

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

SELF-STUDY

Submitted to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.

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PREFACE: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

Western Connecticut State University began the self-study process in August 2001, to prepare for a ten-year comprehensive evaluation by NEASC. President James R. Roach appointed a seven-member Steering Committee to lead the process. Committee membership included three senior administrators and four faculty representing the Schools of the University.

President Roach consulted with the Steering Committee on leadership of the subcommittees charged with reporting on each of the NEASC Standards, and he personally invited faculty and staff to serve as subcommittee Chairs. Calls for nominations and volunteers for subcommittee membership drew a strong response. When rosters were complete, seventy-nine individuals across the University had made a commitment to participate formally in the Self-Study, and many others volunteered to serve as resources. Each subcommittee had a member of the Steering Committee as designated liaison. In October 2001, five members of the Steering Committee attended the NEASC Self-Study Workshop held at the New England Conference Center. During the fall semester the Steering Committee established a timeline, identified needs and sources of data, set up a website and a workroom, and produced a presentation on the Self-Study process and two subcommittee handbooks.

The WestConn Self-Study "went public" with a kickoff breakfast on February 13, 2002. President Roach, Academic Vice President Eugene P. Buccini, and members of the Steering Committee made presentations and answered questions. The subcommittees met regularly throughout the semester to identify, gather, and analyze data. Mid-semester luncheon meetings were held in April for the subcommittees to share information on their findings, surprises, and roadblocks. The subcommittees submitted first drafts of their reports in May.

After Steering Committee review for format, accuracy, and completeness, Dr. Margaret Leahey edited the drafts for resubmission to subcommittees in the fall. Throughout the Fall 2002 semester the Steering Committee held editorial conferences with each subcommittee. After further review and revision, a draft of the entire document was completed in March 2003, and questions and critiques were invited from the WestConn community. The draft was posted on the University home page and electronic reserve, with hard copy available in both campus libraries. Three open forums, including one at a meeting of the University Senate, and a forum for students were held. The Steering Committee gave full consideration to input received before preparing a revised draft for NEASC review.

Final editing and publication took place during Summer 2003.

The Steering Committee extends sincere appreciation to all who gave generously of their time and knowledge to make the Self-Study accurate, complete, and a valuable learning experience for the University community. President Roach, the Vice Presidents, the Deans, members of the faculty and the administration, students, and all from whom we sought information and advice were unfailingly helpful. Special thanks are due to those who chaired and served on the subcommittees responsible for addressing the eleven NEASC Standards for Accreditation. Finally, we are indebted to the willingness, skills, and patience of Ms. Michelle Ramey, Secretary in Academic Affairs, who

supported our efforts throughout the long study, scheduled countless meetings, and processed multiple drafts; to Ms. Theresa Buzaid, CSU Administrative Assistant, Academic Affairs; and to Ms. Mary Sergi, CSU Administrative Assistant, Office of the President.

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Glossary of Acronyms

AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
AAUP	American Association of University Professors
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AFSCME	American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
ATC	Advanced Technology Classroom
BAR	Biennial Assessment Report (superseded by Performance Measures)
BGHE	Board of Governors for Higher Education, State of Connecticut
BOT	Board of Trustees, Connecticut State University
CACREP	Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CDC	Career Development Center
CDS	Center for Developmental Studies
CELT	Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
CHRO	Connecticut Commission of Human Rights and Opportunities
CIHE	Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
CLEP	College Level Examination Program
CONSULS	Connecticut State University Library System
COPS	Community Oriented Policing Services
CSU	Connecticut State University
CSU/BOT	Connecticut State University Board of Trustees
CUCAS	Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards
DEC	Department Evaluation Committee
DHE	Department of Higher Education, State of Connecticut
EA ² P	Educational Achievement and Access Programs
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
HERI	Higher Education Research Institute (Faculty Survey)
HSRC	Human Subjects Review Committee (see IRB)
IACUC	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
IAP	Individualized Admissions Program (superseded by EA ² P)
ILL	Interlibrary Loan
IRB	Institutional Review Board
NACUBO	National Association of College and University Business Officers
NCATE	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.
P&T	Promotion and Tenure Committee
R&D	Research and Development Committee
SGA	Student Government Association
STTC	Student Technology Training Centers
UCAE	University Center for Adult Education
UPBC	University Planning and Budgeting Committee
VPAA	Vice President for Academic Affairs
VPFA	Vice President for Finance and Administration
VPIA	Vice President for Institutional Advancement
VPSA	Vice President for Student Affairs

SELF-STUDY OVERVIEW

Celebrating Our Past...Imagining our Future

While celebrating our Centennial Year, members of the Western Connecticut State University community, as part of the campus-wide self-study process, have also been assessing our stewardship of the values upon which the institution was founded. The self-study experience has been a wonderful opportunity to look within and recognize what we are doing well, but also an opportunity to practice continuous improvement and develop those areas in which we want to do better. Entering a new and exciting phase in the University's history, we are guided by our promise that we will continue to ensure integrity in everything we do: quality in our academic programs, distinctiveness in our cultural programs, and service as an accessible, responsive, and creative resource to the people and institutions of Connecticut and the region.

Since 1993, WestConn has experienced significant growth in its academic programs, enrollment, and facilities. New undergraduate and graduate degree programs have been developed in key areas. Another milestone on the long journey from normal school to mature university was reached in December 2002 when WestConn received approval at the state level for its first doctoral program, an Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership, a practitioner's degree that maintains our commitment to teaching, builds on our thriving master's programs in education, and serves the local and regional community. Continuing an ambitious building plan to meet the needs of an increasing student population and expanded programs, the University will invest nearly \$90 million in the next three years on bonded construction initiatives, including a 350-bed residence hall, a student center, and expansion of the Observatory on the Westside campus, and on the Midtown campus, a \$49 million science building. The University is also planning to build a multimillion-dollar fine and performing arts center on its Westside campus (2007) that will enable the University to enhance its role as a regional cultural resource.

Five years ago, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, in response to our fifth-year report, directed the University to address two areas of concern: (1) progress in achieving the institution's own goals for incorporating the perspectives and contributions of minorities and women, and the new scholarship about them, into the curriculum and co-curriculum; and (2) progress in providing print and electronic collections to support graduate programs and increased research activities, and in hiring sufficient library staff, in particular, clerical staff. The University has made documented, measurable progress in the first area as multicultural and women's perspectives and new scholarship have been incorporated into curricular and co-curricular activities and programs. In the library, the University has greatly expanded electronic resources and access to these resources and is increasing the print collection. The University is mindful of its obligation to expand resources and staff and continues to work diligently and creatively to support faculty and graduate research. The areas of Commission concern will be addressed in more detail in Standard IV (Programs and Instruction) and Standard VII (Library and Information Resources).

The self-study that follows represents a thoughtful and conscientious effort to assess the institution's strengths and challenges as of Fall 2002. In January 2003, however, only a few weeks after the self-study process was completed, the University was required to cut 5% from an already austere budget. A hiring freeze was put into place, and faculty and staff were laid off. Although all faculty and most staff have since been rehired, the operating budget cuts have not been restored. Moreover, a very attractive early-retirement offer has led many senior faculty and staff to choose that option. The

regrettable loss of valued and experienced personnel must be looked upon as an opportunity to review and rethink structure, program needs, and job descriptions.

Several of the standards that follow in the text contain projection sections that anticipate the hiring of additional personnel; the likelihood that we will be able to add all of the positions in the immediate future is now problematic. However, there is confidence that as it has in the past, the University will successfully weather the fiscal difficulties, and continue to grow. The University has tremendous opportunities at hand -- the new science building, the fine and performing arts center, new and enhanced graduate and undergraduate programs, a stronger endowment, enhanced technologies, and a dynamic, committed faculty. There is every reason to expect that the institution will be able to capitalize on these opportunities.

Major Findings

The self-study process has made the University aware of progress achieved in academic programs, enrollment, facilities, and service to the community. We take pride in our programs, especially our first doctoral program, and in the access we provide while maintaining quality as enrollment grows. We are proud of the expansion and enhancement of campus facilities, especially of a library twice its former size, a multi-million dollar science building under construction, an arts center planned and authorized, an enhanced astronomical observatory, new athletic fields and a stadium, a 450-bed residence hall completed and a 350-bed hall in process, campus landscaping that has created quads from parking lots, and technology over all. We value our close relationships with the community. We honor those who worked for these developments and made them possible.

Issues and concerns revealed by the self-study include reductions in funding because of the state budget deficit and the loss of experienced faculty and staff due to incentives for early retirement. We need to strengthen the feedback loop for program improvement in response to assessment of student learning outcomes. We must meet the challenge of doctoral instruction by raising expectations and supporting faculty research and publication.

The self-study gives evidence that we are addressing these issues and moving toward their resolution. Though state funding is limited, we have received our first million-dollar gifts and are well on our way toward meeting the goal of our first capital campaign. Enrollment continues to grow in targeted programs of high value. We have received state authorization to replace retired faculty. All academic departments have plans appropriate to their disciplines to assess student learning and to implement changes based on analysis of the assessment data. Faculty research and publication have been increasing for several years, and with a full-time grants officer now on staff, further increase should meet the doctoral challenge.

The future of WestConn, however, lies beyond. It lies in the vision of a people's university, as shown in Herbert Janick's *Centennial History*. It lies in the transformation of a normal school into a university, making learning at every level accessible to the community. It lies in degree programs of sustained high quality. It lies in the CEO Forum of regional business leaders, the Executive Forum for nonprofits, the Jane Goodall Institute, the Center for the Study of Cultural Values, and the Athletic Hall of Fame. It lies in concerts, plays, art exhibitions, and sports events. It lies in the beauty of the campuses and their significance to the community as an intellectual, cultural, and academic resource.

The self-study has deepened our understanding of WestConn and our commitment to its future. Our Mission sets high goals and standards of program quality, accessibility, integrity, and service. We pledge fulfillment.

Standard I

MISSION AND PURPOSES

Description

John R. Perkins organized a group of civic leaders to persuade legislators in Hartford to build a teacher preparatory school in Western Connecticut. He subsequently became the first principal of Danbury Normal School, which opened in September 1904 with thirty-seven students.¹ Perkins had such faith in the institution that he probably would not be surprised to learn that it has become a university or that by the 21st century, over 6,000 students are enrolled. He would certainly be pleased that the institution has maintained its strength in undergraduate teaching. But it is also safe to say that he would be proud to learn that the school has developed master's programs in a variety of disciplines and that, consistent with its founding values, the institution's first doctoral degree is in instructional leadership.

As Western Connecticut State University has evolved over the past 100 years from its beginnings as a normal school into a comprehensive public university, its Mission has, of course, undergone a number of reviews and revisions, but it is still true to its commitment to educational quality. The current Mission Statement includes specific principles and values that guide the institution in fulfilling its mission, and each of the University's departments has developed complementary statements of mission and purpose.

The Mission Statement is accepted and understood by members of the University community, it is reviewed periodically by the University Senate (made up of faculty, administration, and students), and approved by the CSU Board of Trustees. It appears in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, the handbook for faculty, the new student handbook for 2003-2004, and many other University publications, both in print and online. The statement reads as follows:

Western Connecticut State University serves as an accessible, responsible and creative intellectual resource for the people and the institutions of Connecticut. We strive to meet the educational needs of a diversified student body through instruction, scholarship and public service. WestConn aspires to be a public university of choice for programs of excellence in the liberal arts and the professions by providing full-time and part-time students with the necessary background to be successful in their chosen careers and to be productive members of society. It accomplishes this by emphasizing:

- A strong liberal arts foundation
- Strong skills in communication, problem solving, and critical thinking
- Opportunities for experiential, cooperative and internship experiences
- A strong background in information technologies
- Interdisciplinary programs
- A strong sense of commitment to public service
- A personalized learning environment

¹ Herbert F. Janick, Ph.D., *A People's University: The Centennial History of Western Connecticut State University, 1903-2003*, 12-13, 24.

Our mission as a public comprehensive university is given life through the principles and values that guide us.

Principles

- Empowering students to attain the highest standards of academic achievement, public and professional services, personal development and ethical conduct is our fundamental responsibility.
- Facilitating learning is our primary function, and it requires that our faculty be active scholars who have a lasting interest in enhancing instruction and that our curriculum be dynamic and include advanced instructional technologies.
- Preparing students for enlightened and productive participation in a global society is our obligation, and is best fulfilled by developing the best possible academic programs and learning experiences.
- Promoting a rich and diverse cultural environment that allows freedom of expression within a spirit of civility and mutual respect is our abiding commitment.
- Strengthening our partnership with the people and institutions of Connecticut is a benefit to both the University and the State and endows our teaching and scholarship with a special vitality and dedication.

Values

- **Quality** in all that we do and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- **Integrity** in the process of teaching and learning.
- **Respect** for the dignity and rights of each member of our University community.

Appraisal

The Mission Statement is consistent with the Connecticut State University System mission:

The four comprehensive universities of the CSU System – Central Connecticut State University, Eastern Connecticut State University, Southern Connecticut State University and Western Connecticut State University – are Connecticut universities of choice for students of all ages, background, races and ethnicities. CSU provides affordable and high-quality, active learning opportunities that are geographically and technologically accessible. A CSU education leads to baccalaureate, graduate and professional degrees, including applied doctoral degree programs consistent with its historical missions of teacher education and career advancement. CSU graduates think critically, acquire enduring problem solving skills and meet outcome standards that embody the competencies necessary for success in the workplace and in life.

The fact that WestConn’s Mission Statement spells out seven specific areas of emphasis is evidence of the institution’s commitment to the assessment of educational outcomes and institutional effectiveness.

By insisting that the curriculum be “dynamic,” the second principle reinforces the idea that evaluation is not an end in itself, but rather a process of review and revision that is directed toward the enhancement of teaching and learning. A “dynamic” curriculum recognizes the importance of offering students educational opportunities that will prepare them for a rapidly changing work environment.

The wording of the Principles also reflects the nationwide shift from an emphasis on teaching to a focus on facilitating learning, and the inclusion of “learning experiences” acknowledges the importance of student teaching, internships, community involvement, and co-curricular activities for students’ intellectual and social growth.

There is evidence of the transition from college to university in the second principle which states that to accomplish the university’s mission, the faculty must be comprised of active scholars. “Strengthening our partnership with the people and institutions of Connecticut” suggests the University’s commitment to a wider community. The use of “continuous” reinforces the notion that improvement is an ongoing process.

The University Planning and Budgeting Committee is working on clarifying and linking the priorities identified in the Mission with the planning process and allocation of resources.

