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Self-Study Evaluation Team Report

SUNY New Paltz
Self-Study Evaluation Team Visit: *March 23-25, 2021*

Section A: Institutional Representatives

Provide a list of the following institutional representatives at the time of the visit:

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/President

Dr. Donald Christian, President

Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Barbara G. Lyman, Interim Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Chief Financial Officer

Michele Halstead, Vice President, Administration and Finance

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, Chair

Chair of the College Council

Mr. Eli Basch, Interim Chair

Section B: Institutional Context

The State University of New York at New Paltz is a comprehensive, public, regional institution that falls within the Carnegie classification of Master's Colleges and Universities: Larger Programs. The College history began in 1828 as the New Paltz Classical School but quickly became a full-fledged academy for preparing teachers. In 1985 the academy became a State Normal School, a State Teachers' College in 1942, and was one of the charter institutions of the State University of New York (SUNY) system when it was formed in 1948. The first bachelor's degrees were awarded to the Class of 1942, and in 1947, the College began offering graduate studies in education.

Six academic divisions comprise SUNY New Paltz: the School of Business, the School of Education, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Fine and Performing Arts, the School of Science and Engineering, and the Office of Graduate and Extended Learning. With

nearly 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students, the institution offers almost 100 active programs leading to a bachelor's degree, 39 master's programs, 4 advanced certificates, and a post-master's Certificate of Advanced Study in School Leadership. In the fall 2019, the student body was composed of 6,291 full time and 516 part-time undergraduate students, and 950 graduate students. The undergraduate population is diverse: 38% are from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, 26% are first-generation college students, and 37% are Pell recipients. The student-to-faculty ratio is 16:1, with average class sizes of 24 students at the undergraduate level and 15 at the graduate level.

The self-study process at New Paltz began in the Spring, 2018, with the establishment of a Steering Committee by the President and Cabinet. This was followed by the appointment of members of Standard Working Groups with two members of the Self-Study Steering Committee co-chairing each Working Group.

The College selected the standards-based approach for the self-study because of its potential to foster campus-wide review of institutional performance within the context of the standards and criteria, institutional mission and Strategic Plan, and their institutional priorities. The standards-based approach was selected to help the College identify and describe institutional challenges and opportunities in a highly public document. SUNY New Paltz pursued the following institutional priorities for the self-study:

1. Nurture a learning environment founded on critical thinking, creativity, and the growth and sharing of knowledge;
2. Cultivate sustainability in all its forms, including institutional, social, economic, and environmental sustainability;
3. Forge community and enhance our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
4. Increase accessibility of undergraduate and graduate education in the region.

Section C: Requirements of Affiliation

In the team's judgment, the institution **appears to meet** all of the requirements of affiliation.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

The institution has shown that it is authorized to operate through its documentation of its federal compliance report and the New York State establishment of the State University of New York (SUNY). The compliance report also demonstrates that the institution is operational, communicates with the Commission, and complies with laws, regulations, and policies. The institution also meets the requirements of affiliation by providing evidence concerning its mission, student learning outcomes, governance, resources, and planning such as bylaws, organizational charts, budgets and financial plans, assessment reports, and curriculum details.

Section D: Standards for Accreditation

Standard I: Mission and Goals

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

In the team's judgment, the institution **appears to meet** this standard.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

- The Mission Statement of SUNY New Paltz clearly identifies its purpose, the students it serves and sets forth clear goals that guide strategic planning and continuous improvement. Although relatively unchanged since its adoption in 1997, the college's Mission Statement is supported and affirmed on an ongoing basis. Numerous online resources related to the institution's Mission Statement are available to the public and the campus community. These contextualize the mission in terms of strategic planning, institutional assessment, and related efforts which aim to improve the learning experience of students.
- The Mission Statement and Goals of the institution incorporate internal and external constituencies that are appropriate and germane to the context of higher education. This is exemplified by its call to the internal community to engage in "scholarly and artistic activity" and its commitment in the larger community to the "economic/cultural life of our region".
- The institution's strategic planning process has been a collaborative one, shepherded first by the Strategic Planning Council (SPC), and more recently by the Strategic Planning and Assessment Council (SPAC). It is noteworthy that the institution's Strategic Plan of 2013-2017 with its goals and priorities was extended in 2018 to reflect a shift in the overall approach to strategic planning. This shift summarized in the self-study states, "Rather than ending this plan and developing a new one, it was decided to retain the seven Essential Initiatives (with modification and adjustment) and to continue using them to guide our new approach of continuous planning and assessment, rather than sequential fixed-term strategic plans."
- SUNY New Paltz's College Council is involved in the review of all major institutional plans prior to review and approval via the SUNY Board of Trustees.

