning of the college's Professional Education Framework into measurable student learning outcomes. Thereafter, unit-wide assessment instruments were developed to address the various items in each section: (1) Inquiry and Intellectual Growth, (2) Professionalism, (3) Appreciation of Human Diversity, as well as (4) Advocacy for Students and Democratic Citizenship. These unit-wide assessments include a final evaluation of the student teaching/internship experience, a long-range planning assessment, assessment of professional dispositions, and an assessment of candidate impact on P-12 student learning. These instruments include assessment items common to all programs with areas for comments as well as a section for program-specific items to be included. All instruments are web-based to make data collection easier and to be able to aggregate and disaggregate data across and within programs.

### **Assessment Plan Implementation**

Newly developed assessment instruments, described in the previous section, correspond to the Professional Education Unit's Framework Rubric and to the standards set by NCATE and their Specialty Professional Associations (SPAs). During the Fall 2005 semester, PEU faculty, supervisors and cooperating teachers began using the final internships/student teaching assessment instruments. A few problems in accessing the online form and going back into completed semester assessment reports were identified and have been resolved. During Spring 2006, the other new unit-wide assessment instruments, Long Range Planning, Dispositions and P-12 Student Learning are being piloted. The results of administering these assessment

instruments will be discussed and used for SPA reports to be completed during summer and fall 2006. These will be the basis of our second accreditation visit, scheduled for spring 2008.

During Summer 2006 faculty will spend time analyzing the results and efficacy of these new assessment instruments. They will be looking for trends in candidate performance, feedback from those using the new assessments, as well as suggestions for changes and improvements. The Candidate Level Reporting – Performance Report, found in Appendix D8, complements these assessment instruments and identifies the measures or sources that correspond to each item of the framework rubric. Currently faculty members are discussing the other assessments that will complete this form.

Program effectiveness will be ascertained from the data collected. The analysis of results will help to identify areas for meaningful programmatic improvements. Within the past two years, an analysis of one of the state licensing exams, the Liberal Arts and Sciences Test (L.A.S.T.), a test that assesses candidates' general knowledge, was conducted. The overall scores and sub-scores for native (four-year) and transfer (two-year) SUNY New Paltz candidates were examined. From this analysis of several years' results of this test, it was determined that students transferring in from community colleges did not score significantly differently from students who attended SUNY New Paltz as first-year students. The results also showed similar patterns relative to students' academic performance. Two meetings were held to share the results of this analysis, one for non-education faculty from SUNY New Paltz and the other with faculty from our feeder community colleges.

The areas being assessed PEU-wide and to be reported in the SPA reports for our next accreditation visit in Spring 2008 include a final evaluation of student teaching/internships; long-range planning; state licensing exams; dispositions; exit, alumni, and employer surveys; and documentation of how our candidates impact P-12 student learning in schools.

### **Obstacles and Resource Needs**

Newly developed assessment instruments that correspond to the Professional Education Unit's Framework Rubric and to the standards set by NCATE and its Specialty Professional Associations (SPAs) are in the early stages of implementation. The effectiveness of programs will be determined from the data collected, with changes and improvements made from analyses of these data. This task has presented a variety of challenges, including getting faculty to agree on a single set of assessment instruments that could be used unit wide and meet multi-level programmatic needs. Training of faculty, college supervisors, as well as cooperating teachers and administrators will be needed to ensure that all parties are using the assessment instruments in a similar fashion. This will also increase the inter-rater reliability of the instruments. Data analysis will be another obstacle to overcome. The sheer volume of data to analyze and the best methods to report that data are concerns which must be addressed. As we move closer to our next accreditation visit, more time, money and personnel resources will need to be directed towards this end.

## **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

### **Background**

Departments in Liberal Arts and Sciences (LA&S) have gone from having no program assessment plans three years ago to having most plans completed today, in large part due to the leadership and support of Associate Dean Lynn Spangler. After faculty approval of the ASC's campus-wide assessment recommendations in 2002, the Dean's office in LA&S worked with Kelli Parmley of the Office of Institutional Research and Janice Anderson from Communication and Media to prepare a guide for the creation of assessment plans for LA&S departments (<http://www.newpaltz.edu/collegelas/lasassessmentmanual.pdf>). For most faculty members, not only was the process of assessment new, but the vocabulary (e.g., "performances," "stakeholders") was, as well. Written guidance and workshops were essential to increasing their comfort and knowledge.

### **Development of Student Learning Outcomes**

Since many departments offer more than one major or program, they have developed/are developing several assessment plans. Of the 16 departments in LA&S, 14 have developed at least one plan based on their majors. (These plans and other LA&S assessment materials can be found at [http://www.newpaltz.edu/collegelas/infodepts\\_assessment.html](http://www.newpaltz.edu/collegelas/infodepts_assessment.html)). The two interdisciplinary majors not connected to a particular department (Asian Studies and Latin American Studies) also will be preparing assessment plans. All programs should have assessment plans by the end of Fall 2006.