Projection

The mission statement will continue to be the basis on which the institution evaluates its effectiveness. As the results of this process are analyzed, the University will use the information to reevaluate the mission statement, principles, and values.

WestConn will add a phrase to the Mission Statement to cover the addition of the Ed.D. degree as consistent with our historical mission.

The University will ensure that the Mission, Principles, and Values statements appear in all appropriate publications.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the mission continues to drive planning and resource allocation.

STANDARD II

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Description

Planning

The University has a long tradition and history of planning guided by and directed toward the fulfillment of its Mission. The planning process has steadily evolved over the years. Ultimately subject to approval by the University Budgeting and Planning Committee and the University Senate, which recommends to the President, the strength of the planning process derives from broad participation, a comprehensive tracking database, and a realistic commitment to implementation.

Since 1990, the National Association of College and University Business Officers' (NACUBO) strategic planning model, which emphasizes process and a more realistic perspective on how to use resources to manage change, has been utilized. In order to implement this model more effectively, the University Planning Committee was merged with the University Budget Committee in 1992 to form the University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC) so that planning and budgeting are linked. The UPBC remains the standing committee of the University Senate charged with the planning/budgeting process. The first plan produced under this system was the Western Connecticut State University Strategic Plan for 1992-1997.

When a new Chancellor of the CSU System took office in August 1994, he introduced focused planning, with two- and six-year projections to coincide with the biennial budgetary process of the Connecticut legislature. The planning process at WestConn follows this model while respecting the role of governance. Planning proposals require approval by the University Planning and Budgeting Committee, the University Senate, and the President. The current WestConn Plan is for the years 2000-2003; a proposal for 2003-2006 has been developed, brought before the UPBC, and will be presented to the Senate.

The President asks the Vice Presidents, the Dean of Human Resources, and the Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services to submit a list of priorities for their areas. After discussing the recommendations with them, the President edits and focuses the priorities, and develops a Letter of Priority, consistent with the Strategic Plan, to be submitted to the Chancellor. The Chancellor and the President meet to review the Letter and other information that may be helpful to the Trustees in making spending plan decisions in the context of the overall picture of the University.

While the focused strategic plan has provided general guidance, emphasis since 1997 has been on data-driven planning for specific areas and operations. This type of planning was greatly facilitated by the establishment at WestConn of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment in 1996.

The plan extends to all areas of the University: academics, student life, information technology, the physical plant, finances (including fundraising), and external relations (for more specific information on WestConn planning in these areas, please see Standards IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X, respectively).

Academic Planning: In 1997, a working committee made up of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the School deans, and officers of the University Senate, began a new approach to academic planning. Data fields were provided to departments by the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. A list of questions was developed by the committee, and each department was asked to respond. The UPBC met to review the departmental planning documents.

The committee defined five categories to be used in establishing priorities:

- Expansion: Student enrollment and interest and regional requirements indicate a need for additional faculty and support.
- Maintain/Potential Expansion: Based on current information, programs should be maintained at their current levels of support. These programs should be reviewed each year for the next three years, however, since...their departmental plans [indicate that] opportunities for expansion in the short term are strong.
- Maintain: Resources permitting, programs will be maintained at current levels of support for the next three years. However, departments may request additional UPBC review during the academic planning period if there are rapid enrollment shifts and/or changing market needs.
- Revitalization: Programs in this category need to be revitalized and/or transformed in order to meet emerging needs. However, departments may request additional UPBC review during the academic planning period.
- Continuing Review: Departments are encouraged to review staffing needs and configurations on an annual basis. Positions vacated during the academic planning period will need additional review.

When consensus was reached by the *ad hoc* committee regarding recommended placement of programs in the categories listed above, the recommendations were forwarded to the departments for their review, response and/or rebuttal. The responses were reviewed by the UPBC. The UPBC prepared an Academic Planning Document (1998-2001) that was submitted to the University Senate for approval. The document was approved by the Senate, sent to the President for his review, and was approved by him. An updated plan was completed and approved for 2001-2004. A third update (2004-2007) is being prepared.

During the planning process, there was general agreement to separate general education issues from specific departmental growth issues. In FY 2001, permanent faculty lines were added in the departments of Mathematics, English, Psychology, History, and Social Science. An additional position was given to the Social Science, Mathematics, and English departments, and a “floater” position was assigned for overloads. Five general education lines were authorized in FY 2001 to cover course needs generated by System-mandated increase in enrollments. (“UPBC – Planning Report: Academic Years 2001-2004”)

Of the lines listed below in the summary table, all the positions are tenure track; 12 of the 14 are completely new.

Department	1999	2000	2001	2002
Mathematics	1	1	1	0
English	1	1	1	0
Psychology		1	1	0
History		1	1	0
Social Science		2		0
Communications & Theatre Arts	1		1	

To meet needs created by growth in enrollment, new faculty lines have also been added in the following areas: Management Information Systems (1); Justice and Law Administration (2); Management (2); and Nursing.

Planning for new graduate programs is done by the academic departments. (For additional information on new graduate programs, please see Standard IV.) Since 1993, ten new graduate programs and options have been developed in response to regional needs, and a number of others have been modified. Some options and concentrations have been eliminated. (For additional information on academic programs, please see Standard IV.) Since 1997 all new program development has been consistent with the academic planning process.

Student Affairs Planning: The Student Affairs division has developed a four-year Strategic Plan (2001-2005) with eight major goals that complement the University's Mission, Principles, and Values. (For more information, please see Standard VI.)

Technology Planning: The University's Information Technology Committee (ITC), a standing committee of the University Senate, developed the institution's three-year plan to upgrade, modernize, and expand technology in classrooms and labs. The Committee, which has representation from each of the three Schools, as well as appropriate departments (Computer Science, Libraries, Media Services, and University Computing), reviews student and faculty computing needs on an ongoing basis. The plan is consistent with and complementary to the System-wide technology plan. (For more information, please see Standard VII.)

Institutional Advancement: The division of Institutional Advancement has also completed strategic planning documents complementary to System-wide planning and to the University's Mission, Principles, and Values. This document has been folded into a University-wide draft Strategic Plan.

Financial Planning: The annual Spending Plan is the financial component of the University's Strategic Plan. In March of each year, the System Office sends information about the anticipated funding for the coming fiscal year and guidelines for developing the Spending Plan. The guidelines, developed in consultation between the chancellor and the University's president, ask for information about the achievement of objectives, particularly in the area of learning outcomes. Specifically, the University is asked to provide information about enrollment, student retention and graduation, affirmative action/diversity, development, revenues, administrative costs, student satisfaction/learning, consumer satisfaction, faculty and staff motivation, progress with Banner (administrative computing) implementation, tuition and fees, and new programs. The annual Spending Plan, developed by the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration, is routinely reviewed by all the vice presidents, the UPBC comments in March (as of 1998), and then the document is sent to the president. The plan is submitted to the CSU System Office in April. The CSU System submits a budget for legislative approval. The plans, with the Chancellor's recommendations, are sent to the Board of Trustees (BOT), which makes allocations to each institution's president, who in turn allocates money to the vice presidents of each division.

Facilities Planning: WestConn's planning process is based on the institution's Campus Master Plan (1995), which identifies capital projects designed to enable the University to meet its academic goals and objectives. A new master plan is in the initial stages of development. The master planning process is designed to evaluate options for growth and development, such as new construction, renovations, additions, or the adaptive re-use of existing buildings. The Campus Master Plan, the University's Planning & Engineering Office, the Campus Design Review Committee, and the CSU System Office, cooperatively create a framework for the development of capital projects at WestConn that is consistent with the University's teaching mission and strategic plan. The University has a construction and renovation schedule through the year 2008. (Additional information on facilities planning may be found in Standard VIII.)

Evaluation

Evaluation was mandated by Public Law 93-201, which required the University to submit biennial assessment reports, with the first due in 1994, and the second in 1997. The process was less than satisfactory, however, and in 1999, the legislature enacted Public Law 99-295. This law requires CSU and other units of public higher education to develop accountability measures to be reported annually to the Department of Higher Education. Six broad goals were identified:

- Enhance student learning and promote academic excellence
- Join with elementary and secondary schools to improve teaching and learning at all levels
- Ensure access to and affordability of higher education
- Promote the economic development of the state to help business and industry sustain strong economic growth
- Respond to the needs and problems of society
- Ensure the efficient use of resources

Accountability was not new to the University. The Board of Trustees had established several initiatives (the presidential evaluation process, for example), and had a number of concerns, including improving retention rates and the six-year graduation rate, increasing enrollment levels, and the implementation of a strategic plan. The Board was also involved at that time in the development of University budgets through the spending plan, as well as in establishing goals for affirmative action and diversity and fund-raising system-wide.

The CSU System was part of a national consortium developed by the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) to benchmark the assessment of student learning outcomes. Four WestConn representatives attended meetings to design the study. The team identified institutions with best practices in assessment and visited them. Over a period of several months (November 1997-June 1998), the team produced a report, "Assessing Learning Outcomes: Consortium Benchmarking Study. Best-in-Class Report."

The legislation related to accountability was modified somewhat in 2000, but the CSU System still has basic accountability goals, and the four sister institutions have developed performance (accountability) measures to address these broad goals. The universities are expected to be consistent in the way they report performance measures.

The Assessment Committee, a standing committee of the University Senate, has actively encouraged all academic departments with degree programs to develop assessment plans. The first efforts were

collected and evaluated in the second half of 2001. The Committee submitted a report to the University community in December 2001 that summarizes the evaluation process for assessment plans and lists selected good practices from the departmental reports. The Committee has continued to work with academic departments, and all have now submitted at least a preliminary evaluation plan; a few have made considerable progress in implementing the plans and in using data to improve instruction.

The Committee has identified three key aspects of assessment that should be addressed: (1) a set of learning objectives that are specific and measurable; each learning objective should be a clear statement of what competencies a graduate of that program should possess; (2) a plan (preferably a timetable) for gathering information on student attainment of the learning objectives; and (3) a process to apply the findings in order to make decisions regarding changes in curriculum and/or instruction.

When a department proposes a new or modified program in the major, it must provide an assessment plan in the materials presented to the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards (CUCAS). New graduate programs are required to provide an assessment plan to the Graduate Council. In addition, a number of graduate programs have advisory committees that serve an evaluative function.

Faculty evaluation is conducted in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement between the AAUP and the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System. The process is detailed in the *Faculty Handbook*. Staff evaluations are conducted in accordance with guidelines established in the appropriate collective bargaining units' agreements.

A number of other mechanisms are in place to assess the effectiveness of the University's programs and departments, including external accrediting agencies: the New England Association of Schools and Colleges; the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education; the Connecticut State Department of Education; the American Chemical Society; the National League for Nursing; the Council on Social Work Education (Baccalaureate level); and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. Each of these accrediting bodies requires a self-study and a site visit. The most recent accreditation reports, responses, and accreditation decisions are available in the team workroom.

All of the University's evaluation efforts are directed toward fulfilling its stated Mission, Principles, and Values.

Appraisal

Planning

The CSU System Office, under the current leadership, has become increasingly involved in planning on the four campuses. This involvement has had an impact on the way WestConn conducts planning and sets priorities, an effect experienced by our sister campuses as well. Some faculty and staff have expressed concern about how plans get implemented. The complexities introduced by the involvement of the System Office, which in turn is responding to increasing demands on the part of the legislature for accountability reporting, further complicate matters. Efforts to communicate information about the process are not always entirely successful.

Academic Planning: Academic planning at WestConn changed considerably after the establishment of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment in 1996 (replacing the Office of Institutional Research). Reliable data collected and disseminated by this office have enhanced planning throughout the University. Longitudinal analyses of student subgroups, together with annual surveys of alumni and students provide valuable information in the planning process. At the direction of the Board of Trustees, enrollments at WestConn have grown considerably over the last ten years, and the student population is increasingly diverse, so accurate data and analyses are crucial for planning. In the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey, 94% of faculty respondents agreed with the statement “The academic planning process involves faculty through departments and governance.” However, in response to the statement “In WestConn governance, there is adequate communication among university constituencies,” only 45% of the faculty and 48% of the non-teaching staff responded affirmatively, which suggests there may be a communication gap.

While the additional positions in departments responsible for general education courses were essential to deal with Board-mandated increased enrollments, the fact that general education had been factored in separately in the Academic Plan led to some frustration. This is particularly the case with departments that had been designated for expansion but have had to delay hiring because of budget restrictions and the need for lines in general education.

Student Affairs: Some areas of need identified in the division’s new Strategic Plan have been addressed. For example, the division has purchased additional hardware and software, and staff have received training. Handbooks and other materials for students have been added or revised and improved, and vacant positions, including Dean of Student Affairs and a Director of Health Services, have been filled. Efforts were made to enhance WestSide services for students, but recent cutbacks in student payroll have meant that coverage had to be reduced.

Technology Planning: The University Senate singled out the Information Technology Committee as a model for committees that are focused on issues requiring special expertise. The ITC has been a major asset to planning and implementation of technology and technology training at WestConn, particularly in the area of instructional technology. Teaching faculty, library faculty, and the staff members in University Computing and Media have worked collaboratively on a number of projects. Additional personnel (e.g., an instructional technology specialist) would make it possible to do more.

Institutional Advancement: The Centennial Campaign is underway, with a fundraising goal of \$4,000,000. During the “silent phase” of the campaign, over \$3.5 million was raised, and the University received its first \$1million gift (the Jason and Ellen Hancock Student Endowment Fund). A \$1.1 million gift from Constantine and Marie Macricostas will be announced early in the Spring 2003 semester. The University has hired a full-time Director of Alumni Affairs, and a number of new programs have been developed for WestConn alumni. Both Institutional Advancement and the Office of Grant Programs (in the Division of Academic Affairs) will play important roles in finding external money to support new initiatives.

The University has made considerable progress toward developing assessment plans aligned with state accountability measures. Some plans are now generating information that can be reviewed and utilized for program enhancement. In the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey, 60% of the faculty respondents answered affirmatively to the statement “WestConn’s assessment process facilitates improvement of instruction and learning in your program.”

The University has put a great deal of effort into evaluation. There have been presentations on assessment in the University Senate, workshops have been offered, and discussion groups were

sponsored. Members of the Assessment Committee, particularly the director of Institutional Research and Assessment, have done outreach and education sessions for faculty.

The process of developing departmental assessment plans has not always been smooth. For example, the Assessment Committee had to issue a clarification of its original instructions. The Assessment Committee's report contains the original criteria (12/11/00) and the clarifications issued the following year (12/3/01). Members of the Assessment Committee have been invited to some department meetings to talk with faculty about evaluation plans.