- Through dialogue and communication with the campus community, there is consistent awareness of the College's planning processes. Overall, the strategic plan appears to have broad support among the campus constituencies.
- The institution demonstrates that it engages in the periodic and ongoing evaluation and assessment of its mission and Strategic Plan via assessment mechanisms and procedures. The institution also engages in a process that aligns curricular programs with both its Mission Statement and Strategic Plan as well as SUNY's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan (The Power of SUNY).

Collegial Advice

- The team suggests that future iterations of the Strategic Plan should incorporate the current or revised Mission Statement to highlight integration and alignment.
- The team supports, as recommended in the self-study, that the institution undertake a review of its Mission Statement given that the last comprehensive review occurred in 1997.
- The team encourages the institution to continue with its plans to complete a campus wide climate study.

Recommendations

- *None*

Requirements

- *None*

Recognition of Accomplishments, Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

- The team commends SUNY New Paltz on its ongoing strategic planning efforts and processes to meet the evolving needs of the campus. This includes the shift from a fixed-term strategic plan model to an ongoing continuous improvement model with a heightened focus on results related to student learning and institutional effectiveness.
- The team commends SUNY New Paltz for its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion including the reorganization of the Human Resources group into the Office of Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion, adoption of a Diversity and Inclusion Plan, and the Peregrine Complex renaming project.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

In the team's judgment, the institution **appears to meet** this standard.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

Summary of Findings

- Examples of the institution's commitment to academic integrity, freedom of expression, and intellectual property rights are evidenced in its policies and procedures detailed in the self-study report. The institution ensures that faculty have clear governance over curriculum and pedagogy and provides evidence that each academic area has a set of faculty bylaws that are followed to protect academic and intellectual freedom. The College also follows guidance provided by the State University of New York (SUNY).
- The institution showed great assurance of sound grievance and complaint protocols. The College functions with seven collective bargaining agreements that each have separate grievance procedures. Human Resource policies are reviewed annually for compliance purposes. The Research Compliance and Human Resources areas highlighted institutional and SUNY policies and procedures that ensure avoidance of conflict of interest, fair and impartial practices, and compliance with federal, state, and Commission requirements.
- In addition to its thorough grievance practices, the university has embraced the responsibility of creating a climate that fosters respect among all stakeholders by incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout campus through learning and development training, hiring practices, and commitment to graduating students from historically underrepresented groups. The Human Resources Diversity & Inclusion area offered 31 trainings sessions and had over 300 participants in January 2021 to expand college awareness of how diversity and inclusion is embedded in all institutional initiatives and operations. The sessions covered topics such as implicit bias and neuro-diverse students. The Diversity and Inclusion Council has expanded from being a central group of students, faculty, staff, and administration to now existing in all academic areas as sub-councils.
- In addition to efforts to improve campus climate, the institution has put forth significant effort to promote affordability and accessibility. The Digital Accessibility Committee was formally developed in 2018 and took a proactive approach to improve accessibility through initiatives such as implementing Blackboard Ally to ensure learning management system materials are accessible. The collaboration between Financial Services and

Student Accounts ensures that students understand their cost of attendance and financial aid options.

- The College provided explanations and evidence in its policies and procedures of its processes to ensure honesty and truthfulness in internal and external communications. The Office of Communications and Marketing is a communal area that plays a hands-on role in the Diversity & Inclusion Council and the Digital Accessibility Committee. The institution has revised its communication approaches to students to improve accessibility by adopting practices such as providing updates via social media and text message.
- The College has incorporated assessment of ethics and integrity into its institutional and unit-level planning and operations. In addition to compliance reviews, Sponsored Programs completes annual assessment plans and reports on ways to improve processes such as the student research experience. The institution also used assessment findings to enhance the accessibility and affordability of textbooks. The undergraduate and graduate admissions units have used assessment findings to revise recruitment efforts that resulted in a greater yield of student deposits and matriculation.