LA&S assessment programs have gone through an extensive feedback process beginning with the associate dean, and proceeding to LA&S senate, LA&S dean, curriculum committee, and associate provost. At each stage, departments have had the option of revising their plans based on feedback or leaving them as they were. LA&S administrators want departments to "own" their plans since the faculty know their programs best and are the ones doing the assessment. All plans include department mission statements; program scope, activities and processes; program goals and performances; student goals and performances; and plans for measuring both program and student performances. Most departments plan to use both direct and indirect measures.

Two LA&S departments are accredited by external agencies. Communication Disorders is accredited by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and by NCATE and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accredited the Nursing program. As a result, these faculty are experienced in assessing direct student learning outcomes. For example, Communication Disorders administers a comprehensive exam to graduate students to test their ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate specific knowledge and uses a rubric for grading. Students who seek professional certification and licensure also take tests that measure their learning. The nursing program uses course-embedded assessment methods. Nursing faculty regularly meets to discuss assessment results and make plans for any needed changes to their curriculum.

By comparison, most other LA&S departments are in the early stages of implementing assessment, and their progress will be communicated in departmental annual reports. The English Department is the farthest along in this process and a sample of their ongoing assessment of the composition program can be found in Appendix D9. Each year, English faculty members

create a booklet of sample papers at various levels to be used as guidelines for the application of their rubric in assessing student portfolios. They spend several hours in training to ensure the reliability and validity of their rubric.

### **Challenges**

In a school as large as LA&S, there are, of course, many challenges. Departments are being encouraged to do more direct measures of student learning. While syllabi reviews, surveys, and other indirect measures that departments have identified are useful, the assessment of students' classroom work is critical. All departments (with the exception of one) have planned to use at least one direct measure of learning outcomes, but many faculty are still unclear about how to do assessment, including writing measurable performances in their syllabi, creating rubrics, and norming for reliability and validity. Workshops and working lunches have proven very beneficial and will continue to be an important part of the process. Departments also need a simple mechanism for reporting their formal assessment results. Chairs have not yet seen how this is to be integrated into their departmental annual reports, although they have provided brief summaries of assessment progress in previous annual reports.

Finally, work must continue on establishing a culture of assessment. Many faculty are still resistant for a variety of reasons. Some fear that results might be used against them and others resent the amount of time assessment demands. While most departments have prepared their assessment plans collaboratively, in some cases the responsibility has fallen to a small group of people. However, though there is still admittedly much to do, we have come a long way in three years!

## **School of Sciences and Engineering**

### **Description of Unit**

The School of Science and Engineering is comprised of six academic departments: Chemistry, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Geology, Mathematics and Physics. It also oversees Environmental Programs, which are currently under development and are housed in the Geology Department.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Development**

Each of the six academic departments within the School has developed an outcomes assessment plan for their undergraduate major programs. During the 2004-2005 academic year, outcomes objectives were agreed upon and program assessment plans were written to determine the strengths and weaknesses of these programs in meeting their stated goals and objectives. We note that many students in Chemistry, Geology, Mathematics and Physics are getting an education degree, and are simultaneously subject to NCATE mandated assessment through the School of Education.

### **Assessment Plans Implementation**

#### Chemistry

The Chemistry Department faculty has identified six critical skills that they intend to impart to their majors. See Appendix D10 for the Chemistry Department's assessment plan. Students'

mastery of these skills will be evaluated by instructors in one of four advanced laboratory courses on a rotating basis, and recorded as exceeding, meeting or not meeting expectations. In addition, graduates will be surveyed 2 and 5 years after graduation to determine the extent to which the program met their needs. These assessments will be implemented beginning this spring.

### Computer Science

Computer Science is accredited by ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology). Their Fall 2004 ABET review revealed only one concern from the visiting ABET team: an inadequate assessment process. The department responded successfully with a detailed assessment plan, matching each goal and objective of the program with a specific course requirement. Computer Science is now accredited by ABET through 2009.

### Engineering

Engineering is also nationally accredited by ABET. As a result of consultations with last fall's visiting accreditation team, the Engineering Department is currently revising both its goals and objectives and its assessment process to bring them into closer alignment with ABET standards. The new assessment process will be considerably streamlined and will be tied much more closely to the required Senior Design Projects. We have every expectation that this process will settle the last remaining concerns of our ABET accreditors.

### Geology

The Department of Geological Sciences has submitted a detailed list of goals and objectives for their majors. Their assessment plan, which will be implemented this spring, calls for graduating students to complete a survey telling, on a scale from 0 to 5, the extent to which each objective was successfully met.

### Mathematics

In December 2005, the Mathematics Department implemented its assessment program by agreeing upon key questions that were put on the final exams in the final two required courses, Intermediate Analysis 1 and Introduction to Abstract Algebra 1. These questions were designed to assess the stated goals for mathematics majors. In February 2006, the faculty will review the results of this assessment and consider means to improve the results.

### Physics

Physics, like Engineering, is tying its program assessment to required Senior Projects in which their students must demonstrate that they have achieved the department's goals and objectives or reveal where they remain weak. Students are currently engaged in these projects and assessments will take place at the end of the academic year.