The Committee continues to see learning objectives that are not easily measurable. Plans are sometimes vague about how they will measure the attainment of objectives. For example, it must be clear how portfolios are selected, what instructions students will receive prior to assembling their portfolios, and what criteria will be applied in evaluating portfolios.

Although departments were instructed to append assessment plans and/or updates to their annual reports, some did not include assessment information.

Student Affairs: The chair of the Assessment Committee in the Division of Student Affairs has worked closely with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to develop surveys of both current students and alumni.

The Student Affairs Assessment Committee will review the survey responses of resident and commuter students during the Spring 2003 semester and make recommendations for change where appropriate.

Projection

Planning

The demand for accountability is likely to increase over the coming years, particularly if economic recovery in the state proceeds slowly. In what is likely to be a relatively unstable financial situation, a thorough integration of planning and evaluation at every level will be crucial to the successful realization of the University's Mission, Principles, and Values.

A draft Strategic Plan to cover the years 2003-2006 has been presented for UPBC approval and will be reviewed and revised as appropriate.

A revised procedure for campus facilities planning and a timetable for the spending plan have been proposed by the UPBC.

During the past ten years, the University has experienced significant growth in its programs, enrollments, and facilities. Over the next few years, it is likely that there will be a number of retirements among key executive personnel, faculty, and staff. Their successors will be responsible for consolidating gains, implementing new programs, overseeing new construction, and developing fiscally responsible, accountability-based plans for the institution's future.

Operating in an atmosphere of state-wide economic crisis is not new to the University, but the current situation comes on the heels of a period of unprecedented growth and rising expectations. Increasing enrollments have meant increasing demands for services, and it will need to be very clear to the University community that the institution is addressing those needs on the basis of established priorities and planning guidelines, especially in the case of hiring decisions.

It is important that there be clear communication among the University's various constituencies about planning and the allocation of resources.

Some needed positions have been filled (both vacancies and new lines), and many are in process. The University has been authorized to fill 100% of faculty vacancies.

A new facilities plan will be developed in the coming year. The immediate future will bring a new residence hall and a student center to the Westside campus, and a new science building to the Midtown campus. The financial obligation to maintain the new facilities will need to be addressed in creative ways.

The Centennial Campaign is expected to meet its goals, and the University will continue aggressive fundraising efforts in order to reach the endowment goal established by the System Office: \$20 million by 2010.

Allocations for hardware, software, and training are likely to be less generous. However, the CSU System is committed to Banner and Campus Pipeline (the portal system). WestConn will need to plan carefully in order to bring about the successful implementation of new and updated software.

Evaluation

The Assessment Committee, CUCAS, and the Graduate Council will continue to articulate expectations for annual updates to assessment plans. Members of the Assessment Committee will continue to work with departments on their plans for assessment of student learning.

The demand for web-based surveys and focus group studies will continue, and in all likelihood, will increase.

Efforts will continue to bring university and departmental planning into alignment with the Connecticut legislature's performance indicators and the CSU System Office objectives.

Standard III

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

Description

Connecticut State University System: The Board of Trustees (BOT) for the Connecticut State University System is responsible for the governance of the four universities under its jurisdiction: Central Connecticut State University (New Britain), Eastern Connecticut State University (Willimantic), Southern Connecticut State University (New Haven), and Western Connecticut State University (Danbury). The CSU system, in turn, is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Governors for Higher Education and its Department of Higher Education. The BOT determines the general policy of the University System, reviews and approves institutional budget requests, sets tuition and fees, and appoints the chancellor of the system and the university presidents.

The BOT is made up of fourteen members appointed by the governor and four members elected by the students, one from each of the constituent universities of the CSU system as specified by the Connecticut General Statutes. Members are guided by the Connecticut Code of Ethics for Public Officials. The BOT appoints university presidents, to whom it delegates a broad range of powers and responsibilities.

The division of authority between the CSU System Office and each campus is delineated in a number of places, including state statutes, the Trustees' Personnel Policies for Management and Confidential Professional personnel, the Board of Trustees' resolutions (compiled in the Board Policy Book), the annual letter of priorities from the chancellor to the individual university presidents, and long-standing practices. During the 1990s, a series of public acts gave the CSU System presidents authority in critical administrative areas (travel requests and expenses, purchase of all commodities and equipment, as well as certain contractual services, personal service agreements and honoraria, and the establishment of positions within budgetary allocations). Management positions are fitted into the System-wide management salary structure in order to promote pay equity across the System.

Western Connecticut State University: The president of the University is the chief executive officer of the institution. The current president, Dr. James R. Roach, was appointed September 18, 1992. WestConn is organized administratively into four divisions: Academic Affairs; Finance and Administration; Student Affairs; and Institutional Advancement. The day-to-day operations of the University are reviewed and discussed during weekly staff meetings with the President. The four vice presidents, the Dean of Human Resources, and the Executive Assistant to the President for Minority Affairs and Disability Services regularly attend these meetings.

During the academic year, the President meets several times a semester with the Cabinet, a much larger group, which includes the vice presidents, the Dean of Human Resources, the three School deans, the Dean of Graduate and External Programs, the Dean of Student Affairs, the Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Chief Information Officer, the Associate Vice President for Public Safety, the Director of Public Safety, the Director of University Libraries, the Enrollment Management Officer, the Director of Public Relations, and the Director of Grant Programs. The President may also seek advice from faculty and students: formally through the University Senate, Senate standing committees, and the Student Government Association; or informally from individuals. President Roach regularly holds open office hours on the Midtown and the Westside

campuses, when anyone may come to talk with him. During his tenure, the President has redefined positions and brought in a number of new people at the executive and administrative level.

Management and Director-Level Changes: The University's fifth-year report listed a number of changes and new appointments at the management level. Appointments since that time include a Vice President for Institutional Advancement (a new position; 1999), a Vice President for Student Affairs (2000), an Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (a new position; 2002), a Dean of the Ansell School of Business (1999), a Dean of the School of Professional Studies (2001), a Dean of Arts and Sciences (2002), a Dean of Graduate Studies and External Programs (a new position; 2002), and a Chief Information Officer (1998).

The fifth-year report addressed four areas of special emphasis at the request of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE): (1) Minority Recruiting and Retention; (2) Faculty Scholarship; (3) Part-time Faculty; and (4) Library and Information Technology. The advancement to Management level of the position of Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services relates to the first area, and that of the Chief Information Officer to the fourth. Two recent director-level appointments are also indicative of the University's commitment to address the areas of emphasis identified by the CIHE: a Director of Grant Programs (2001), supporting faculty scholarship, and an Associate Director of Library Services (2002).

Collective Bargaining: There are six bargaining units on the Western Connecticut State University campus: The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), State University Organization of Administrative Faculty (SUOAF), Administrative and Residual (A&R), Protective Services, Maintenance and Service Unit, and the Administrative Clerical Bargaining Unit.

Academic Affairs: The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) has overall responsibility for the entire area of academic affairs and for the total instructional program of the University, in accordance with established policy and the direction of the President. The VPAA is responsible for the administration, coordination and supervision of all academic personnel and related programs and services, including academic strategic planning and the coordination of institutional, regional, and state accreditation processes.

Schools and Departments: The University is organized into three Schools: the Ansell School of Business, the School of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Professional Studies, each of which has its own standards, retention criteria, and faculty. Each School is administered by an academic dean responsible to the VPAA. All graduate and undergraduate programs are offered through one of the three schools. The Ansell School of Business has five departments (Accounting, Finance, Management, Management Information Systems, and Marketing) and a division (Justice and Law Administration). Arts and Sciences, the largest of three Schools, is made up of thirteen departments: Art, Biology and Environmental Science, Chemistry, Communications and Theatre Arts, Computer Science, English, Foreign Languages and Literature, History and Non-Western Cultures, Mathematics, Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, Physics, Astronomy and Meteorology, Psychology, and Social Sciences. Professional Studies has five departments: Education and Educational Psychology, Health Promotion and Exercise Sciences, Music and Music Education, Nursing, and Social Work. Each academic department has a chairperson, the official spokesperson for department faculty.

Curriculum Development: Academic departments and their faculty have authority over the WestConn curriculum. Departments originate proposals and seek permission to proceed with planning through the University Planning and Budgeting Committee, which recommends to the President after review for compatibility with the University Strategic Plan and implications for

staffing, equipment, and facilities. With permission to proceed, departments complete proposals and submit them for approval by governance at the School, University, and management levels. New degree programs must go beyond the University to the Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors for Higher Education.

Program Review: CUCAS has the responsibility for conducting regular program reviews on a rotating ten-year basis. In addition, CUCAS, the University Senate, or any member of the administration may request CUCAS to review a program. Programs that undergo external review may use the external review guidelines in lieu of the internal guidelines. Reviews are submitted to the University President.

Program Discontinuance: A department, CUCAS, the Graduate Council, the University Senate, or the University President may initiate a recommendation for program discontinuance. The review procedure is complex, with emphasis on how the proposed discontinuance would affect students, faculty, and related programs. Provision is always made for completion of a program by students who have begun their coursework.

Constituent Elements: Other constituent elements of the Division of Academic Affairs and the standards in which they are addressed in greater detail are: the Office of Enrollment Management (Standard VI), the Registrar's Office (Standard VI), Media Services (Standard VII), Library Services (Standard VII), Institutional Research and Assessment (Standards III, IV, and VI), the Office of External Programs, and the Office of Grant Programs (Standards IV and V).

Finance and Administration: The Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPFA) has overall responsibility for the entire area of finance, as well as administrative offices serving the institution's students and faculty. Offices reporting to the VPFA include Public Safety, Fiscal Affairs, Institutional Services, University Computing, Planning and Engineering, University Events, and University Publications and Design.

Student Affairs: Student Affairs is the responsibility of the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA). The Dean of Student Affairs, who reports to the VPSA, is responsible for supervising, evaluating and coordinating areas such as Career Development and Placement, Counseling, Health Services, the Student Center, Student Judicial Affairs, and student organizations. Also included in the Division of Student Affairs are Athletics and Recreation, club sports, and intramurals.

Institutional Advancement: The Vice President for Institutional Advancement is responsible for public relations, all development activities with external agencies, organizations, and individuals, and alumni affairs.

University Senate: Established by the will of the faculty in 1968 and last reorganized in 1991, the University Senate is responsible for representing the general faculty (all professional employees except the president). Its membership is made up of teaching faculty, administrative faculty, representatives from management, and a representative from the Student Government Association. In the case of policies over which WestConn has autonomy, the approval of the University Senate is required. The University Senate also acts as a forum to discuss issues and to express its views through resolutions on any topic of concern to the faculty. The University Senate's authority, responsibility, and membership are described in the faculty handbook. The University Senate currently has 17 standing committees.

Students and Shared Governance: On matters that directly concern students, the President and the University Senate consult with members of the Student Government Association (SGA) and student

representatives on University Senate standing committees, University Senate *ad hoc* committees, and on the University Senate itself. The SGA is charged with initiating, coordinating, and integrating all activities of the student body and member campus organizations in the best interest of the entire student body. The SGA acts as the main voice of student opinion and serves as a liaison between students and the University administration.

The SGA is the governing body of student organizations at WestConn. SGA represents students on various University committees, serves as the voice of the student body, and establishes channels of communications within the student population. SGA develops and funds many campus activities, and also serves to help protect the rights and freedoms of individual students and student groups in academic and social matters. Consistent with state legislation and Board of Trustees policy, the University administration consults with the SGA regarding changes in student fees and charges. By statute, the University administration retains ultimate responsibility for expenditure of all fee revenues.

Appraisal

Connecticut State University System: The Connecticut State University, as a public state university system, interacts with the state legislature, the executive branch, and the Board of Governors for Higher Education. The current system, though not without its problems, has on the whole functioned well.

The relationship between WestConn and its sister institutions within the system also functions well in an environment characterized by collegiality and collaboration. The relationship between WestConn and the CSU System Office is similar to that of its sister institutions, with occasional stresses and strains. For example, WestConn faculty and staff have not always agreed with System Office decisions on technology, such as the choice of course management software. The issues become more complex when the State government is also involved. For example, the CSU System's administrative software is SCT Banner. However, the State of Connecticut has recently moved to PeopleSoft, a decision that complicates matters for several areas of CSU administrative computing (payroll, accounts receivable and payable, for example). Online CSU runs distance education courses, an arrangement that has not been entirely satisfactory for faculty, staff, or students at the four universities.

Western Connecticut State University: President Roach's open and collegial style has greatly improved the morale of faculty and staff. In general, there is effective collaboration between faculty and the administration and that pattern can be expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The University strategic plan has created a comprehensive and workable structure for setting priorities and determining spending plans, though the state's current economic difficulties obviously create challenges. (For additional information, please see Standards III and IX).

WestConn faculty and administration are committed to a participatory governance system. Members of the University community show a consistent willingness to serve on University Senate committees. In the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff survey, however, a substantial number of respondents did not agree that "WestConn's system of governance effectively accomplishes the mission and purposes of the University." Why the process is perceived this way may be related to communication issues, despite the widespread use of e-mail and a weekly newsletter, "WestConn Report."

Although students have many opportunities to be involved in governance, actual participation has been somewhat disappointing. For many reasons, most of them related to time conflicts (there is no

regularly scheduled “open” time) and other commitments, student representatives do not regularly attend meetings of University Senate standing committees.

The reorganization of the University Senate in 1991 resulted in better communication between departments and the Senate. The flow of information from the various committees and the University community has significantly improved through the increased use of the University’s computer network.

In 1998 the Senate initiated a complete review of committee bylaws. As a result, the focus of each committee has been clarified and redefined where necessary. There are no formally established procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the governance system, but when problems arise, they are brought before the Senate and resolved in a collegial manner.

The office of ombudsman, established in the late 1980s, continues to function. The ombudsman is responsible for resolving complaints not adequately addressed through normal university channels. There have been few appeals to the ombudsman recently, however. This may indicate that the formal mechanisms for resolving complaints have been working effectively and/or that not everyone is aware of the services available through that office.