Collegial Advice

- The team suggests that the College should continue to diversify faculty and staff throughout campus through creative hiring and retention initiatives.
- The College should continue to improve the campus climate by assessing climate on a scheduled basis, using the assessment findings to develop and implement changes.
- The College should conduct exit interviews to better understand faculty attrition.
- The College should continue to expand student cost-savings through initiatives such as minimizing course fees and course material expenses.
- The College should ensure that the campus leadership listens to student concerns about the need for its commitment to inclusion to be reflected in the allocation of campus resources.

Team Recommendation(s)

- *None*

Requirement(s)

- *None*

Recognition of Accomplishments, Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

- The institution should be recognized for its adaptability to serve high-need students during the Covid-19 emergency. The Scholar's Mentorship Program and Educational Opportunity Program provided needy students with WiFi and laptops, at no cost to the student, to ensure their success.
- The Sponsored Programs office's support of and collaboration with HREB has led to it becoming qualified to conduct prison research. This initiative is a new way of expanding intellectual freedom.
- The team would like to recognize the institution's campus-wide diversity and accessibility efforts, including offering Roger Pens to students with hearing aids, creating an LGBTQ coordinator position, and several other responsible initiatives.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence of all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

In the team's judgment, the institution *appears to meet* this standard.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

Summary of Findings

- The institution has student learning experiences that are structured and synthetic and are informed by a high-quality General Education program that introduces undergraduates to necessary skills (which are aligned with Middle States expectations). The undergraduate programs all have capstone courses that bring the GE skills to the forefront to be assessed.
- The institution has a comprehensive portfolio of graduate studies designed to prepare students for professional careers.
- The student-centered student to faculty ratio has been consistent at 20:1 or less over the last 5+ years and the student experience is supplemented with opportunities to cross major, participate in international programs, study abroad, and, most notably, engage in experiential and applied learning (through features like the Applied Learning Tool kit, which allows for a high-quality nuanced level of learning to happen in every course). The faculty are appropriately performing and documenting high-impact practices.

- Extensive work has been done to assess general education student learning outcomes, applying a high standard of teaching through high impact practices, writing-intensive courses, general education capstones, and a diversity requirement, exemplifying the quality of the design for the student learning experience. This work is supported through a General Education Committee, a Writing Board, and a newly established Curricular Diversity Board that provides approval of diversity courses. The undergraduate program approval process has remained responsive and nimble during the pandemic period.
- The mechanisms for faculty development, including online and instructional support, appear lacking in organizational structure. Despite the diffuse nature of these operations, which are supported mostly by faculty on a part-time basis, they exemplify the excellent work that has been done during the pandemic to maintain and enhance instruction across the institution. The OIT has seen a 70% increase in faculty tickets during the pandemic, yet they still provide high quality support for faculty. Its commendable work has resulted in a positive increase in student response on course evaluations. It appears that the institution was doing a good job with these areas before the pandemic, but during the pandemic services became stronger. Now they are in search of a sustainable faculty development structure that can assure continuation of the great work.
- There is evidence that the general education program aligns with the essential skills identified in Middle States Standard 3. This information was found across a range of curricular maps and documents.
- The institution was diligent in its ability to pivot with program delivery options during the pandemic, including producing face-to-face instruction for select laboratory, studio, clinical, and equipment-based courses and relocating lecture seminar courses. In online lectures that were 60 or more students, the institution provided a teaching assistant.

Collegial Advice

- The institution does not appear to have a clear grasp on how the experiences gained through the pandemic will inform course design to meet the learning outcomes for the online student experience going forward. Online programming should be considered a means of helping the institution meet its larger institutional goals rather than simply a means of providing accessibility. Some learners are neuro-diverse, with a range of differences that may not be identified. Thus, a proactive stance on digital learning would benefit the institution.
- There is increased need for leadership, resources and support for OIT, faculty development, instructional support, and Dashlab. The pandemic has resulted in an increasing number of faculty who would benefit from faculty development to enhance the quality of their teaching in a virtual environment. The team suggests that the College develop and implement a cohesive, sustainable faculty development plan to promote

digital pedagogy and assessment of student learning within the virtual and traditional learning environments.