### **Challenges**

At this point the challenge faced by each of our departments, and by the school as a whole, is to make these assessment plans work effectively to improve the programs that we offer. These approaches are quite varied, as are the underlying disciplines. Our intention is, after several assessment cycles, to assess the effectiveness of each of these assessment plans and modify them as appropriate to make them more effective.

## SUPPORT FOR ASSESSMENT

At SUNY New Paltz, the university resources and support for assessment provided thus far reflect an institutional commitment to assessment and awareness that such support is mandatory in fostering assessment success. Administrators understand that while top-level leadership is essential in establishing outcomes assessment as a priority and in sustaining it over time, knowledgeable individuals at other levels of the institution are needed to oversee assessment efforts and to keep the process moving forward. As such, in Spring 2004 a new associate provost position was created in the Office of Academic Affairs. This individual has responsibility for helping to define, plan, develop, and oversee assessment efforts throughout the academic departments and academic support units. The administration also hired a new associate dean in the School of Fine and Performing Arts to work closely with faculty in that school on assessment-related activities. In addition to new hires, the administration allocated financial resources to develop a campus-wide alumni survey whose results will be used in conjunction with assessment and accreditation processes. Money has also been set aside to support institution-wide assessment activities. In addition, many of our part-time faculty members have received a small stipend for participating in norming sessions.

There is also support for assessment activities from external sources. For example, as mentioned above, the Professional Education Unit of SUNY New Paltz is a collaborating member of a FIPSE grant awarded to the 16 SUNY teacher education colleges. The grant has provided funding for a principal investigator and an institutional researcher from SUNY New Paltz to attend semi-annual meetings of the group that began in Fall 2003. At these gatherings, members share assessment strategies and instruments used to determine the effectiveness, strengths, and weaknesses of teacher education programs, as well as the successes, challenges, and issues of common concern. A statement about the grant and its purpose can be found at SUNY Oswego's web site: [http://www.oswego.edu/administration/public\\_affairs/releases/oct03/fipse.html](http://www.oswego.edu/administration/public_affairs/releases/oct03/fipse.html)

As part of the project, workshops have informed the group about the latest developments in assessment implementation. Selected topics include *Rubric Creation* and *The Renaissance Project's Teacher Work Samples for Assessing P-12 Student Learning*. The grant paid stipends to faculty members for working to define operationally the learning outcomes of the Professional Education Framework, known as the Professional Education Unit's Framework Rubric. The grant also funded the hiring of a web programmer to construct a data management system designed by teacher education faculty.

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUNY New Paltz is committed to maintaining a culture of assessment at the university, one in which action is based on outcomes. Under new leadership, the campus community is in the process of building on a base of excellence as it reaches the next level of accountability and achievement. During the past five years, assessment at the departmental and unit levels as well as the institutional level has been a major focus. The college has begun to make institutional effectiveness practices systematic.

The campus has made significant progress on academic and outcomes assessment in the past five years. However, the institution is aware that there are assessment goals and objectives yet to be achieved. The following recommendations will further help the institution to accomplish its assessment goals and objectives:

### **1. Writing Student Learning Outcomes**

Faculty and staff engaging in assessment, particularly in the areas of General Education assessment and assessment in the major need opportunities to write student learning outcomes and class assignments that relate to standards that indicate the level at which the learning outcomes are being met. The opportunities can be in the form of workshops through the Teaching and Learning Center and departmental sessions within the colleges/schools.

### **2. Developing Valid and Reliable Assessment Methods**

Although the administrative staff and the faculty have made substantial progress in developing valid and reliable assessment methods, there is need for ongoing professional development opportunities in these areas. For example, faculty need continued support in developing instruments that include standards to which student performance, relative to the learning outcomes in the objectives, can be compared.

### **3. Support for the Storage and Analysis of Assessment Data**

Designated secure space must be provided for electronic and hard copy storage of assessment materials/artifacts. Additional resources are also needed for data analysis.

### **4. Continued Professional Development Opportunities**

To ensure that faculty and staff are knowledgeable of best practices in assessment, continued professional development opportunities should be offered (e.g., workshops on “Writing Student Learning Outcomes,” and “Developing Valid and Reliable Assessment Methods”).

### **5. Continued Implementation of Administrative and Academic Support Assessment**

The Administrative Assessment Support Committee (AASC) has made substantial progress in educating its members and in promoting assessment across campus. However, the demands of staff time in operational units and in Institutional Research have made progress (both in receiving plans and in providing feedback to units) uneven. There are several administrative units that are substantially impacted by Banner implementation and implementation of assessment in these areas will prove to be particularly challenging. The responsibility for assessment, including the development, implementation (and reporting), and use of assessment data should be the responsibility of each Vice President.

### **6. “Closing the Loop”**

A process for reporting assessment results, analysis, and actions taken as a result of the assessments needs to be formalized across academic and administrative divisions. There is currently no formal requirement or mechanism for demonstrating what departments (both academic and administrative) are doing with respect to assessment and how they are utilizing the information to demonstrate quality or to improve. A process should be implemented within each division and an annual, campus-wide report identifying how New Paltz is using assessment results should be developed (This would also make Middle States ten-year review process substantially more manageable).