The University’s governance structure and internal organization seem to have served the institution well. Changes have been made when necessary to improve governance in order to better fulfill the University’s mission. For example, at the executive and administrative level, new positions have been added gradually and existing positions redefined in ways that help to address needs and concerns. The position of Dean of Graduate and External Programs is a case in point. The new dean is working with the Graduate Council to develop new processes and procedures, and to revise existing ones that have not always run smoothly. Another example concerns the institution of the position of Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services. The University received pointed criticisms on diversity issues from the 1993 NEASC site team and from the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. For the last seven years, however, since the establishment of this position and the upgrading to management level, the University’s affirmative action plan has been approved by the Commission. Another example is the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, which has accelerated the University’s progress in putting into place procedures for the evaluation of institutional effectiveness, particularly of student learning outcomes. Finally, since the appointment of a Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the University’s endowment has grown significantly: from \$1.9M in 1999 to \$5.1M in 2002 (see Standard IX for additional information). Grant awards, which had fallen off during the years when there was no full-time grants officer, are steadily rising.

Projection

WestConn is growing and maturing as a university. New programs, especially the addition of a doctoral level program in education (pending NEASC approval), are accelerating a process that began many years ago. The University will continue to evaluate and, where appropriate, revise internal governance structures.

Responses to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey indicated a perception that communication among WestConn constituencies is less than ideal; the University community will need to work together to improve the situation. The sheer volume of print and electronic messages and reports may be part of the problem.

The Student Affairs Division will continue to work with the Academic Affairs Division to develop ways to improve student participation in governance, whether through improving the scheduling of committee meetings or by providing incentives to encourage student participation.

STANDARD IV

PROGRAMS AND INSTRUCTION

Overview (4.1-4.11)

Response to Fifth-Year Review: Following WestConn's fifth-year review, the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education asked that in its self-study for comprehensive evaluation the University emphasize the steps it had taken to "incorporate the perspectives and contributions of minorities and women and the new scholarship about them into the curriculum and co-curricular activities to achieve the institution's goals for diversity." (The Commission's second request, concerning library resources, will be discussed under Standard VII.)

Minorities: The University policy is one of inclusion of minorities in a commitment to multiculturalism. We believe that multiculturalism best reflects the broad spectrum of cultures represented by our student body and our faculty. At the same time, we recognize the perspectives and contributions of minorities and support student interests and needs both in the curriculum and in co-curricular activities.

In curriculum we offer an interdisciplinary Multicultural Studies Minor (Social Sciences), with an elective African-American focus. To complete the African-American focus, students take 12 semester hours in African-American studies, chosen from 27 semester hours of course offerings. AAS 100, *The Black Experience in America*, the lead course of the minor, is also available as a free elective and draws high enrollment. It is offered every semester and is taught by a leader in Connecticut public affairs and senior part-time faculty at WestConn.

An eight-course series in Non-Western Cultures, developed to ensure multicultural perspectives in General Education, is offered on a rotating basis every semester and is always fully enrolled. Cultures represented, in addition to African, include Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Middle Eastern, and Vietnamese. In addition, more than 50 courses incorporating minority and multicultural perspectives and contributions and the new scholarship in these fields are offered across the curriculum, and many others include minority and/or multicultural materials.

Many faculty across the University are strongly interested, engaged in scholarship, and teach in multicultural and minority fields. Recognized leaders include a cultural anthropologist who is the faculty advisor to the Multi-Cultural Studies Minor and active on the Advisory Committee to the Jane Goodall Institute at WestConn. A sociology professor whose research area is the Mexican immigrant experience, teaches the Latino Experience in the U.S. Social work faculty prepare students to work in community agencies characterized by the region's broad ethnic diversity.

In co-curricular activities, the University sponsors the celebration each February of Black History Month, with lectures, films, and performances. In February 2003 the chief activity was an African Film Festival that was so popular that plans are underway to make it an annual event. An annual awards dinner, *Tribute to People of Color*, was initiated in Spring 2000, with the first two honorees drawn from the WestConn faculty (one from Art, the other from Education/Educational Psychology).

Among student clubs and organizations, the InterCultural Advisory Council was named Student Government Association Club of the Year in 2002 and 2003. Other clubs include the Black Students Alliance, the Chinese-American Club, the Latin-American Student Organization, and the West Indian Club. All of the clubs welcome new membership and sponsor activities throughout the year.

The University's administrative structure reflects the priority given to multicultural and minority affairs. The position of Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services was advanced to Management level (2000) and is regularly included in the President's staff meetings with the Vice Presidents of the University. The Coordinator of Minority Affairs reports to this office (2002).

Women: The University policy is one of equal opportunity and inclusion of women in all aspects of institutional life. Women have served with distinction as president of the University Senate and as chairs of key governance committees and academic departments, including Biology, Chemistry, Physics/Astronomy/Meteorology, and Mathematics/Computer Science. University offices offering direct support in employment and other issues, beyond the due process of the CSU/AAUP and other negotiated agreements, include the Ombudsman and the Executive Assistant to the President for Minority Affairs and Disability Services.

In curriculum an interdisciplinary Women's Studies Minor (Social Sciences) emphasizes "awareness and knowledge about women's achievements and contributions to society and about social concerns and issues that are of particular importance to women and to all minority groups." In addition, courses incorporating the perspectives and contributions of women and the scholarship about them are offered across the curriculum.

Faculty leaders include an anthropologist/sociologist (and co-founder of the minor) who has published research on women in the military in Canada and the US, and a professor of Communications and Theatre Arts (a co-founder of the minor), whose research area is women's issues in the workplace; she is also currently the president of the WestConn chapter of AAUP. A recently hired English professor was a leader in bringing Women's Studies into the curriculum of the English Department.

Co-curricular activities include the celebration in March of Women's History Month, with lectures, films, and performances. Among special events in the past year were productions of the *Vagina Monologues*, with student sponsorship, and of *Silent Witness* (domestic violence), in partnership with the Coalition of Jewish Women.

Women students hold leadership positions in clubs and organizations across the campus, including the Student Government Association *The Echo* (student newspaper), and WCXI (radio station). Residential students have the option of living in an all-female hall (Newbury Hall). They hold office and staff appointments in this and other halls and plan activities to meet residents' interests and needs.

Description

Over the past 10 years, WestConn has made substantial progress toward maturing as a university. The programmatic changes have been as striking as the dramatic improvements in the physical plant. Exciting new undergraduate programs have been developed as WestConn's focus has gradually but steadily shifted from being primarily an institution with an emphasis on teacher education, as it was at its founding, to a university offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and particular niches within those fields. Many faculty members are engaged in applied and/or theoretical research that contributes to their disciplines, enriches their course offerings, and broadens

opportunities for our students. WestConn has also significantly extended its outreach to the community and beyond. Examples of changes include the following:

- The Department of Physics, Astronomy, and Meteorology has replaced its B.A. program with a B.S. in Meteorology. WestConn has the only operational weather center within the state of Connecticut to run, in real time, a suite of highly advanced, state-of-the-science, numerical weather prediction models that provide virtually uninterrupted simulated meteorological data for use in instruction, research, forecasting, outreach, and service to subscribers. The Department now has a pilot program in Weathercasting that offers students the opportunity to prepare for careers as television weather reporters as well as scientists in meteorology.
- In 1994 the American Chemical Society accredited WestConn's chemistry major; in 1996, the accreditation was extended to the biochemistry option. WestConn is the only public university in Connecticut with an American Chemical Society-approved program in biochemistry.
- The Jane Goodall Institute entered into an agreement with WestConn (1994) to establish an affiliation to promote environmental studies. The collaboration includes an annual visit and presentation by Dr. Goodall, the development of teacher-training workshops, and the organization and implementation of environmental education seminars.
- An M.F.A. Visual Arts has been established, making WestConn one of four schools in the state offering the degree (the other three are Yale, the University of Connecticut, and the University of Hartford). In 2000, the faculty in the program developed an informal visiting artist partnership with the Weir Farm Trust (the only national park in the country devoted to American painting).
- In December 2000, 21 Bahamian students graduated from the College of the Bahamas with a WestConn degree in Health Care Administration.
- Theatre students travel to Scotland every other year to participate in the Edinburgh Festival.
- An Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership received state approval in December 2002. WestConn will be only the thirteenth school in the nation to offer the degree.
- The University is awaiting approval from the Board of Governors for an M.F.A. in Professional Writing.
- The Social Work Department and the Department of Management have established a not-for-profit Executive Forum with a focus on building the capacity of area agencies to serve community needs.
- The Ansell School of Business created a CEO Forum for business executives in 1996. The forum offers area chief executive officers the opportunity to meet together in an informal atmosphere to discuss problems of mutual interest and concern.

Western Connecticut State University is authorized by the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education to confer the B.A., B.S., B.B.A., and B.M. in a variety of academic and professional disciplines, and the M.A., M.S., M.S.M., M.H.A., M.B.A., M.F.A., and the Ed.D. at the graduate level. An A.S. in Liberal Arts is also offered.

The Connecticut State University System establishes program objectives for the system as a whole, and the programs and instruction for each of the individual campuses are aligned with those objectives. After campus approval at all levels, new degree programs must be approved by the CSU system-wide Council of Academic Vice Presidents, the CSU Board of Trustees, and the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education. All programs follow the Connecticut State Department of Higher Education's official Program Inventory and are in compliance with the Rules and Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Education outlined by the state of Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education.

In the Mission Statement, the University has identified facilitating learning as its primary function. Three University Senate standing committees (the University Planning and Budgeting Committee, the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards, and the Graduate Council) are charged with ensuring that academic programs are consistent with WestConn's Mission, Principles, and Values. Specific procedures are in place to assist academic departments in curricular development, modification, and review. These procedures require detailed justification of proposals and successive approvals at the department, school, governance, and administrative level. A detailed summary of curricular procedures for undergraduate and graduate programs and courses may be found in the faculty handbook.

Each undergraduate and graduate program offering is clearly articulated. Policies and procedures for admission to programs are published in the appropriate catalog and online. Some programs have special criteria. For example, the Music Department requires an audition. Admission to degree status in the teacher education program follows the Connecticut Department of Education certification requirements.

Instructional methodologies are consistent with best practices in the disciplines and the instructor's approach to teaching and learning. The Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey responses indicate that methods of instruction include class discussions, lectures, independent projects, cooperative learning, experiential learning and field studies, recitals, demonstrations, shows, group projects, and technology enhanced instruction (see Standard VII for additional information on technology).

A listing of required courses and goals for all undergraduate and graduate programs is published in the appropriate catalog, and each student is given an official program sheet that includes a listing of all prerequisites and course work in the major. The Registrar uses the fulfillment of these requirements to certify students for graduation.

Formally admitted students must enroll in a degree program. For the baccalaureate degree, undergraduates are required to earn at least 122 credits including the physical education requirement in order to graduate. At least 30 semester hours must be taken at WestConn and a minimum of half of the credits in the major must be earned at the University. The maximum number of credits by examination that may be applied to the bachelor's degree is 60; for an associate degree, the maximum is 30 credits.

Existing programs are periodically and systematically reviewed by departments, Schools, and governance. The Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards (CUCAS), a standing committee of the University Senate, is charged with reviewing undergraduate programs; the Graduate Council is responsible for review of graduate programs. The Assessment Committee, a standing committee of the University Senate, reviews programs for assessment of student learning. Programs with external accreditation are reviewed by their accrediting bodies. In addition to accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education, and the Connecticut State Department of Education, several graduate and undergraduate programs (e.g., Chemistry, Counseling, Music, Nursing, and Social Work,) are accredited nationally and reviewed by discipline-related agencies. The quality of planning and evaluation activities for all programs has been enhanced by the establishment of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (1996) and the implementation of revised procedures for academic planning (1999).

Since 1993, the following changes involving discontinuance have been made in undergraduate programs:

- B.A. in English is now offered as a B.A. in English, American, and Comparative Literature
- B.A. in English: The Professional Writing Option is now offered as a B.A. in Professional Writing, with five options
- B.A. in Mathematics and Computer Science is now a B.A. in Mathematics and a B.A. in Computer Science
- B.A. in Meteorology will become a B.S. in Meteorology in Fall 2003
- The undergraduate honors program was revised and renamed “The University Scholars Program”

Similarly, new or revised graduate programs and options have been developed since 1993:

- M.A. in Biological and Environmental Sciences
- M.A. in Earth and Planetary Sciences
- M.F.A. in Visual Arts
- M.F.A. in Professional Writing (pending approval at the State level)
- M.S. in Justice Administration
- M.S. in Education with an Instructional Technology option
- M.S. in Education with a Special Education option
- M.S.N., with an Adult Nurse Practitioner option
- Post-Master’s Certificate, Adult Nurse Practitioner
- Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership (approved at the State level; awaiting NEASC review)

Special features include use of an apprenticeship model in the M.F.A. in Visual Arts Program, the low-residency program proposed for the M.F.A. in Professional Writing, theatre productions at the Edinburgh Festival every other year, and opportunities for astronomy students to spend time at the National Undergraduate Research Observatory at Northern Arizona University. Students regularly present papers at the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) and at other national meetings. WestConn has also put into place a Freshman Seminar that is being closely monitored for best practices and strategies for helping students to succeed in their academic programs.

Undergraduate and graduate program discontinuance procedures have been in place for over 20 years. As required by Board of Trustees regulations, arrangements must be made to ensure that if a program is eliminated, students already enrolled will still be able to graduate in a timely fashion. Between 1993 and 2002, the only undergraduate program that was discontinued was the option in Biotechnology (May 2000) offered by the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences (it is still offered by the Chemistry Department). To better serve needs of students and the region, the following changes involving discontinuance have been made in graduate programs:

- M.A. in Oceanography and Limnology became the M.A. in Biological and Environmental Sciences (1996)
- M.B.A.: specializations are no longer offered
- M.S. options and concentrations in Child and Adolescent Study, Early Childhood Education, Earth, Space and Environmental Sciences, and Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts Certification are no longer offered

WestConn provides a variety of options in order to accommodate the diverse instructional needs of its students. In addition to the Fall and Spring semesters (15 weeks of classes scheduled throughout the day and evening, including some Saturday courses), four Summer sessions, Spring Break, and a Winter Intersession are offered. The instructional objectives, performance expectations, and learning

outcomes of the alternatively structured and scheduled courses are comparable to those of the traditional courses. Prerequisites and departmental requirements are identical. Assignments and assessment criteria are consistent with course objectives. The total number of hours of instruction is set by the collective bargaining agreement. Instructional support (library and information services, technology resources, audio-visual equipment, and the bookstores) is available for all sessions. Distance learning courses are offered in cooperation with our sister institutions (Central, Eastern, and Southern). Students enrolled in Distance Learning courses are issued an ID and are eligible to use campus facilities. Distance learning courses are taught by full-time as well as part-time faculty, and students may interact with faculty through a two-way audio system; the Picture-Tel video system, installed in 1998, enables two-way video.