Team Recommendation(s)

- *The institution should provide further evidence of coherent student learning experiences appropriate to the credential levels offered; specifically, the institution should develop a comprehensive academic plan that can organize the Academy.*

Requirement(s)

- *None*

Recognition of Accomplishments, Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

- Despite the lack of a formal structured program, the team would like to recognize the Faculty Development components that are in place. Training was provided for all full-time and adjunct faculty to prepare them for teaching across the modes of delivery. It is commendable that over 600 faculty members have been enrolled in a contingency training program on Blackboard by OIT. The pandemic crisis was used as an opportunity to elevate Quality Teaching, and backwards design is exemplary. The team found it significant that all faculty members are engaged in high impact practices, prioritizing schedules and classroom space for Experiential Learning, exemplifying a high-quality teaching and learning culture.

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

In the team's judgment, the institution **appears to meet** this standard.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

- The College relies on ethical and clear policies and processes in admissions, retention, and graduation. It nurtures the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and academic goals are compatible with its mission.
- Websites and marketing materials present accurate, clear, and comprehensive information about expenses (tuition, fees, housing, meal plans), financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, repayment, and refunds.
- Policies and processes identify, place, and support students who are not fully prepared for study. Some are linked to its Educational Opportunity Initiative (EOP), which supports about 150 students a year. The Haggerty English Language Program allows international students to improve their language skills prior to their degree coursework. Trained tutors at the Center for Student Success provide academic support that focuses on building skills in novel situations.
- Students access advisors and counselors at each stage of their education. Orientation and advising focus on addressing the needs of specific groups (first-year students, transfer students, EOP students, and others). Peers, staff, and faculty contribute to advising. This was clear in dialogues with staff, the review of documentation, and the assessment of student support services.
- The Starfish platform is used to communicate specific concerns about course performance that faculty have identified. It includes flags that link students to support services and a kudos option for positive feedback. At the graduate level, cohort style meetings, orientations, and individual meetings are in place.
- Rates of retention for first-year students and transfer students at the undergraduate level are high, 95% and 91.2%, respectively, for 2019. Retention rates improved annually for the three-year period 2017-2019.
- Professional career counselors in the Career Resource Center prepare students for career options and assist with graduate school applications. The Diversity and Equity Student Task Force develops career programming for students of color.
- Mental health services and peer support services are provided to students. Demand for these is higher than in previous periods and rising. The approach to mental health services is multi-pronged and includes tele-counseling (a result of the pandemic) and a system that refers students to professionals off campus.
- Staff members relay that they have targeted improvements in course availability. Numerous students who participated in an open forum stated that the courses they need are generally available and indicated that they can graduate on time.
- College policies assure transparency with respect to the use of student activity fees and non-tuition fees, as established in the fiscal and accounting procedures of the College.

- The effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience are periodically assessed. The Division of Student Affairs holds an annual conference in which assessment plans, final reports, and projected enhancements are presented and discussed.

Collegial Advice

- The team suggests, as recommended by the College, to identify ways to increase support for students with mental health needs.
- As the Career Resource Center continues its excellent work, it should consider expanding its resources to include additional fields and career paths.
- The team suggests the College continue with its efforts to improve advising to better support the student experience.

Recommendation(s)

- *None*

Requirements

- *None*

Recognition of Accomplishments, Progress, or Exemplary / Innovative Practices

- The team commends the College for providing micro-grants of \$1,000 to students who demonstrated that their incomes were adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their programs of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

In the team's judgment, the institution **appears to meet** this standard.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