Faculty and staff engaging in assessment, particularly in the area of General Education, need opportunities to discuss and understand assessment results if assessment is to move beyond an endeavor that at present is engaged for purposes of external accountability. Through the teaching and learning center and within the colleges/schools, regular opportunities to discuss, understand, and make improvements should be facilitated for faculty.

### **7. Linking Assessment to Budgeting**

While New Paltz has clearly made progress in implementing assessment in less than 5 years (since the last visit), the institution will continue to strengthen the relationship of assessment to institutional budgeting and planning processes. As departments improve the quality of their methods for assessment (e.g., validity and reliability) and the campus develops a stronger reporting process within each division, a strong connection between assessment, planning, and budgeting needs to be forged. SUNY New Paltz recognizes that strong budgeting and planning processes are based on systematic, quality evidence to guide decisions. Quality assessment data is at least one way to inform those processes.

## Section 6 Evidence of Linked Institutional Planning and Budgeting

### OVERALL PLANNING AND BUDGETING

New Paltz is conscientious about implementing budget decisions that are driven by priorities derived directly from our mission. The campus has linked planning and budgeting through a number of on-going processes described below. This chapter offers an overview of planning and budgeting priorities, and then will offer a more specific discussion of the planning and budgeting processes in functional areas that figure prominently in New Paltz' comprehensive plans for the next five years.

Our recent Mission of Understanding (MOU) document, forged collaboratively on campus through an iterative process with SUNY System Administration, highlights New Paltz' most prominent characteristics today as its strong - and growing - academic quality; its deep connections to the culture and economy of the mid-Hudson region; the comprehensiveness of its academic programs (which cover a broader range than is the case at other SUNY colleges); and its diverse population, itself a source of academic strength and vibrancy.

Planning and budgeting functions stem from these core facets of the New Paltz mission as articulated in the MOU. In recent years, New Paltz has taken significant strides in enrolling, retaining and graduating a more talented and serious student body. We continue to assess our best strategies for attracting an increasingly strong pool of student applicants through increased recruiting in certain geographic regions, improved web application services and by soliciting endowed scholarships to award merit aid to the most academically competitive applicants. In Spring 2004, a Branding Taskforce was constituted to work in conjunction with Institutional Research and a marketing research firm, Carnegie Communications. The findings of these endeavors will guide recruitment strategies and resources through 2010.

Admissions and retention are key motivators in our renewed emphasis on improving the physical appearance (and smooth functioning) of the campus through renovations, enhanced maintenance, and expanded grounds keeping. A new Welcome Center has been opened this semester so we may better welcome and inform campus visitors and prospective students, sharing a broad range of information, directions and services. Classrooms and other learning environments have figured heavily into campus renovation efforts; one major classroom and faculty office building, van den Berg Hall, was completely renovated over the last two years and another, Old Main, is scheduled to begin in the next two years. The new Athletic and Wellness Center, funded through the SUNY Construction Fund and largely operated through student activity fees, should prove quite valuable in both recruiting and retaining qualified students.

Our master's degree programs provide enhanced professional opportunities and preparation for further advanced studies for our region's residents, and, in some cases, attract significant numbers of out-of-state and international students. As we note in the MOU, graduate enrollment has declined in recent semesters, linked to some extent to changes in State Education requirements for teacher certification. While the majority of graduate students are in the School of Education, other graduate programs have also experienced some decline related to tightened

visa restrictions for international students. We have recently opened a graduate school admission center near the main entrance to the campus, where prospective students receive individual attention to their inquiries and appointments will be arranged with specific program faculty. More importantly, the college is investigating and funding new and expanded graduate programs, such as a program in School Counseling, which would allow us to draw new and talented pools of graduate students and serve regional needs.

Attracting, retaining and graduating academically talented and serious students is intimately related to New Paltz' ability to attract and retain gifted faculty. The college aspires to offer the finest and most intellectually engaging undergraduate education in the State University of New York and to compete successfully for strong students with excellent public and private colleges and universities across the Northeast. We are aware that to achieve the level of academic competitiveness and status we strive for, SUNY New Paltz must increase its percentage of full-time faculty. As we note in the MOU, our goal is to have tenure-track faculty coverage of each required sub disciplinary area in each department and a sufficient number of full-time faculty in large departments to meet the need for advisors for majors and to provide curricular leadership. We also recognize that it is vital to our mission to have faculty on campus and available not only for teaching but for student advisement and mentoring.

Building the ranks of highly qualified, full-time faculty is a planning and budgeting priority for New Paltz. Each year, department chairs request faculty lines based on programmatic and accreditation requirements, replacement for faculty attrition (not automatic under our system), increased enrollment, general education offerings and the like. To determine minimum acceptable levels for each department, we have undertaken a retrospective study of number of majors, numbers of students served by each department for General Education, and the number of sub disciplinary areas taught in each department. Careful consideration is then given by the Deans, Provost and Cabinet as to the number of new faculty lines available each year and which requests fit most closely with our institutional goals and requirements. We anticipate that, should budget projections remain fairly consistent, New Paltz will be able to significantly increase its full-time faculty in the next two years and reduce its dependence on part-time instruction.