Cooperative Education, combining formal classroom work with on-the-job experience in cooperation with business, industry, government agencies, and other employers, offers students additional opportunities for professional development, academic achievement, and personal growth. Cooperative education credit is available as a free elective on a Pass/Fail basis, or students may earn a letter grade in an academic area through the appropriate department (*Undergraduate Catalog*, 37). Some professional programs, including education, nursing, medical technology, and social work, require that students have community-based field experience. Essential student support on campus is provided to students on field assignments, but the University also enters into contracts defining the responsibilities of both parties when working with service agencies that regularly offer field placements.

A variety of conferences, institutes, lectures, workshops, and other enrichment activities are offered to the campus community and to the community at large. Offerings have included music programs, noted speakers, theatre presentations, art exhibits, and workshops that address specific issues. These activities are an extension of and are compatible with WestConn's Mission, Principles, and Values.

Individual faculty have the sole responsibility for awarding grades. (*Collective Bargaining Agreement*, 4.2.2, 13). The grading system and quality points grading system are described in the catalogs. Students may appeal a grade through a defined procedure published in the catalog. The Registrar's Office evaluates students' progress toward a degree. This information is also available to the students' advisers, authorized administrative and faculty personnel, and the students themselves through the Banner administrative software system.

The undergraduate and graduate catalogs (in print and online) provide information on transferring credits earned at other institutions, in the Armed Forces, through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or through prior learning via a contractual arrangement with Charter Oak State College. Such credits are applied to meet graduation requirements but are not considered in determining grade point averages. When appropriate, WestConn may use credential evaluation services for international students.

Although WestConn is part of the CSU system, the University retains responsibility for all credit-bearing courses, including course content and delivery, the selection and approval of faculty, admission, registration, retention, student evaluation, and the awarding and recording of credit. Instructional delivery is at the discretion of the instructor, subject to policies established by governance and published in the faculty handbook.

Academic personnel searches (full- and part-time) are conducted by the departments. The departments' recommendations are subject to the review by the School dean, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services, the Dean of Human Resources, and the President.

Students confer with their advisers prior to registration. The academic progress of undergraduate students is closely monitored. At midterm, students who have been identified by faculty as academically at risk are offered support through their departments, the deans, and the residence halls. At the end of each semester, the School deans review students' records. Students whose G.P.A. falls below the 2.0 (1.7 for first-semester freshmen) required for Good Standing are placed on Academic Probation and are advised of the many resources available to help them. Their major departments are notified. If the students do not meet requirements by the end of the next semester, they may be placed on Academic Suspension. This means that they lose matriculation and may enroll only as non-matriculated students until their grades justify reapplication for admission to the University.

Graduate students confer with the Dean of Graduate Studies and their Graduate Program Coordinator prior to admission to a program and then are responsible for following their program sheet and checking with the appropriate coordinator periodically. The progress of graduate students is monitored by their respective Graduate Coordinators and the Dean of Graduate Studies and External Programs. A graduate student (except for M.B.A. students) whose G.P.A. falls below 3.0 is placed on Academic Probation. A graduate student on Probation who does not regain Good Standing within two semesters will be dismissed for unsatisfactory academic performance.

Faculty are required to take attendance and submit course grades. Procedures are in place to allow a student to add or drop a course in the first week of a semester or to withdraw without academic penalty until the end of the tenth week of a semester. Evaluation methods to measure student progress include competency-based grading, mid-term and final exams, quizzes, term and/or research papers, and student presentations. Individual instructors are responsible for determining final grades.

Appraisal

Overall, the University effectively fulfills its commitment to "facilitate learning" through programs that help students to "attain the highest standards of academic achievement" (Mission, Principles, and Values). There is a strong academic foundation in place and standards are applied consistently across Schools, departments, and programs. Resources are sufficient to support programs and instruction, although the current fiscal uncertainty in the state may limit opportunities for expansion and enhancement.

Faculty members at the University are dedicated and committed to learning and teaching. (For information on the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, please see Standard V.) Curricular procedures are clearly specified in the *Faculty Handbook 2001-2005* and assure that new programs or modifications of programs are congruent with the institution's Mission, Principles, and Values. Governance committees at the school and institutional levels act responsibly in their review and analysis of proposals, and the additional requirement of Administrative approval ensures that sufficient resources are available to implement programs.

Faculty leadership through membership on the departmental and School technology committees and the University-wide Instructional Technology Committee has led to a number of improvements and innovations in the integration of various technologies into course delivery in every discipline. Faculty who are successful early adapters have offered workshops on various software and multimedia packages for their peers. ERes, a user-friendly electronic reserve system that makes course materials available at any time of the day or night, is accessed through the library web page, and an increasing number of faculty in a variety of disciplines are taking advantage of the system to Web-enable their courses.

According to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey, 93% of the full-time faculty respondents believe that the “need for remedial instruction is a growing problem at WestConn.” This is a national problem which we share. To address concerns about underprepared students, freshman to sophomore retention rates and graduation rates, a number of recommendations have been put into place. As a short-term measure, a Dean of Freshmen and Academic Support Services was appointed for the 2001-2002 academic year (renewed for 2002-2003). The Academic Advisement Center focuses on advising undeclared students. A large number of faculty members serve as advisers to these students, and a half-time staff adviser is also available.

A mentoring program for new faculty was established in 1995, and the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), established in 2001, has sponsored a number of sessions. (For additional information on CELT, please see Standard V.)

Since 1993, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to improve academic services and accountability. Systematic evaluation plans are in various stages of refinement, but all departments have developed an assessment plan. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, the Assessment Committee, and departmental evaluation committees are working with programs to improve evaluation, with particular attention to the “feedback loop” -- using data to make changes in curricula and/or instruction to enhance learning. (For detailed information, please see Standard III.)

Information about academic policies and procedures is widely disseminated, and print and online materials are reviewed regularly for adequacy, consistency, and accuracy.

Some faculty have concerns about online courses and programs that include: enrollment caps (which many believe should be lower for online than for on ground courses), problems with technical support at the System Office, and the decisions made at the System level about the choice of course management software. The administration has concerns about the costs of online programs and the fact that a faculty member who teaches an online course is not available to teach its on ground equivalent, complicated by the fact that there are contractual limits on the number of adjuncts.

Projection

A number of initiatives are underway that should enhance programs and services. For example, the Academic Policy Committee will be meeting early in the Spring 2003 semester to consider the responses from faculty, staff, and students to the question “What Gets in the Way?” The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching is sponsoring a session on Richard J. Light’s book, *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds* (Cambridge, 2001), that is expected to begin a campus-wide discussion of issues that directly relate to program enhancement. During the Spring semester, appropriate Academic and Student Affairs personnel will also be reviewing the responses to the faculty and student surveys conducted in the Fall 2002 semester in order to look for areas that may need improvement.

Several promising interdisciplinary initiatives are underway. One is the Graphics Research Group, sponsored by faculty in Computer Science and Art. The GRG brings together students and faculty in a number of different disciplines to work on projects that involve both content and multimedia technology. Planning for an interdisciplinary post-baccalaureate certificate in gerontology is making its way through the curriculum proposal and approval stages.

The faculty will continue to integrate technology into teaching and learning, a process that has been underway for at least ten years. There are already a number of online and technology-enhanced courses, but many more will be added over the next few years once Campus Pipeline (the portal

software) and WebCT (course management software) are available. In the meantime, the number of faculty using ERes is expected to grow significantly.

Wherever appropriate, professional programs will continue efforts to obtain approval by external accrediting agencies.

The University will continue to develop and enhance graduate programs. Two new programs were approved through the State level during the Fall 2002 semester: The Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership was approved at the State level during the Fall 2002 semester. The M.F.A. in Visual Arts, already approved for licensure, received state accreditation. The M.F.A. in Professional Writing is a candidate for approval by the Board of Governors. All three of these initiatives hold great promise for the students and for the institution.

A review of the *Graduate Catalog* has been completed, and recommendations for revisions, changes, and deletions made in time for the 2003 edition. A similar close review of the *Undergraduate Catalog* is underway. In both cases, changes will also be made to the online versions.

As faculty receive more training and become more comfortable with the Banner Administrative Software System and as problems with the software itself are resolved, electronic access to student data will be facilitated and that aspect of advising improved.

The faculty and administration will continue to work on ways to be more creative and flexible in course delivery and structure so that students are best served and programs are competitive.

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, the Assessment Committee, and the departmental assessment committees will continue to improve evaluation plans, to analyze results of assessment, and to put into place improvements based on those analyses.

Faculty and administrators will continue to seek external funding to support the development and enhancement of programs and courses.

Undergraduate Degree Programs (4.12-4.19)

Description

Each of WestConn's three Schools has developed a mission statement complementary to the University's Mission, Principles, and Values. Every academic program also has a statement of purpose aligned with both the University's mission and the appropriate department's statement. The *Undergraduate Catalog* lists the introductory coursework needed, the sequence of advanced coursework, the requirements for graduation, and the expected educational outcomes of each academic program. University documents, including the *Undergraduate Catalog*, departmental program sheets and brochures, and course outlines provide information about the relationship between academic curricula and the abilities and scholastic preparation required of students admitted to degree programs.

General Education at WestConn: As reported in the last self-study, revised General Education requirements, approved by the University Senate, were implemented in Fall 1993. The revision maintained a distributive structure for General Education, but changed from course-specific to disciplinary requirements and allowed students to complete some work at an advanced level, subject to departmental approval. In the approval process, the Senate reviewed the existing Nine Objectives

of the Common Core and reaffirmed the appropriateness of their application to the revised requirements.

Courses in the five areas of General Education (Communication Skills, Humanities, Social and Behavior Sciences, Natural Science and Mathematics, and Physical Education), and the new writing intensive requirement constitute more than a third of the student's undergraduate program. Placement in or exemption from skill area courses (mathematics, for example) is determined by tests. Students who do not meet the minimum standard in any skill area are required to take remedial courses (ENG 098 and/or MAT 098) that do not count toward a degree.

The *Undergraduate Catalog* lists all degree programs, majors, and concentrations/certificates alphabetically by School and department. Program sheets are designed to illustrate how the range of human knowledge (general education) and commitment to a particular area of inquiry (concentration, major, career field) are balanced in each program.

Associate Degree Requirements: The School of Arts and Sciences offers a 62-semester hour A.S. in Liberal Arts to students who have completed all general education requirements (42 semester hours) and 20 semester hours of unrestricted electives. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of C (2.0) to receive the Associate in Science degree.

Baccalaureate Degree Requirements: Each undergraduate program in the University includes a general education requirement and a major to successfully complete the degree program. Changes in program sheets are made through an established process that is outlined in the *Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*. The official program sheets, maintained by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, identify specific information. A brief summary of program requirements for each major is printed in the *Undergraduate Catalog 2002-2003*.

Responsibility for reviewing course level requirements for new and revised degree programs lies with the departments and the School curriculum committees. The Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards (CUCAS) reviews proposals approved by the School committees based on the program and course outlines submitted. Course numbering is described in the *Undergraduate Catalog 2002-2003* (37) with 100-level courses considered introductory and 400-level advanced. Additional resources needed for personnel, the library, or technology must be included as part of the course proposal.

In the major, students usually (Education majors are an exception) begin with introductory (100-level) courses and progress through the program to advanced courses, generally at the 300 level or above. The interrelatedness of areas of concentration (major, career field) may be seen on each program sheet. In the natural and social sciences, for example, the student is required to take courses in related areas as part of the major. Pre-professional programs (for example, nursing, education, and social work) include requirements stipulated by the professional accrediting agencies. General education courses offer students the opportunity to contextualize learning in the major within the broader spectrum of human knowledge.

In order to graduate, students must achieve a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher (with A = 4.0) for all credits earned at WestConn, as well as a grade point average of 2.0 or higher in the major. Some departments (Education, Communications and Theatre Arts, Health Promotion and Exercise Science, Nursing, and all undergraduate departments in the Ansell School of Business) require higher grade point averages for retention and graduation.

Appraisal

Alumni have been positive in evaluating their experiences at WestConn. In the Survey of Graduates 1999-2000, 93% of respondents would recommend WestConn to a friend and indicated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of classroom instruction. Almost all rated their preparation at the University as adequate to excellent. A strong majority agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “My major program prepared me well for my current occupation.” They agreed or strongly agreed that their education at WestConn is well utilized in their present work.

Professional accreditation is evidence that WestConn students are receiving an education that is current and meets rigorous national standards in the disciplines. For example, the Ansell School of Business and the School of Professional Studies, as well as the Chemistry Department in the School of Arts and Sciences, have separate accrediting bodies that review programs for the standards of the profession:

- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB; candidacy)
- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE; Baccalaureate Level)
- National League for Nursing
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP)
- National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
- American Chemical Society (ACS)

Faculty and administrators at the University are making concerted efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of programs in preparing students for success in their graduate and professional lives.

The General Education requirement currently in place is congruent with the University’s Mission, Principles, and Values and with the goals established in 1986. In the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey, 72% percent of full-time faculty responding to the statement: “The general education requirements provide a strong liberal arts foundation for students in your program,” answered in the affirmative. Spearheaded by the School of Arts and Sciences, a multi-school, multi-disciplinary task force is currently conducting a review of the general education requirements.

Departments regularly revise their curricula to meet changes in the discipline as well as to respond to student course evaluations and alumni survey. The Department of English, Comparative Literature and Writing, for example, undertook an extensive revision of its undergraduate and graduate programs. The department has added a Professional Writing Major with five options: Creative Writing; Professional Writing: Business; Professional Writing: Public Relations; Professional Writing: Journalism/Freelance; and General Writing. A Writing Minor (Professional Writing, Journalism, and Broadcast Journalism) was also developed. The Nursing Department revised its curriculum in 1999 and the department is carefully monitoring the progress of students. The Music and Music Education Department was visited by a National Association of Schools of Music peer review team in the Fall 2002 semester; and has received NASM accreditation. The Counselor Education Program received full reaccreditation in 2003.

WestConn’s chemistry department is among only 15% of such departments nationwide with accreditation in both chemistry and biochemistry.

Eighty-five percent of the respondents to the 1999-2000 Current Student Survey indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “Most courses challenged me intellectually,” and a similar number thought that they had learned a great deal in their major courses. The percentages for seniors are very similar for the 2001-2002 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), with

most respondents evaluating their entire educational experience at WestConn as “Excellent” or “Good,” and indicating they would “Definitely” or “Probably” go to WestConn if they could start all over again.