Summary of Findings

- The College self-study and on-site review verified evidence the institution has developed and implemented a culture of assessment throughout the College. An assessment of student learning that demonstrated that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.
- Assessment is overseen by the Strategic Planning and Assessment Council and an Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Assessment. Planning and Assessment is also overseen by the College's Curriculum Committee and the General Education Assessment Board. Academic assessment activities are coordinated by Associate Deans. Program Chairs and faculty manage assessment within their programs. The integration of assessment within the strategic plan is used for programmatic planning and resource allocation.
- During the 2019-2020 academic year, a new General Education Program was implemented. In a review of documents, the College website, and interviews with faculty it was determined that there was extensive assessment of student learning before and after the implementation of the new program focused on general education concepts related to critical thinking, math skills, and information management. General education coursework is clearly mapped within each program. Faculty were able to articulate a coherent plan for assessment of general education concepts within the capstone courses.
- During interviews and review of documents, it was noted that new College-wide learning outcomes were initiated in 2019. A review of a sample of individual programs indicate they map courses to the program learning goals identified in 2018. In interviews and the review of documents, there was a lack of evidence that provided a plan for review of program level learning goals to ensure that they are inter-related to new College-wide learning outcomes. A review of the catalog did not demonstrate program level learning goals. In an interview with Associate Deans and Chairs, few could articulate program level learning goals. Additionally, the group stated that program level learning goals were reviewed every five years and more often at the Chair level. The Associate Provost and Associate Deans identified that they have focused on assessing general education goals related to information management and critical thinking. During interviews with Chairs, the majority of participants did not articulate a plan for assessment of program level learning goals. Faculty, when interviewed, could identify methods of assessment of program level learning goals, although this was not consistently evident in all departments. Faculty could describe changes made to curriculum based on assessment. In interviews, faculty, Chairs, and Associate Deans identified that curricular changes were frequently based on evaluation of course content versus meeting program learning goals. A review of a sample of five to seven-year program reviews did not provide a clear or consistent presentation of program level learning goals.
- A review of syllabi clearly demonstrated course level learning goals. Specific measures of these goals were not consistently available in the syllabi. Methods of grading were clearly identified, but there was a lack of consistency with respect to how student evaluation activities linked to course goals. Some syllabi did demonstrate rubrics for

evaluation of student work.

- In interviews and a review of documents, a culture of assessment was clearly demonstrated by all services which support student learning. Decision-making processes and authority have been exhibited with effective collaboration, opportunities for input from different university constituencies and sufficient mechanisms in place for process improvement. Collaboration with external College constituents contributed to the assessment of community/ College needs and the development of strategies to improve support of student learning.
- The College utilizes various means of communicating assessment results. These methods include reports on the University website and reporting at meetings with various constituents. Additionally, the Office of Student Affairs holds annual summer reporting sessions to share assessment and planning results.

Collegial Advice

- The team encourages the College to publish Degree/ Program level curricular goals on the programs' website.

Recommendation(s)

The institution should provide further evidence of:

- *clearly stated institutional and program-level goals which are aligned with each other and with the institution's mission.*
- *the development and implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement*
- *sufficient support to sustain the assessment of student achievement and to communicate results of assessment to stakeholders.*
- *periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment processes utilized by the institution for the improvement of educational effectiveness.*

Requirement(s)

- *None*

Recognition of Accomplishments, Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

- The College has developed a commendable culture of assessment across the institution.
- The College has developed an innovative general education program with a strong plan of assessment.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

The institution’s planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

In the team’s judgment, the institution **appears to meet** this standard.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

Summary of Findings

- As stated in the Self-Study Report and validated by the Team, the institution has documented a strategic plan and planning processes that show a clear linkage between institutional objectives, assessment, planning and resource allocation. Through assessment, the strategic planning process has evolved from the use of “vision points” at the time of the last review to a Strategic Planning Council (SPC) that developed the College’s initial full strategic plan, to a Strategic Planning and Assessment Council (SPAC) that modifies the Strategic Plan on an ongoing basis. The SPAC tracks progress in meeting SUNY New Paltz’s Essential Initiatives. All divisions and departments have assessment plans that align with the campus Strategic Plan. The team found that in order to manage the strategic planning process, the College has made significant investments in administrative and financial assessment.
- The campus has documented continuous improvement through implementation of assessment goals connected to one or more of the Strategic Plan’s Essential Initiatives. For example, focus group research revealed that transfer students, particularly those that are commuters, feel less integrated into the New Paltz community than first year students. The Division of Student Affairs developed a proposal and secured funding that resulted in improvements to transfer student life on campus. A new full time Coordinator of Transfer Student Engagement was hired and has been working on campus since the 2015-2016 academic year. In addition, a Transfer Initiative Task Force was formed to recommend programming and support services on an ongoing basis. Subsequent focus groups have registered higher satisfaction among transfer student participants.
- The campus has also focused campus-wide attention on streamlining institutional processes and increasing operational efficiency. This is in keeping with another Strategic Plan Essential Initiative: “Improve Processes and Address Institutional Capacity.” In this instance, the renovation of Wooster Hall led to the centralization of student support services in a single campus location. The offices of Student Accounts, Parking, Records and Registration, Student Financial Services, Academic Advising, and Student Success

are now centrally located with a new Student Services Help Desk reception area staffed by trained Student Services Help Desk Liaisons supported with work-study funding. This demonstrates how New Paltz links its capital, tax levy and federal funding to implement strategic initiatives. Assessment has shown that these actions have reduced congestion and wait time.