Facilities are a consideration when attracting and retaining talented faculty as well as students. We are experiencing a serious lack of faculty office space, which to some extent limits our hiring potential. Furthermore, new faculty often require more extensive space for their research activities than has been true in the past; a dilemma hardly exclusive to New Paltz. We are working with the State University Construction Fund to shape a capital plan for campus that better reflects New Paltz' current assessment of facilities needs. Many campus buildings are in need of renovation/rehabilitation to accommodate increasing needs for technology, changing instructional styles and the modernization of building systems for greater climate control and energy efficiency. The Department of Residence Life is working collaboratively with the Facilities Operations Department to assess existing physical plant needs of the residence halls and to develop a long-term aesthetic improvement plan. Scheduled for the next five years are renovations to bathrooms, lighting, lobbies, and carpeting, and electrical upgrades to individual rooms. New Paltz is also working with the SUNY Construction Fund and our local representatives to address concerns about our Student Union Building and the Sojourner Truth Library.

Finally, through the MOU New Paltz addresses some of its challenges, priorities and plans with regards to student admissions, diversity, retention and graduation rates. We know from a variety of assessment data that while our admissions standards have been more selective over the past several years, our retention rates and the time it takes students to complete their degrees have not improved commensurately. As we plan and budget in the foreseeable future, tools, strategies and especially personnel lines that would contribute to improvement in these areas will be given high priority. In addition to the increase in full-time faculty, we will be investing in faculty and professional advisement and the technological tools that support this critical function.

SUNY New Paltz does not practice historical budgeting or base budgets strictly on enrollment. We have developed and articulated, through the MOU and through communication between campus constituencies, a mission and goals for the advancement of the college. The President's Cabinet considers the entire institutional budget in light of those goals. We carefully align what few discretionary resources we have with institutional priorities and make funding decisions based on where the campus needs lie, what has been done well and what shows promise for the future enhancement of the institution. The following section offers more specifics on key functional areas targeted for action in the MOU.

### **BUDGET DEVELOPMENT/RESOURCE REQUEST PROCESS**

Annual projects and resource requests are developed in a bottom up process beginning with individual departments. Department chairs and directors prepare realistic prioritized budget requests linked directly to their specific role within the college. Previous year allocations along with the pattern of expenditures (a compilation of expenditures by subcategory current to the time when budget reviews take place) form the basis of the review.

The resource request process for the new fiscal year begins early in the spring semester, following a schedule that has been developed in consultation with the Budget, Plans and Goals Committee of faculty governance (see Appendix F). When there are new permanent dollars available or significantly reduced costs that produce a permanent positive budget balance, requests for permanent funding are reviewed. After departmental resource requests are completed, they are forwarded to the appropriate unit managers in order to clarify and prioritize funding needs. Unit budget requests are then finalized and incorporated into each vice president's total budget request.

As may be seen from Figure 6.1 on the following page, approximately 96% of the university's educational and general budget is committed to personnel expenditures and other fixed costs, with only 04% available for other expenditures. Because of limited discretionary dollars, repairs and renovations to facilities, and supplements for operating and student employment budgets must be carefully considered.

**Figure 6.1**

<b>SUNY New Paltz 2005-06 Budget Allocations (Initial)</b>	
<b>Budget Category</b>	
<b>Personal Service Instructional</b>	16,942,503
<b>Personal Service Non-Instructional</b>	20,702,775
<b>Personal Service - Other</b>	<u>403,664</u>
<b>Total Personal Service</b>	<b>37,996,378</b>
<b>Temp Service - Instructional</b> 3,248,823	
<b>Temp Service - Other</b> 434,088	
<b>Temp Service - Non-Instructional</b> <u>187,565</u>	
<b>Total Temp Service</b>	<b>3,870,476</b>
<b>Supplies</b>	1,564,693
<b>Travel</b>	391,615
<b>Contract Services</b>	1,727,505
<b>Library Acquisitions</b>	552,644
<b>Equipment</b>	196,889
<b>Utilities</b>	2,665,000
<b>Unallocated</b>	<u>                    </u>
<b>Total Other Than Personal Service</b>	<b>7,098,346</b>
<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>48,965,200</b>

The Office of the Vice President for Administration prepares an initial base budget in mid-spring semester, projecting funding requirements for on-going expenses at the previous year’s level plus adjustments for anticipated personnel rate increases, utility cost projections, costs associated with existing contracts, and other factors. Revenue projections are based on anticipated enrollments and alternative scenarios for possible state allocation and tuition levels are created. The SUNY system administration usually informs the campus of its allocation (determined principally by a formula based on agreed-upon FTE enrollment and cost-of-program factors) and the amount that it must raise from tuition about a month to six weeks after the State University's overall budget has been finalized by the governor and legislature (on time, April 1, last year for the first time in two decades).