These University-wide student and alumni satisfaction surveys are consistent with the Report of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) Peer Review Team in the Fall of 2001 which found that the Ansell School of Business had made a positive impression on graduates and current students.

Projection

The University will continue to focus on offering high-quality, intellectually challenging programs that prepare students for success in their graduate studies and professional careers.

Departments will continue to evaluate and enhance existing programs and to develop new ones to meet the requirements of students and the community.

The task force reviewing general education will make its report during the 2003-2004 academic year and can be expected to make recommendations based on a careful review of the goals, requirements, and assessment data.

The School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Professional Studies are working together to ensure high quality advising of secondary education majors.

Faculty will continue their efforts to integrate technology into their teaching. Additional faculty will be trained in the use of ERes (electronic reserves) and WebCT (the course management system), for example.

New emphasis will be given to developing interdisciplinary programs, making use of courses provided by different departments within Schools and across Schools.

Accreditation by external agencies will be continued and new accreditation sought wherever appropriate. The Department of Education and Educational Psychology, for example, is pursuing Connecticut State Department of Education reaccreditation with National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standards.

The deans and the departments in all three Schools will undertake a systematic review of official course outlines, the documents that are the starting point for syllabi development. The course outlines will be updated or revised where appropriate.

The Macricostas Family Foundation has pledged \$1.1 million to WestConn (the largest pledge in the University’s history) to establish an endowed chair for Hellenic and Modern Greek Studies as part of the proposed new Center for Culture and Values. The gift will also establish and support the Macricostas Scholarship Endowment for foreign-born students, the Constantine S. Macricostas Lectures Series, and the Macricostas Entrepreneurial Endowment. (For information on the \$1 million Jason and Ellen M. Hancock Student Endowment Fund, please see Standard VI.)

Graduate Degree Programs (4.20-4.25)

Description

Academic degree programs at the graduate level have been designed to provide opportunities to pursue advanced study in the discipline. Graduate programs in the professions have the additional requirement of satisfying professional association and/or licensure criteria. The rationale and requirements for each program are clearly stated in the *Graduate Catalog* and are consistent with the role and scope statement for graduate programs.

Program objectives are listed in the *Graduate Catalog*. Students are expected to have appropriate undergraduate preparation and to build upon this competence in their graduate programs. All graduate programs have requirements significantly beyond those of undergraduate programs, and all require a culminating experience (thesis, research project, or comprehensive examination). The programs are rigorous, requiring both specialization and generalized knowledge of the field.

Resources: The terms of the current collective bargaining agreement do not provide for a separate graduate faculty. However, faculty members teaching in the graduate programs meet the qualifications set by the state Department of Higher Education's Rules and Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation.

Departments administer their budgets and provide support staff. A Dean of Graduate Studies and External Programs was appointed in the Fall of 2002.

Full-time faculty members teaching in the Ed.D. program will have a minimum of three to six credits per semester (or six to twelve credits annually) of reassigned time to pursue research and scholarship.

Most programs have a research component and research projects are directed by faculty with the requisite education and professional experience.

A variety of criteria are used to determine need for faculty and allocation of lines. Adjunct faculty are hired by almost every department to complement the strengths and expertise of the full-time faculty. A number of professional programs (e.g., business and nursing) offer courses taught by faculty who have clinical or professional expertise and experience in their respective disciplines (e.g., CPA, certification in oncology, studio art, rehabilitation, critical care, and neurological nursing).

Each graduate program has a faculty member assigned to coordinate and oversee faculty; the coordinators have programmatic responsibilities, as well. Coordinators also interview incoming students and advise and monitor students as they progress through a program. All program coordinators are members of the Graduate Council, which meets monthly to review and coordinate the University's graduate programs.

Master's Programs: The Master of Arts degree programs have been designed to offer students the opportunity for in-depth study of a specific field for professional advancement, personal development, or preparation for further study. The M.A. is offered in Biological and Environmental Sciences, Earth and Planetary Sciences, English, History, and Mathematics. Each program offers a minimum of 30 semester hours in the discipline. Students develop a basic understanding of research

appropriate to the discipline through course work, independent thesis research, a research project or a comprehensive exam.

The M.B.A., M.H.A, M.S. in Ed., M.S. in Music Education, M.S. in Justice Administration, and M.S.N. are all professional or practice-oriented degrees designed to help students develop the analytical and professional skills needed to practice and advance in their respective professions. Students are prepared to apply what they have learned to advance their careers in middle or upper management positions in business administration, criminal justice, health administration, nursing, and education.

The M.S. in Education secondary and elementary programs offer concentrations or options in Curriculum, English, Instructional Technology, Mathematics, Reading and Special Education. The M.S. in Counselor Education may be earned in Community Counseling or in School Counseling.

Assessment is in place for all Master's programs, based on comprehensive and cumulative projects or examinations to evaluate learning outcomes. All M.A. programs require a comprehensive examination or a thesis. The M.F.A. in Visual Arts requires a thesis exhibition. The M.S. in Education requires a thesis or research seminar and project. The M.B.A. requires a research project evaluated by external examiners.

Doctoral Program: With state licensure of a five-year pilot program (January 6, 2003) and NEASC authorization to proceed (May 21, 2003), the University has recruited students and assigned faculty to begin implementation of the Ed.D. program in Instructional Leadership. This program, one of thirteen of its kind nationally, is designed to address critical issues raised by the educational reform movement. Coursework for the degree will prepare classroom teachers to assume roles of instructional leadership within their school districts. Graduates will return to their schools prepared to address such issues as reaching disengaged students, mentoring student teachers, working with experienced colleagues to improve their instruction, and reaching low-income and underserved populations.

Response to NEASC Questions: In its letter of May 21, 2003, the Commission requested response to three questions regarding numbers of faculty, program content in relation to need, and assessment for quality and relevance:

1. To ensure a sufficient number of faculty to serve the projected numbers of students, the University conducted extensive evaluations. The decision taken, in accord with recommendations of the state visiting team, was to stagger cohort enrollment, admitting a new cohort every other year (1st, 3rd, and 5th year). This procedure will maintain a 1:8 faculty-student ratio, satisfactory at the doctoral level. Additional funding will be available annually to hire methodologists and other consultants should the need arise.
2. Program content was developed with specific reference to the needs of prospective students and the school districts in which they will work. The close collaboration between program planners and regional school administrators is evident in the membership of the program's Advisory Board: seven school superintendents and directors. The superintendents, directors, and other members of the Advisory Board met regularly with the Ed.D. Planning Committee to develop a shared vision of student competencies and program structure needed for a strong doctoral program in Instructional Leadership. School districts have made clear their need for graduates of this program.

3. To assess program quality and relevance in relation to goals, the Ed.D. Planning Committee constructed a Curriculum Alignment Chart that maps program objectives and explains how areas of expertise (instruction, curriculum design, measurement and evaluation, leadership and professional development, enhancement of student development and achievement, and use of technology) will be addressed course by course. Beyond this, the program Evaluation Plan examines research questions, sources and types of data, the data collection plan, and the expected outcome. This information will allow the faculty to assess the degree to which the program is meeting its goals and make curricular adjustments as appropriate.

For documentation supporting the responses above, please see the Ed.D. proposal and, more succinctly, the *WCSU's Response to Staff Report* (11/1/02), prepared for the Connecticut Advisory Board on Accreditation. Both the full proposal and the *Response* are available in the Team Workroom.

Appraisal

Since the last NEASC self-study, the University has made a number of changes in its graduate programs, eliminating or modifying some and developing new ones in response to identified needs. The addition of a doctoral program in instructional leadership is a good example of how the University continues to build on its areas of expertise. The program has been designed to be responsive to the changing relationships among teaching, learning, curriculum content, and technology. WestConn has taken the initiative in conceptualizing and assessing programs to support and develop the instructional capabilities of teachers through the Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership, approved at the State level. The number of graduate programs has grown from 8 in 1993 to 15 in 2002; two more programs have been approved and will be in place in 2003.

All programs in the Ansell School of Business, and some programs in the Schools of Professional Studies and Arts and Sciences have advisory boards with representation from professionals in the field. The Ed.D. program has an advisory board that includes, among others, six superintendents from the greater Danbury area school district, a Teachers College, Columbia University, faculty member, and the Supervising Superintendent, Chancellor's District, the New York City Department of Education. The advisory group meets regularly with the Ed.D. Planning Committee with a goal of continuously improving the content of the Instructional Leadership program.

The position of Dean of Graduate and External Programs was created to bring coordination and overall leadership to the increasingly significant commitment of the University at the graduate level.

Faculty continue to express concern about the workload of faculty who teach graduate courses because the Collective Bargaining Agreement does not distinguish between undergraduate and graduate workload. In 1993, the self-study noted that the "workload of [faculty] teaching graduate courses continues to be a problem since the same load credit is, at present, given for teaching graduate and undergraduate courses." Since there is a perception that this situation continues, all departments, at the request of the University Senate, have been asked to address the issue, but it is recognized that change from a 12-credit to a 9-credit load is a contractual issue. The AACSB Peer Review Team noted the standard teaching load (12 hours per semester with two or three preparations the norm), and considered this to be a "heavy load for a school trying to deliver a graduate business program as well as a full complement of undergraduate majors."

Projection

The University will continue to develop new programs (e.g., the proposed M.F.A. in Professional Writing and a certificate program in Gerontology) and to modify existing programs on the basis of data and needs assessments.

The new Dean of Graduate and External Programs is working with the administration and the Graduate Council to continue to identify areas that need to be strengthened (e.g., standardization of processes and procedures).

To address issues that have arisen as a result of the growth in the number of graduate programs, members of the Graduate Council are examining and updating (where appropriate) their bylaws and procedures.

There are plans to investigate new master's degree programs, for example, an M.F.A. in Musical Theatre to complement the master's programs in Visual Arts and Professional Writing. Also under consideration is an interdisciplinary graduate program in arts management. The new Center for Fine and Performing Arts, scheduled for completion in 2007, will offer an excellent venue for new programs.

To ensure program quality, the Ed.D. faculty and the administration will carefully monitor assessment data and will continue to work closely with the advisory committee.

As graduate programs at the four CSU system institutions continue to increase in number and enrollment, it is expected that workload issues for faculty teaching in these programs will be addressed in the next collective bargaining agreement.

Research and Scholarship (4.26-4.29)

Description

Scholarship is an integral part of the Mission, Principles, and Values of Western Connecticut State University. The first line of the WestConn Mission Statement says that the University is a "creative intellectual resource for the people and institutions of Connecticut." Faculty scholarly activities are vital and creative intellectual resources at the University.

Facilitating learning is the stated primary purpose of the University, and it is understood that faculty are therefore required to be "active scholars." Scholarly activity at WestConn has three components: (1) Research (discipline, applied, and pedagogical); (2) Scholarship; and (3) Creative endeavor. (*Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*, 136-7)

Eighty-seven percent of full-time faculty responding to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey indicated that they had published or presented scholarly work during the last six years, and nearly all agreed with the statement that faculty scholarship in their department enhances instruction. The faculty profiles and the annual reports of the deans of the schools, and the Faculty Recognition Ceremony booklets indicate the variety of scholarly and research activities engaged in by faculty. The President's *Annual Report* also lists faculty scholarly achievements and grant/fellowship awards.

Faculty-Student Research: With faculty mentoring, students participate regionally and nationally in competitions such as the National Weather Forecasting Competition, the International Mathematical Contest in Modeling, and the Conference on Undergraduate Research. Many major programs require the preparation of a senior thesis. Some student research is published in *Clio*, *The Western Scholar*, and the *Western Connecticut State University Social Science Journal*, for example.

Resources: Research and scholarly and creative activity are supported by several CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Special Funds. CSU/AAUP grants offer up to \$5,000 per project and are available to all full-time faculty. A total of \$22,269.59 is available in 2002-2003 to full-time faculty and \$5,291.00 for part-time instructors to support curriculum-related projects applied for through the Faculty Development and Recognition Committee. Fifty-four hours of reassigned time for research is available through the Research and Development Committee. Retraining funds are also available.

As noted above, full-time faculty in the Ed.D. program will have reassigned time (six to twelve credits annually) to devote to research and scholarship.

Sabbatic leave to undertake scholarly and creative projects is available to tenured faculty who have at least six years of service, and funds are available to support full- and part-time faculty travel to professional seminars, workshops, and conferences. Faculty may also receive paid leave for such travel "at the discretion of the President...for up to five working days for each occurrence."

There are also School-specific resources available to faculty. The Ansell School of Business has an endowment that generates up to \$75,000 per year that may be used to support a variety of activities including travel funds to support faculty attendance at professional conferences or research-related travel. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences has had funds to support Student-Faculty Collaborative Research. Since 1995, more than 100 projects have been supported through this special program.

The Office of Grant Programs provides information about federal, foundation, and corporate funding sources available to support the research, scholarly, creative, and curricular interests of faculty. The office also provides assistance in proposal preparation and grant administration. Workshops on proposal development are provided to departments, classes, or groups upon request. The University is a member of the Grants Resource Center of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities which provides daily updates on grants and contracts, as well as an online database. As of Fall 2002, the Office of Grant Programs subscribes to SPIN, a database with thousands of federal and non-federal funding opportunities; faculty, staff, and students may also establish profiles that trigger the mailing of information relevant to their grant interests. In 2002, faculty and staff submitted \$613,000 in requests for external funding and were awarded \$387,588 to support research, scholarly, and creative projects. Faculty received an additional \$90,037 in CSU/AAUP funds for research for a total of \$477,625.

The Institutional Review Board (formerly known as the Human Subjects Review Committee) is responsible for ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations related to research with human subjects. The IRB reviews research protocols for all projects, funded or unfunded, involving human subjects. Everyone who does research with human subjects or supervises research with human subjects is required to complete online training through the National Institutes of Health web site. The University also has an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee responsible for reviewing protocols that call for the use of vertebrate animals in research. WestConn is registered as a Research Facility, in accordance with provisions of the Animal Welfare Act, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Appraisal

In the review, tenure, and promotion process, WestConn has consistently recognized and rewarded excellence in the classroom. As the University has come to put greater value on research and scholarship, many recent faculty hires have earned their doctoral degrees at first-tier research

institutions. These faculty members come to WestConn with the expectation that their research and scholarly activities will be encouraged and supported. It is also the case that scholarship has assumed greater weight in the review process for renewal, tenure, and promotion, although clearly excellence in teaching remains the priority.