- In furtherance of several Essential Initiatives, the campus has made major strategic investments in new technology systems. These include:
 - Course Dog-student scheduling system
 - Starfish for student advising, and
 - Slate for recruiting

Collegial Advice

- As the campus plans its reopening after the Covid Pandemic, a special effort should be made to continue to utilize new technologies to foster learning, student life, alumni engagement, etc.
- Continued utilization of virtual learning technologies should be employed to help the College deal with its space constraints. Partnerships with other SUNY schools should be explored to expand course offerings for New Paltz's students and students at other SUNY schools. For example, the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures has been working with other SUNY schools to expand course offerings to departmental majors at other institutions.
- The Budget Office should expand its outreach efforts to explain the budgeting process to students. For example, a Budget Training Program could be developed and offered annually to educate student government members and students in the EOP, Honors, and the Scholar's Mentorship Program and other programs. The goal is to better explain the financial challenges facing the College and to increase student involvement in the budgeting process.

Team Recommendation(s)

- *None*

Requirement(s)

- *None*

Recognition of Accomplishments, Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

- SUNY New Paltz should be commended for its management of the Covid Pandemic. Faculty, administration, and staff rose to the challenge and were able to make the transition to virtual learning within severe budgetary constraints.

- The team commends SUNY New Paltz for the management of its budget during very lean times. Recent federal legislation should allow the College to cover its accumulated deficit. The New Paltz administration will have to continue to carefully manage its budget due to long term financial issues facing the State of New York.
- The Office of Development and Alumni Relations should be commended for developing a student mentoring program utilizing retired faculty and alumni. This program should be expanded due to its direct impact on student learning, career development, and alumni engagement and fundraising.
- SUNY New Paltz should be commended for its commitment to sustainability. This effort has reduced the College's carbon footprint, saved money, and provided learning opportunities for students.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituents it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

In the team's judgment, the institution **appears to meet** this standard.

This judgment is based on a review of the self-study report, evidence, and interviews with campus constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the self-study evaluation team visit.

Summary of Findings

- It is clear that SUNY New Paltz has a shared governance system, sound leadership, and qualified administrative personnel that enable the institution to operate effectively within a complex and challenging higher education environment. These College groups advance the institution's mission to provide high quality, affordable education to students from all social and economic backgrounds. The SUNY New Paltz governance system (the College Council, the Cabinet, the College Faculty, and the SUNY New Paltz Student Association) working in conjunction with the SUNY governance bodies (the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Council of Community Colleges, and the SUNY Student Assembly), and in combination with numerous faculty and professional staff committees, allows all key constituents, administration, faculty, staff, and students a voice in College decisions. However, only about a quarter (27%) of professional faculty (staff) report there is sufficient consultation by Senate representatives, compared to 77% of academic faculty.

- The SUNY Board of Trustees is the governing body of the State University of New York, of which SUNY New Paltz is a member. The Board of Trustees has statutory authority to provide overall central administration, supervision, and coordination of state-operated campuses to meet the SUNY mission. The Board is responsible for, among other things:
 - Regulating the curriculum and planning for new curriculum.
 - Reviewing and coordinating budget and appropriation requests.
 - Appointing and evaluating the presidents of state-operated institutions.
 - Granting degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
 - Regulating admission of students, and tuition and fees.

The SUNY Board of Trustee members must abide by state laws and rules regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