In-depth budget discussions occur during spring and summer at the Executive Cabinet level. These discussions focus on the relationship between planning documents and resource requests. After receipt of the final appropriation level and any changes to tuition rates (a relatively rare occurrence in the State of New York), the Cabinet meets in August to finalize the campus' budget. Figures must be submitted to and accepted by our system administration, typically in late August dependant upon when the New York State budget passes. The amount that we have allocated to materials, supplies and utilities are particularly closely scrutinized in Albany. If they appear too low, we must reallocate from others budget areas. Also carefully reviewed are our full-time personnel numbers and total amount, to ensure that we have allocated sufficient funds to cover negotiated salary increases and to ensure that the amount of fringe benefits to be allocated separately by our system administration is accurate.

The budget is reviewed again after the beginning of the fall and spring semesters to determine what adjustments, if any, are warranted. This re-budget process allows the institution flexibility to address emergent needs or opportunities or to fund requests that could not be funded in the original budget. The re-budget process provides an additional opportunity to align dollars with priorities specified in strategic plans.

#### **EVIDENCE OF LINKED PLANNING AND BUDGETING AT THE DIVISION LEVEL**

This section presents the university's major divisional responsibilities and how budgets were allocated in accordance with each set of responsibilities. Each year's plan is developed through an inclusive process with representatives of all areas of the institution as appropriate.

##### **Academic Affairs**

Major budget considerations for this division over the past five years have included:

- Provide sufficient class seats for students to complete degree programs in a timely manner and qualified faculty to teach them.
- Enhance learning environments (classrooms, laboratories, library, etc.).
- Provide additional opportunities for faculty to engage in research and scholarly activities and for joint projects with students.
- Accommodate financial requirements for a new General Education Program and for assessment efforts.

These goals are linked to budgeting through departmental and School level budget requests as well as college-wide programmatic budgeting.

- The first goal was approached in two ways. To ensure sufficiency of course offerings, a group including the executive assistant to the provost, representatives from the registrar's office and academic advising and the associate deans of the schools make recommendations on numbers of courses needed in each curricular area. Members of this group meet with the Provost and Deans to project requirements for each upcoming semester. Recommendations are considered both for allocations for full-time and part-

time faculty based on enrollment projections, General Education needs, and course enrollment histories. Secondly, an attrition replacement budget model was developed to project the amount of funds that are likely to be available each year for replacing existing faculty. We have been attempting, within the budget allocated to us, to build upon this number each year to achieve a better full-time/part-time balance.

- To achieve the second goal, data from faculty requests for electronic classrooms and projections of needs from curricular changes channeled from departments to the Deans have been used in allocating technology funds and internal alteration/renovation funds.
- A number of funding decisions have been directed toward increasing faculty research opportunities. Based on an increasing number of applications for internal research grants, the funding for the program was increased. An increasing number of faculty have requested conference travel funding and those costs have also increased, so additional funds that have become available by initiatives to increase summer school revenue have been allocated to the Schools to support faculty travel. Some of the increased revenue was also allocated to fund equipment needed for research. A modest increase in our state allocation has also allowed us to initiate a fund to support student-faculty research. Additional funding resulting from an increase in the student technology fee has allowed the library to acquire new electronic data requested by faculty for their research.
- The new General Education program created additional demands in the arts (due to a requirement for a "hands-on" course as well as a classroom course), the sciences (also a requirement that courses involve hands-on experience, eliminating our typical large lecture format) among others. Budgeting for anticipated needs has accommodated these new requirements. Assessment efforts involve part-time faculty spending additional time in training workshops and cross-instructor grading sessions, etc., off-site training for full-time faculty, on-campus workshops by outside consultants and other expenses. An annual assessment account has been established and we are gauging our experience each year to determine the amount that should be budgeted for the next year.

## **Facilities**

In the SUNY system, planning and budgeting processes differ greatly based on the way that funding is derived for each type of activity. Therefore, this section is organized by type of funding source.

### **1. State Capital Funding**

In recent years, the State of New York has appropriated funds to the State University system through an independent agency, the State University Construction Fund, based upon a multi-year system-wide proposal. The current plan is for five years (6/2004-6/2009). The previous plan was initially passed for five years but extended without additional funding for a sixth year. In the previous project period and subsequent to our Middle States team visit, the major projects we initiated were a near doubling of our athletic center to accommodate a new competition gymnasium, indoor track and fitness areas and a complete renovation of our building

for the School of Business and the Department of Nursing (van den Berg Hall). These are now nearing completion using some of the funds from the current five-year plan.

Funds other than those for completing the projects underway at the end of the previous plan period have been restricted in the current plan (system-wide by a decision of the state legislature) to infrastructural improvements, ADA accommodations and the like. After a thorough study of existing facilities completed by the Construction Fund in conjunction with the college, some of the key projects that have been budgeted include restoration of our high temperature hot water lines and replacement of electrical generators and large air conditioning chillers. Input from faculty, staff and students as well as a review of building usage is being used to determine the order and extent of these projects. For ADA and other campus improvement projects the administration has sought input from students (particularly the student ambassadors who conduct campus tours for over 10,000 visitors annually) and we are now repairing or replacing a numbers of outside staircases, walkways and building access areas.