Resources to support research, scholarship, and creative work have increased over the last ten years, but time remains a problem for many faculty. In a survey conducted by the NEASC Subcommittee on Research and Scholarship, more than half the respondents identified time as the most limiting resource.

With an eye toward improving accountability, the Faculty Development and Recognition Committee and the Research and Development Committee have reviewed their respective guidelines for reporting the results of supported activities.

Having a full-time person in the Office of Grant Programs has meant that there is better support for faculty who are interested in seeking grants and fellowships. Forms have been revised and updated, and the Office has developed a web site; information and forms are available electronically from the web site and from the library's ERes site, as well. The subscription to the SPIN database provides a significant new resource for faculty. One SPIN workshop was offered in Fall 2002, but additional training is needed.

The Institutional Review Board (formerly called the Human Subjects Review Committee) has expanded its membership. The Board offered two workshops on human subjects issues to faculty and staff in 2001-2003, and members have reviewed forms, making changes and developing new forms where appropriate. The University requires that faculty, staff, and all others involved in human subjects research complete online training and follow federal, state, and institutional regulations governing such research.

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) was not active in 2001-2002, but plans are underway to reconstitute the committee.

Projection

Continued growth and development of WestConn as a comprehensive university requires an increase in the amount of scholarly and creative activity by faculty. The University community will engage in an open dialogue to identify (1) what level of activity is appropriate given its Mission, Principles, and Values, and (2) an appropriate and effective strategy to achieve greater levels of scholarly productivity. The University will continue to hire new faculty who expect to be able to do research. Expansion of current programs to desired levels and development of additional quality programs must be balanced against the availability of state funding.

CSU/AAUP grants and reassigned time for research are two of the contractually mandated resources intended to support faculty scholarly activities. Greater accountability will be established to ensure appropriate levels of productivity by faculty who receive these grants and/or reassigned time.

Faculty and administrators are looking to develop more effective means of encouraging and rewarding faculty scholarly activities.

The Office of Grant Programs and the Fiscal Affairs Office will continue to enhance services to faculty and staff. Training and support in effective use of available technologies will be a priority.

The Institutional Review Board will continue its outreach activities to departments and divisions in order to ensure understanding of and compliance with Federal, state, and institutional policies governing research with human subjects.

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee will be reestablished and workshops and tutorials will be offered to assure compliance with all regulations governing research with vertebrate animals.

Instruction (4.29-4.32)

Description

Consistent with WestConn's principle that "facilitating learning is our primary function," faculty at the University use a wide variety of instructional techniques including traditional lecture, technology-enhanced presentations, online courses, collaborative learning, and individualized instruction in appropriate laboratory and research settings.

During the past ten years, integration of technology into classroom instruction has increased significantly. Thirty-three classrooms are equipped with presentation technology (computers and LCD projectors, e.g.). Five of these classrooms have document cameras allowing for three-dimensional demonstrations. Every department has the opportunity to make use of multimedia in instruction. Each School has a technology committee whose chair is a member of the University-wide Information Technology Committee, a standing committee of the University Senate. Faculty members provide workshops on software and multimedia applications for their peers (these workshops were initiated by the School of Arts and Sciences Technology Steering Committee). Technology-equipped Learning Labs are available for students who need special assistance, and all students have access to 24-hour computer labs. Students are offered a number of workshops throughout the year to help them learn to use technology effectively.

There are now eleven departmental computer laboratories (compared to six in 1993) making it possible for students to have access to a computer during a class session. These classrooms are used extensively by the Music, Mathematics, Computer Science, Psychology, Art, English, Education, Finance, Accounting, and MIS departments. (For additional information on technology resources and workshops, please see Standard VII.)

Other instructional innovations have also been introduced. The new M.F.A. in Visual Arts uses an apprenticeship model. The M.F.A. in Professional Writing, when it is approved at the State level, will be a low-residency program, combining online courses and campus sessions. The discussion sections of the megasection Freshman English classes are led by graduate assistants under the close supervision of a member of the English Department faculty. Writing-intensive courses, in any area of the curriculum, fulfill a degree requirement. A psychology professor has received University support and external grant funding to do extensive testing and monitoring of students who elect to take the Freshmen Seminar. In an effort to bridge the gap between chemistry courses and chemistry as practiced in commercial and industrial laboratories, a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and Chromatography Data Systems (CDS) have been developed through a partnership between the Department of Chemistry and Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey businesses. The systems focus on integrated treatment of automated data gathering and handling, graphical method editing, and database management.

Honors Program: The University Scholars Program offers academically gifted students the opportunity to enroll in an Honors Seminar each fall. The seminars have an interdisciplinary theme or topic, and are designed to help students develop discussion, research, analytical, and writing skills.

In addition, students may take honors courses offered by any department or they may choose to work with a faculty member to develop an “enhanced course.” University scholars are also involved in community service, multicultural experiences, and specialized research and University events.

Contract Major: In consultation with a faculty adviser, a student may propose a program of study leading to the B.A. or B.S. degree. The contract major is intended to allow students whose academic interests extend beyond existing majors the flexibility to design a program of studies appropriate to their own educational goals. The proposed program must fulfill General Education and other University-wide degree requirements, with a major comprised of a minimum of 36 credits related to a specialized topic, theme, or area of concentration. Credits may be drawn from course offerings in one or more academic departments.

Honors Interdisciplinary Bachelor’s Degree Program: The Honors Interdisciplinary Bachelor’s Degree Program is a special kind of contract major. Highly motivated students may pursue a specialized course of study that examines a theme or idea from the perspectives of two or more disciplines. The program proposal is developed by the student with the assistance of a faculty adviser and must fulfill General Education and other University-wide requirements.

Study Abroad: WestConn students interested in study abroad may participate in the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP), a network of 225 institutions in the U.S. and around the world. Students’ tuition, room, and board costs abroad are the same as they would be at WCSU.

WestConn joins each year with the other three CSU institutions in offering spring and summer study abroad. The courses are taught overseas by CSU faculty and with CSU course designation, which makes it especially easy to transfer credits for work accomplished, observing the same academic standards and requirements as expected on campus.

Improving Instruction through Faculty Development: The University has the organizational mechanisms and the funds to create and promote faculty development directed toward enhancing learning and teaching. The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) was established in 2001 to provide and promote programs and services to improve teaching effectiveness, and to serve as a forum for the interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and talents among faculty and staff, drawing on local, regional, and national resources.

The Office of Grant Programs is available to assist faculty and staff in preparing proposals for external funding to support innovation and curriculum development. The Faculty Development and Recognition Committee, a standing committee of the University Senate, is responsible for reviewing proposals and recommending funding for projects that develop and disseminate new teaching approaches, techniques, and strategies. Other resources include reassigned time, CBA-mandated funds (CSU/AAUP grants, e.g.), and travel funds to support curriculum development. A provision in the current faculty contract provides for funds to be allocated to support these activities. In 2001-2002, \$1,444,666 was available.

Assessing and Improving Instruction. Contractual procedures for faculty evaluation (renewal, tenure, promotion, professional assessment, and special assessment) remain unchanged since the 1992 self-study. (CBA, 4.11, 20ff.)

- Every six years, tenured faculty members undergo a “professional assessment;” for teaching faculty, the primary focus of the assessment is “to measure the member’s teaching effectiveness.”

- The principal criterion for assessments for tenure or promotion of teaching faculty is the quality of their teaching.
- The evaluation of non-tenured teaching faculty for renewal also relies heavily on assessment of the member's teaching.

In each case, the assessment process begins with the Department Evaluation Committee (DEC). The DEC's report includes a peer evaluation (usually based on at least one classroom observation) and course evaluations by students. The evaluations are returned to the instructor who is expected to use them to improve instruction. The appropriate School dean, the members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, and the Administration also contribute to the decision.

New faculty have the opportunity to become involved in a voluntary mentoring program established in 1995.

Academic Advising: The primary responsibility for advising lies with faculty in the disciplines. A Dean of Freshmen and Academic Support Services was appointed for the 2001-2002 academic year (renewed for 2002-2003). This office served to coordinate the advising of students who have not declared a major. In Fall 2003 responsibility for the Advisement Center will be assumed by the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences. A number of faculty in a wide range of disciplines serve as advisers to undeclared students, but some students are advised by trained staff in the Advisement Center. The allocation of responsibility for an effective system of academic advising and procedures for carrying out these responsibilities are described in the collective bargaining agreement.

One semester before a student is expected to graduate, the Registrar's Office does an official audit of the student's progress toward a degree. To facilitate degree audits, advising information about the student's progress is available at any time to advisers and appropriate staff through the University's Banner system. At the graduate level the official audit is prepared by the Associate Director of Graduate Studies.

Those responsible for academic advising at the undergraduate level (virtually all teaching faculty) have ample information for carrying out these duties (program sheets, catalogs, *Student Handbook*, *Faculty Handbook*) and, in most cases, are prepared to discharge this responsibility. At the graduate level, the program coordinator takes responsibility for academic advising.

Appraisal

Undergraduate students in most degree programs have the option to take unrestricted electives, although the number of electives varies considerably among programs. Professional programs, particularly in Music and Education, have such a large number of requirements that there are few free electives available.

There have been problems posting transfer credits in Banner in a timely fashion.

Some printed program sheets need to be reviewed and updated.

Technology is critical to instruction on the WestConn campus. More than three-quarters of the full-time faculty responding to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "Technology is appropriately integrated into your curriculum." Two-thirds agreed that Media Services provides adequate technological support to the departments. Sixty-eight percent responded affirmatively to the statement: "Media Services provides equipment that functions properly," and a similar number agreed that Media Services provides appropriate technical assistance.

Remediation continues to be a concern. Of the class that entered in the Fall of 2002, 63% placed into Math 098 and 17% placed into English 098. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment has prepared a 13-year summary of remedial courses. Between 1990 and 1997, registrations in remedial English averaged 143 per academic year, of whom 81% passed the course. Of those who passed, 31% subsequently received a baccalaureate degree at WestConn. During that same period, an average of 443 were placed in Math 098 each year, of whom 70% passed the course and 46% subsequently graduated. (Numbers are available for 1997-2002, but it is too soon to calculate graduation rates.) Successful remediation, particularly in math, seems to be an indicator of subsequent academic success, but there are still many students who (a) place into remedial courses, (b) fail the courses, and (c) do not complete their degree programs at the University. The fact that there is no community college located in the Danbury area may partly explain the large numbers of enrolled students who fail the placement tests. These are often students who would have attended a two-year institution had one been available. Remediation in a university setting is an expensive and time-intensive process, and the faculty and administration are looking at alternatives.

More than two-thirds of the full-time faculty responding to the survey indicated that they believe their department has an effective system of academic advising, and a similar number of WestConn seniors rated the quality of academic advising as “Excellent” or “Good.”

Projection

Professional programs will continue to leave few opportunities for students to take free electives, but creative suggestions for addressing the problem may arise out of the General Education Task Force’s deliberations.

The faculty and administration will continue to work to enhance opportunities for students through the honors program, faculty-student research, study abroad, cooperative education, and career development.

When the campus portal (Campus Pipeline) and course management software (WebCT) become available, the integration of information technologies can be expected to increase significantly. Effective and widely available training and technical support will be key to successful implementation of these tools.

Academic departments, faculty advisers, and administration will give careful consideration to the report of the University Senate’s *ad hoc* committees on remediation and academic advisement (2001) and implement improvements that are economically feasible as quickly as possible.

Admissions and Retention (4.33-4.41)

Description

In Fall 1993, the total undergraduate headcount was 4,679, with an undergraduate FTE of 3,367 (FTE = 15 credit hours). In contrast, the Fall 2002 total undergraduate headcount was 5,274, with an undergraduate FTE of 4,085. The growth in FTE -- 21% since 1993 -- represents a major change for the institution. The growth began in earnest in Fall 1997, when 669 freshmen were admitted (496 the previous year), and accelerated in 2000 with the admission of 822 full-time freshmen.

The percentage of full-time undergraduates who self-identified as minorities rose from 13% of the total enrollment in Fall 1993 to 17% in Fall 2002.

Most graduate programs at WestConn were designed to be part-time. In Fall 1993, there were 59 full-time and 988 part-time graduate students, with a graduate FTE of 387. In Fall 2002, there were 44 full-time and 732 part-time graduate students, with a graduate FTE of 306 (FTE = 12 credit hours), representing a decline of 20.9%, with the FTE varying by program.

Admissions: Admissions policies and procedures are in compliance with state and federal regulations with regard to equal opportunity. The University's admission and retention policies are consistent with the CSU Board of Trustees' policies and WestConn's Mission, Principles, and Values. The policies are clearly stated in the *Undergraduate Catalog*, the *Graduate Catalog*, the student handbook, the University's viewbook, application materials, and other publications (in print and online). The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment reports enrollment data to the University community, the CSU System Office, and to Federal and state governments.

An Admissions Committee, composed of six faculty members (three elected, three administratively appointed), three students (selected by the Student Government Association), and the Director of Admissions (*ex officio*), has three areas of responsibility (*Faculty Handbook*, 26):

- To develop, review, and recommend to the University Senate and Administration policies that govern admission and readmission to the University
- To develop, review, and recommend to the University Senate and Administration policies that govern admission of transfer students
- To advise the Director of Admissions on action in relation to the admission or readmission of students who present special problems

The Committee meets at least once a month during the academic year.

The University has a number of programs to address identified needs of disabled and underprepared students; these programs are described in the catalogs and other University publications. The Office of Disability Services directs and coordinates services for students with disabilities. The Educational Achievement and Access Program (EA²P) offers under-prepared students a five-week summer program designed to enhance their academic skills. In addition, EA²P students have year-round access to the Writing Lab, the Math/Computer Science Clinic, the Study Skills/Reading Lab, individual and group counseling sessions, and special social and cultural events. (Please see Standard VI for additional information.) All entering freshmen except those with high SAT scores are given placement tests in English sentence structure, algebra, and college-level math. Students who need additional preparation are placed in remedial sections.

Admissions policies are in place for international students, veterans, guest students, readmitted students, and "fresh start" admission (students who previously matriculated, but whose GPA falls below 2.0 are eligible to apply for re-admission under certain conditions). Credit may be awarded for appropriate scores on standardized examinations (Advanced Placement Examinations, College Level Examination Program, or by taking college courses while still in secondary school; *Undergraduate Catalog*, 14).