- As per SUNY Board of Trustee policy, the president of SUNY New Paltz is the chief administrative officer of the College and is charged to promote the institution's development and effectiveness. The policies provide the president the authority and autonomy to fulfill various duties of the position including, among other things:
 - Appointing, or recommending to the Chancellor for appointment, of college administrative officers, faculty, profession staff, and classified staff.
 - Assigning powers, duties, and responsibilities of college administrative officers,
 - Supervising professional and non-academic staff,
 - Preparing and recommending the annual budget requests of the college
 - Making recommendations to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees and the College Council concerning the operation, plans, and development of the college.
- The College has clearly defined the leadership roles and administrative functions, many of which are codified in state law, SUNY Board of Trustee policies, and collective bargaining agreements. However, after many years of stability in the office, there has been substantial turnover of individuals in the Provost/VP of Academic Affairs position, with five Provosts/VPs in the past 10 years (two "permanent" and three interim) and a recent failed search. SUNY New Paltz has systematic processes in place to evaluate personnel and administrative units and that each unit conduct some assessment annually.
- The revision of the faculty governance system in 2018 was prompted by a finding documented during their prior Middle States Self-Study that the governance system at that time was not particularly effective. Reviewing and streamlining faculty governance was included in the College's Strategic Plan in 2013, with a revised system implemented in 2018. A comparison of the results from periodic surveys to gauge the institutional climate for governance demonstrates a vast improvement in the perception of the effectiveness of faculty and shared governance from before and after the new system was

put in place. Student participation in the New Paltz self-study prompted the NPSA to examine a student governance model which led to a proposal to replace their at-large system with a representative model.

Collegial Advice

- The team supports the Self-Study observation that the effectiveness of the redefined Provost's duties and streamlined reporting structure should be monitored for effectiveness.
- The team suggests that there should be a planned, cyclical assessment of the effectiveness of shared governance.
- The team suggests that efforts to address the low (27%) agreement to "sufficient consultation by senate representatives" cited by professional faculty (staff) be undertaken.

Team Recommendation(s)

- *None*

Requirement(s)

- *None*

Recognition of Accomplishments, Progress, or Exemplary/Innovative Practices

- The team recognizes that the recently revised faculty governance model, implemented in spring 2018, has improved the perception of the effectiveness faculty and shared governance at SUNY New Paltz.

Section E: Applicable Federal Regulatory Requirements

In the team's judgment, the institution **appears to meet** all applicable federal regulatory requirements.

This judgment is based on a review of the Institutional Federal Compliance Report, evidence, and interviews with institutional constituencies to clarify information and verify compliance during the team visit.

The institution supplied evidence of policies and procedures for distance education, transfer of credits and articulation agreements, Title IV compliance, record of student complaints, consumer information, and standing with the state and accrediting agencies. Documentation provided

includes the student handbook, online identification verification policy, academic policies and procedures, verification of accreditation status with all existing accrediting agencies.

Section F: Review of Student Achievement and Verification of Institutional Data

I. Student Achievement Goals

In the team's judgment, the institution's approach to realizing its student achievement goals **appears to be effective**, consonant with higher education expectations, and consistent with the institution's mission.

This judgment is based on a review of the institution's student achievement information provided in the self-study report, evidence, interviews with institutional constituencies, and the student achievement URL available on its website.

In addition, in the team's judgment, the institution's student achievement information data that it discloses to the public *appear* to be reasonably valid and accurate in light of other data and information reviewed by the team.

To draw this conclusion, the team members interviewed academic and non-academic administration, Vice Presidents, deans, Associate Deans, Chairs and program faculty. From those interviews conducted after a careful review of the self-study report and the institution's evidence inventory, the team concluded that sufficient evidence exists to conclude that the institution has a cohesive strategic plan for assessment.

- Institutional strategic planning is based on the University Essential Initiatives
- University essentials integrate all aspects of academic and non-academic assessment including program assessment and student learning assessment.

II. Verification of Institutional Data

In the team's opinion, the processes and procedures the institution uses to verify institutional data and the data provided in the self-study report *appear* to be reasonably valid and effective, conforming to higher education expectations.

To draw this conclusion, the team members interviewed staff of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, members of the College Council, and the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Assessment. From interviews conducted after a careful review of information found in the Self-Study Report and the College's Evidence inventory, the team determined that sufficient evidence exists to conclude that the processes the College uses to verify the accuracy of data is supported by the necessary technical skills and an ethical culture.

According to New Paltz's Institutional Federal Compliance report provided in the evidence inventory, the Office of Institutional Research (IR) oversees those responsible for the stewardship of student outcomes data. IR maintains relationships with various units across campus who "own" specific data (e.g., Undergraduate Admission and Graduate and Extended Learning, Records and Registration, and Enrollment Management) and works with these units to ensure data are coded accurately, that there is consistency in how students are coded, and that IR has access to the student data. Data entry and coding follows adherence to federal, state and SUNY data definitions. IR periodically checks the data for accuracy (e.g., SAT scores or high school GPA outside reasonable range, missing demographic data). Data are compared to prior years' information and, if significant differences/anomalies are revealed, the data are further scrutinized and discussions ensue with the data "owners" to determine whether these discrepancies are legitimate/justifiable.