Recently, the legislature augmented the five-year plan budget through individual legislator-sponsored projects. New Paltz was fortunate in obtaining additional funding for our Student Union Building. The Student Union Building, built in 1970, has had no substantive work done to it since it opened. The campus has recently secured \$10 million in state capital funding for the construction of an addition to the original building. The addition will provide much needed space for on-campus programming. Planning for this addition is underway.

## 2. Operating Budget

The campus also expends facilities improvement funds from the annual operating budget. Some funds have become available from tuition collection above the amount required by our system administration. To ensure an open, collaborative and systematic approach to the expenditure of these funds, President Poskanzer established the Capital Planning Council in 2003. The Council, which consists of the Vice Presidents of Administration and Student Affairs, the Director of Campus Facilities, students, staff and faculty members, is chaired by the Provost, proposes a slate of projects each year taking into account the on-going obligations of our campus architect and planning office, facilities staff and the budget envelope given to it by the President's cabinet. Projects that have been undertaken as a result of this process include several high-technology intensive classrooms, office area alterations, improvements in the library and construction of a welcome center. Project proposals, approved projects, and the progress on approved projects are made public on the college's website.

## 3. Dormitory Fees

The third area of facilities improvements involves funding derived from fees received from housing charges. Maintaining the existing physical plant of residence halls is a difficult challenge. This is particularly true as the majority of our facilities are 35 to 45 years old. The Department of Residence Life is working collaboratively with the Facilities Operations Center to assess existing physical plant needs of the residence halls, as well as design a long-term aesthetic improvement plan. Scheduled for the next five years are renovations to building entries, bathrooms, lighting, lobbies, carpeting, and electrical upgrades to individual rooms. A window replacement project has begun for the 11 older residence halls and will be completed by 2009.

Annual reviews with Facilities and Residence Life staff provide for adjustments to the renovation schedule as needed. Furniture replacement, which began in 2001, was completed for all residence hall rooms and lounges on campus prior to the start of the 2005-06 academic year.

### **Information Technology**

The college identified in its strategic plan of 1999 the following areas or tasks impacted by or dependent upon instructional and information technology:

#### **Academic / Instruction**

- support new pedagogical modalities
- foster communication and collaboration
- support learning communities
- provide basic computer skills
- provide a significant technological experience in each discipline
- support both synchronous and asynchronous learning where determined appropriate
- coordinate efforts to support the infusion of technology to the campus

#### **Academic / Administration**

- support data systems capable of providing management and planning information
- support advising (Degree Audit)
- provide timely enrollment data / analysis to assist in time to degree and maximize use of facilities
- support One Stop Services thru both in-place and virtual services
- enhance inter-office and institution to student communications

#### **Technology**

- provide on going technology planning for the campus addressing:
  - space
  - staffing
  - budgeting
  - network infrastructure
  - technological currency
- build an adequate support infrastructure

These tasks have provided direction for the efforts of Computer Services and Instructional Media Services and the strategies to be employed for resource allocation.

#### **1. Support and foster innovation, improve communication, and enhance instruction:**

*a. Courseware / Instructional software:* Perhaps the biggest success story of the past few years has been the introduction and adoption of Blackboard for instructional use. This package has been so quickly and widely adopted, and it provides so many benefits to instructors and students, that its use on campus has become strategically important. It will be a part of hundreds of courses each semester. This can also be an effective way to

create learning communities and interest groups within and across academic areas. We are continuing to expand upon this basic platform in an effort to provide additional information and communication capabilities to the campus.

*b. Classroom technology:* We are committed to building and maintaining technologically current classrooms. We will continue to roll out electronically equipped classrooms and will need to find a way to accelerate the rate at which these resources are made available. Within traditional classrooms, we will provide basic network access. In addition, we will continue to provide support and encouragement to faculty to extend the learning environment outside the physical space thru the addition of network-based services. Since the visit in 2001 we have added or completely re-equipped nearly 40 electronic classrooms.

*c. Hardware/software tools:* We have opted not to become a ‘laptop campus’. Instead, we have robust computer labs and we are committed to keeping these at or near the cutting edge of technology. This involves replacing the hardware every three years in our most active labs and upgrading software to newer versions as they become available. Even though we will not require student laptops they are none the less becoming somewhat pervasive. In response, we are in the process of bringing wireless network access to many additional places on campus. The environment is evolving and convenient access from virtually everywhere on campus will soon be required.

*d. Distance learning space / distance learning tools:* We have obtained external funding, through a legislative initiative to build partnerships with other institutions to meet educational needs of place-bound students. This has allowed us to complete two state-of-the-art distance learning faculties that are used not only for the specific partnership program but also to provide courses at other sites, particularly for teachers seeking to complete permanent certification requirements and for video conferencing.

*e. Student support:* To ensure that the campus provides a technologically capable environment to directly address the needs of our student population, we have funded up to date, well-maintained computer labs, a Help Desk, a wired campus (all academic areas and residence halls), robust Internet access, and, in some locations, wireless access to the campus network.

## 2. Support academic department efforts to provide up to date resources and relevant experiences:

*a. Centralized staff with distributed responsibilities:* The structure used to support academic computing on campus continues to evolve. We are now in a mixed mode, where some of the professional staff have a campus-wide focus while others support groups of academic departments or special projects. This has required extra efforts to keep the staff well coordinated and functioning as a team. Indications are that this is providing good service and we plan to continue on this path.

Members of the Academic Computing staff are currently directly involved in the Teaching and Learning Center and we will continue to work with the faculty through that venue.

*b. Funding for departmental projects and innovation:* We have used the resources provided by the SUNY system program for instructional innovation (SCAP), a technology fee paid by students over and above tuition, and our state allocated operating budget to support innovation and department projects.

The current process of soliciting proposals from the faculty for SCAP funding has been working well and will likely continue. The technology fee provides the funds to hire staff, replace academic equipment at reasonable intervals, and support growth in classroom technology and library resources. A modest annual increase in these funds will enable us to keep up with the changes under way and enable us to keep pace with our peer institutions.

State allocated funds are used for a large portion of salaries, for infrastructure and for equipment needs that cannot be covered by the technology fee because they are not directly related to student use.

One of our greatest challenges in this area is to adequately fund our campus network. The college never opted for the million-dollar campus-wide network project. Instead, we have been doing things incrementally using operating funds. Bringing every building on line has been tedious, and there are several generations of network gear spread across the campus. This is typical of the gradual, evolutionary nature of technology deployment here. The relatively low level of funds assigned to this purpose has the campus moving ahead at a slow pace. We replaced the infrastructure in JFT in 2003, which was still using the thick cable Ethernet backbone from a decade ago. We are drawing funds from regular Computer Services and Telecommunications budgets for these upgrades. We should dedicate a modest increase to enable us to improve our network infrastructure on a more timely basis, or there will be a growing imbalance between what we are providing on the student / residential side (funded thru residential and Technology fees) and what we have available to faculty and staff.

*c. Governance structure to articulate campus priorities:* The newly formed Central Committee on Education Technology must continue to be active and engaged in order to address campus issues and provide guidance to Computer Services and Instructional Media Services.

### 3. Provide effective, efficient and accessible administrative systems:

*a. Virtual services / one stop services:* Our website, *my.newpaltz*, has become an excellent resource for both students and faculty and we will build on this by augmenting the collection of services available with on-line payment and services for faculty.

*b. Effective administrative systems / accessible data:* Our current administrative systems are a combination of those developed in-house and packages purchased from commercial

vendors. They provide a strong base on which to layer new systems, and some of our software tools, such as Oracle and ColdFusion, are very capable. However, as typical of 'legacy' systems, they were built over the past two decades with detailed, customized programs. We have now begun the process of transition to the Banner system. The cost, in terms of time and manpower will be high, but is a necessary investment to ensure reliable service for the future.

### **University Advancement**

The Advancement Division, which includes the Office of Alumni Affairs, Commencement and the SUNY New Paltz Foundation, has realigned its activities and expenditures to support campus priorities and to highlight campus strengths.

The President, in consultation with the SUNY New Paltz Foundation board, has focused fundraising and the Foundation spending to support three key campus priorities – attracting and retaining the best students, supporting faculty in their scholarship, and establishing the campus as a cultural hub for the region.

Fund raising activity has focused on building endowments to support these key areas:

- *Recruitment scholarships.* As New Paltz has become more selective, competition for top students has become intense. The college is increasingly offering admissions to students who have other options- often including generous aid packages. New Paltz finds itself at a competitive disadvantage in terms of resources available to offer substantial renewable scholarships to prospective students. In the past three years, the Foundation has raised nearly \$1.5 million in endowments for recruitment scholarships, and budgeted nearly \$70,000 each year from Foundation unrestricted funds.
- *Faculty Development.* The Foundation has used unrestricted funds each year to support faculty scholarship in ways that state funds cannot, including paying the cost of health insurance for faculty on sabbatical and research leaves. In addition, more than \$24,000 has been raised for an endowment to support faculty development.
- *Promoting the campus as a cultural hub:* The focus of these efforts have been to raise a meaningful endowment to support the newly constructed Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art. More than \$800,000 has been added to endowed funds to support the museum's exhibitions and programming.

In addition, these priorities guide allocation of the foundation's unrestricted revenues (an average of \$400,000) each year.

Alumni with strong ties to their alma mater are key both to future fundraising success, and to strengthening the institution's image among key influencers. Anecdotal information suggested that many alumni had graduated and not returned to the campus in many years, and have therefore communicated outdated images of the college and its strengths – particularly the growth in the liberal arts and professional programs, and the increase in the quality of students

admitted. The office of Alumni Affairs has aligned its spending, events and communications to reinforce New Paltz' image as a selective, comprehensive college of choice in the minds of alumni.

## **SUMMARY**

SUNY New Paltz University is committed to planning responsibly and practicing good stewardship of its resources. In accordance with the university mission and vision, division-level strategic plans have been developed through collaborative processes and budget decisions and allocations are based on these plans. Objectives are established and analyses are performed to validate the effective use of allocations. The college will continue to refine its approach to coordinate planning efforts and continue to connect the budget request and allocation process to long-term goals and objectives.