Retention and graduation rates data are based on enrollment and registration data from the College's student information system Ellucian Banner. Job placement data come from a combination of surveys administered by IR, data researched by the Career Resource Center, and faculty advisors who have kept in touch with their students.

Section G: Review of Third-Party Comments

No third-party comments were received by the team.

Section H: List of Additional Evidence

Listing of all additional information requested by peer evaluators before or during the visit that was used to verify compliance with Commission standards for accreditation, requirements of affiliation, policies and procedures, and applicable federal regulatory requirements:

Additional Evidence Uploaded to the Middle States Portal by SUNY New Paltz:

Request for Additional Information from Standard VII on 3.17.21 - Uploaded on 3/19/21

- 2012 Full Faculty Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- 2012 Academic Senate Agendas and Minutes
- 2020 Graduate Council Meeting Agendas and Minutes
- 2020 Faculty Senate Meeting Agendas and Minutes
- 2019 Bylaws and Elections Meeting Minutes
- 2019 Academic Affairs Minutes
- 2019 Faculty Meeting Agendas
- 2019 Curriculum Committee Minutes
- 2020 Academic Affairs Minutes
- 2019 Graduate Council Meeting Agendas and Minutes

2020 Graduate Council Meeting Agendas and Minutes
2020 Executive Committee Meeting Agendas and Minutes
2020 Curriculum Committee Meetings
School of Science & Engineering Governance documents
School of Fine & Performing Arts Governance Minutes and Bylaws
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Governance Agendas and Minutes

Request for Additional Information from Standard V – Uploaded on 3/21/21

Cover Letter – Sample capstone course syllabi – accredited and non-accredited programs
PHY424 Catherine Herne
BIO412_evo theory
CHE407-01, 02 s21 Megan Ferguson
EGG409 Senior Design 2
ARS408 01 02 Graphic Design Thesis II Spr21 Papaelis
ARS421-422 Mimplitsch-Gray F2019
SED406-606 – Brandon (Adolescence Education)
BUS450-01 & 02 Jun Lin Fall 2019

Request for Additional Information from Standard V – Uploaded on 3/22/21

Cover Letter – Samples of Program Assessment
Sociology Department Assessment 2016-17
Philosophy Dept. Assessment Report 2014-2015
COU Assessment Report 2019-20
English Graduate Assessment Report 2020
2019 SoE Annual Report – Adolescence Math
Biology Self-Study 2018-2019
SoB Assurance of Learning Report 2017-2018

Request for Additional Information from Evaluation Team on 3/24/21 – Uploaded 3/24/21

COVID-19 Winter Spring 2021_9 Plan Update
COVID-19 Fall 2020-Spring 202 Restart Plan.January.update2
COVID-19 Addendum Fall 2020 Reopening Plan

Request for Additional Information from Standard V on 3/25/21 – Uploaded on 3/25/21

Cover Letter Curriculum & Assessment Reports Standard 5 Team Members
Curriculum Maps for Biology, Biochemistry, & Engineering ILOs vs Program SLOs
Anthropology Department Curricular Map 5-2-2018
Curriculum Maps-Sociology
Languages, Literatures, & Cultures Curriculum Map
Curriculum Matrix-School of Business
Sch. of Business Information Management PLO
SoE Curriculum Map – Literacy MSED

Dept. of Sociology 2018-19 (see pp. 5-20)

Biology Self-Study RE Program Assessment – See p. 93 and pp. 107-128

2020 Fall Engineering-Electrical EGE311-01 Computer Simulations Heather Lai Copy

Request for Additional Information from Standard VI on 3/25/21 – Uploaded on 3/25/21

Cover Email – To William Keller (Standard VI) from Michele Halstead, VP, Admin & Finance
Request School of Science & Engineering

Tried to upload an Excel file to the portal and it didn't upload. So, emailed file titled – Summary
New Allocation Requests 14-15 Details – to William Keller.

Section I: Self-Study Report and Process Comments

The team found the institution to be very organized and focused on doing a quality self-study. Doing a site visit virtually was made doable by the presence of a talented technology team that met the needs of the campus and the team of external evaluators.