Transfer: Undergraduate transfer applicants, defined as those who have previously earned 12 or more college credits, are required to provide an official transcript from each college or university attended. They must have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 for all previous college-level work. Students with 45 or more credits must meet any special requirements for admission to a particular degree program or school. In evaluating credits for transfer, the Admissions Office uses standard guides and whenever appropriate consults with the chair of the relevant department; students

have the right of appeal. No more than 90 credits from an accredited four-year institution may be transferred into WestConn. To earn a WestConn baccalaureate degree, students must complete at least 30 credits at the University, including at least half the credits required in the major.

At the graduate level, courses for transfer credit (minimum grade of 3.0) are evaluated by the appropriate program coordinator and the Graduate Office. No more than nine credits may be transferred into most master's programs, with exceptions for credits from other CSU institutions and special requirements of the M.B.A. and M.S.N. degrees. To earn a master's degree from WestConn, students must complete at least 15 credits at the University.

In collaboration with the Connecticut Community Technical Colleges, CSU has established a Joint Standing Committee on Transfer and Articulation (see Public Act No. 01-165). WestConn has representatives on two working committees of this body. The CTC/CSU Committee on Nursing has forwarded recommendations to the Department of Higher Education; deliberations of the Committee on Business, Education, and Social Work are still in progress.

Retention: The University has a number of efforts underway designed to improve retention. The Writing Center, the Math/CS Lab, and the Study Skills Lab are available to students. There are programs (the EA²P, for example) directed toward improving underprepared students' readiness for college work. A freshman seminar is now in place. The Office of the Dean of Freshmen and Academic Support Services, created on a pilot basis, worked toward coordinating, complementing, and linking existing programs at the University. The goal is to provide students with the academic services necessary for a richer and more challenging experience at WestConn.

The retention rate of first-time full-time degree-seeking freshmen at WestConn, Fall 2001 to Fall 2002, was 69% (72% for females, 66% for males). The six-year graduation rate of first-time, full-time degree seeking students varies from a low of 35% (2002) to a high of 45% (1998), with the rate generally in the low- to mid- forties. The graduation rate for all CSU schools ranges from 38% to 42%.

By way of comparison, the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE), of which WestConn is a member, reports that for the 360 institutions that participated in its survey, 41% of students dropped out of college over a six-year period, with more than half leaving in the freshman year in 2002.

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment has prepared a number of reports on retention, looking at many different variables, including SAT scores, high school rank, race, gender, whether or not the student was admitted through a special program (EA²P, e.g.), whether or not the student was a member of an athletic team, whether or not the student was placed in remedial English or Math classes, residential vs. commuter, etc. Using these data and other information, the University Senate's *ad hoc* Committee on Remediation made a number of recommendations for improving the remedial program at WestConn. Its main goal was to "*help under-prepared students get through college.*"

Freshman to sophomore retention rates for Black and Hispanic students have improved from 57% in 1992 to 65% for freshmen who entered in Fall 2001. The six-year graduation rate for Black and Hispanic students has stayed approximately the same:

- 26% for Black and Hispanic students who entered in 1992
- 25% for Black and Hispanic students who entered in 1996
- 44% for all students who entered in 1992

- 35% for all students who entered in 1996

In 1992, there were 70 Black and Hispanic students in the freshman class of 387; in 2001, there were 121 in an entering class of 848. Students who self-identify belonging to other ethnicities have remained at 4%.

The University has a number of initiatives underway designed to increase minority enrollment and persistence to the degree. For example, the Dean of the School of Professional Studies, members of the Education/Educational Psychology Department, and administrators and teachers from the Danbury Public Schools are working together on a program to interest minority students in teaching as a career. The Office of Minority Affairs is actively engaged in outreach to the African-American community in Danbury through the Concerned Black Men program. While the Educational Achievement and Access Program does not target minority students specifically, many of the participants, all of whom have been identified as at risk, are members of minority groups. The freshman to sophomore retention rate for EA²P students has varied over the years, but since 1998, when a full-time director was hired, the retention rate has risen from 53% to 60% for the class that entered in 2001. The Summer 2002 EA²P program had the largest enrollment (61) in its history; 98% of the students who began the program completed it.

The proportion of students of color (16.7%) is higher than the Census 2000 percentages for the seven towns from which WestConn recruits the majority of its students. In 2002, 93% of WestConn seniors responding to the NSSE survey indicated that diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs) were included in class discussions or assignments, and more than half thought these perspectives were included “very often” or “often.” Eighty-seven percent of seniors responded that their experience at the University had contributed to “understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds,” and more than three-fourths indicated that the University puts some emphasis on “encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds.”

On the 2001-2002, National Survey of Student Engagement, seniors were asked to indicate the extent to which their examinations during the current school year had challenged them to do their best work. The results show a very positive response. On a scale of 1 (very little) to 7 (very much), the percentages were as follows:

Very much	22.8%
6	33.3%
5	33.3%
4	11.9%
3	3.6%
2	0.5%
Very little	0.5%

Appraisal

A well-integrated enrollment management system is a key element in planning and evaluation of enrollment. While all of the pieces are in place at WestConn, it is not clear that they are as well integrated as they could be. It is likely that the vast amounts of data being gathered and analyzed by the University’s Institutional Research and Assessment Office could be used to effect change more quickly and effectively than is the case.

The report of the University Senate's *ad hoc* Committee on Remediation found that the proportion of students enrolled in the University's remedial courses more than doubled during the 1990s. In the Fall 2000 semester, nearly one-third of the 825 first-time, full-time students were enrolled in Math 098 or English 098 (the percentage rose somewhat in Fall 2002). The report also found large statistical differences between the SAT scores of students enrolled in remedial courses and those who were not. The committee noted that while "an individual's SAT score should not be (and is not) the only criterion by which the University assesses his/her readiness for college, low SAT scores do matter when it comes to teaching *groups* of students."

The University has a number of programs in place (EA²P, Freshman Seminar, the Learning Centers, the Advisement Center, and others) directed toward helping students succeed, but the resources of these programs are strained by the large numbers of under-prepared students. The *ad hoc* Committee on Remediation recommended hiring a full-time coordinator for the Learning Center.

WestConn will continue to work with the CTC-CSU committees established to develop recommendations for system-wide articulation agreements.

There are still some problems with the Banner Administrative Software System that need to be resolved in order to facilitate advising; ease of access to records of students' academic progress is an area that needs to be improved.

Projection

Admissions: The University plans to stabilize the size of the freshman class at its present level and to achieve further growth by recruiting larger numbers of transfer and graduate students and improving the retention rate. A new Westside residence hall will open in 2004, addressing the need to house the increasing numbers of students who want to live on campus.

The members of the Admissions Committee (faculty, students, and Admissions staff) will continue to collaborate on the recruitment and admission of students to the University. The Committee will also continue to be involved in developing, reviewing, and recommending policies related to admissions.

The transfer of students from community and technical colleges will be greatly facilitated by the system-wide articulation agreements scheduled for completion in July 2004.

Graduate Policies are being reviewed and revised as appropriate by the new Dean of Graduate Studies and External Programs and the Graduate Council. The Dean will recommend that application forms and other materials be made available on the University's web site to facilitate access to paperwork for graduate students, who are primarily part-time.

When it opens in 2004, the new science building is expected to attract larger numbers of students to the sciences. The new Center for the Fine and Performing Arts, scheduled to open in 2007, can be expected to bring about growth in the already well-subscribed programs in the arts fields. Task forces on the sciences and the fine and performing arts are looking at ways to increase enrollments in these areas.

New graduate programs, particularly the Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership, the M.F.A. in Visual Arts, and the M.F.A. in Professional Writing, will attract students at an advanced level.

Advising and Retention: The faculty, administration, and staff will review and discuss the recommendations of the *ad hoc* Committee on Retention. During the state's (and therefore the

institution's) current fiscal crisis, suggestions for doing more with less will receive careful consideration.

A number of initiatives for improving retention rates (particularly freshman to sophomore retention) are already in place and are being assessed for effectiveness. Programs will be continued, strengthened, or consolidated as appropriate. The University has set an ambitious goal of a 70-73% retention rate by Fall 2003.

The Banner administrative software system has the potential to facilitate advising and tracking student progress. Implementation of the campus portal (Campus Pipeline) and course management software (WebCT) should also contribute to success in these two areas. (For additional information, please see Standard VII.)

STANDARD V

FACULTY

Description

Data, Qualifications, and Workload: During the Fall 2002 semester, Western Connecticut State University had 188 full-time teaching and 22 full-time non-teaching faculty (coaches, counselors and librarians). Also on staff were 247 part-time instructional faculty (91.6 FTE faculty) to serve 5,274 undergraduate and 776 graduate students, for a total of 6,050 (4,391 FTE) students. Of the full-time instructional faculty, there were 89 professors, 48 associate professors and 51 assistant professors. Eighty-three percent of the full-time instructional faculty hold doctoral or other approved terminal degrees; 69% are tenured.

All faculty (full- and part-time) work under a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that specifies policies and practices. The current contract between the Connecticut State University (CSU) System and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) covers the period from August 23, 2002 through August 24, 2006.

Professional rights and responsibilities, including academic freedom, tenure, types of appointments, and evaluation, are delineated in Article 4 of the collective bargaining agreement; Article 5 describes participation procedures, including standards for full-time appointment and promotion, ranks, and comparable standards.

The English Department offers the only academic program that employs graduate assistants in classroom instruction, but only as leaders of discussion groups. Graduate students in Mathematics serve as tutors in the Mathematics/Computer Science Clinic. Teaching assistants and tutors are selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated by full-time faculty members.

Full-time faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate courses; 54% of faculty respondents to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff survey said that they have taught courses at the graduate level. Faculty credit load (12 hours, as established by the CBA) is the same for both graduate and undergraduate courses. The CBA provides for extra load credit if enrollment in a class exceeds 40. Although some faculty receive reassigned time for administrative duties or for research during the academic year, the major focus is on teaching. Faculty members actively participate in governance: More than half of faculty respondents said that they spend from one to four hours per week during the academic year on committee and task force work; others spend an additional one to four hours on administrative tasks. More than three-fourths indicated that they used technology to work from home at least once a week.

Almost all full-time faculty respondents indicated that they consider teaching their principal activity (Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey). Some spend as many as eight hours per week advising.

Recruitment and Employment Security: The search for new or replacement faculty is initiated at the department level. The chairperson (or unit head) forwards the request to the appropriate School dean. The dean makes his or her recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The VPAA makes the final decision on authorization in accordance with the academic plan regarding position allocation. If a search is authorized, the University complies with all relevant federal and state requirements.

Appropriate attention is given to the achievement of diversity of race, gender, and ethnic representation in accordance with the goals established in the annual “Affirmative Action Plan.” The CBA specifies that the University President “with the advice and consent of the AAUP Chapter President and consultation with the Director of Affirmative Action shall appoint a Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee,” at least two members of which must be members of minority or other protected groups. The CBA also specifies the funds to be set aside for minority recruitment.

New faculty members are provided with a written contract that defines the nature and terms of the initial appointment as well as any special conditions that apply. (CBA, 127-8, 130-1, 135-6, and 141.) Copies of faculty contracts are kept on file in the Human Resources Office. The faculty are accorded employment security consistent with the CSU-AAUP bargaining agreement. Full-time faculty contracts range from one-year temporary appointments to tenure positions.

The minimum annual faculty salaries for each year of the current collective bargaining agreement for each of the four academic ranks are as follows:

Rank	2002-2003	2003-2004
Professor	\$63,757	\$65,669
Associate Professor	\$53,555	\$55,162
Assistant Professor	\$43,354	\$44,655
Instructor	\$38,254	\$39,402

The collective bargaining agreement recognizes the appropriateness of market pay adjustments “in rare instances for compelling reasons.” Salary may not be increased beyond the maximum for the rank, however.

Librarians, counselors, and coaches are covered by the CSU-AAUP bargaining agreement. Administrative faculty are members of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees-State University Organization of Administrative Faculty (AFSCME-SUOAF). Academic support staff are also covered by collective bargaining agreements (Administrative and Residual Employees Union, e.g.).

The ratio of part-time to full-time faculty load is limited by the collective bargaining agreement to 21% through the 2003-2004 academic year. This restricts the hiring of part-time faculty. Compensation rates for part-time faculty are specified by the CBA on the basis of academic credentials and prior experience in the CSU system.

Evaluation: Information about the processes of review, tenure, and promotion of full-time faculty may be found in the *Faculty Handbook 2001-2005* (189-195) and the CBA, Article 4 (teaching faculty), Article 7.3.1 (counseling faculty), and Article 8.2.1 (library faculty). Full-time faculty are evaluated on the basis of the quality of activity, which includes load credit activity (performance in all workload areas, and for classroom faculty, the use of classroom peer evaluations and student surveys); creative activity appropriate to their fields; productive service to the department and to the University; and professional activity. Years in rank and any special conditions in the faculty member’s letter of appointment are reviewed for compliance.

The procedure is similar for renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment of full-time tenured members. There is also a specific timetable. Evaluations of teaching faculty are conducted by their Department Evaluation Committee (DEC), the chairperson (if he/she is not serving on the DEC), and the School dean. Counselor faculty are evaluated by the director or dean, and library faculty by a library faculty evaluation committee. Renewals and professional assessments are sent to the VPAA.

Promotion and tenure recommendations are sent to the Promotion and Tenure Committee, a standing committee of the University Senate, which recommends to the president.

Materials that may be considered during the evaluation process include:

- Personnel file official documents (application and hiring materials, annual evaluation reports, reappointment letters)
- Peer evaluations
- DEC/library faculty evaluation committee reports
- Dean/Director reports/recommendations
- Items that the faculty member submits or has approved in order to update his/her portfolio
- Student opinion surveys (i.e., course evaluations)

All departments have instruments for student opinion surveys of classroom teaching. These instruments vary considerably, from a few open-ended questions about the course and/or teaching to a highly structured, scaled document covering course objectives and content, teaching skills, and related advisement. The option to design a program-specific student survey instrument (rather than a University-wide survey) was given to departments since the last self-study. Some departments use the basic student survey but have refined the items or added questions specific to their discipline's objectives and evaluation criteria. Faculty may add questions to the course surveys. The procedure for conducting student opinion surveys of teaching faculty is established in the CBA.

DECs conduct classroom evaluations. Guides to peer evaluation vary considerably, and there is a wide range of formats. Some do not specify a standard, others have open-ended, articulated areas for assessment, still others use fully articulated topic areas with scaled responses and overall commentary and/or recommendations.

Faculty members submit documents that provide evidence of performance in the evaluation criteria areas, including the required student opinion surveys, to the DEC, the Director or Dean, or the Library Evaluation Committee, as appropriate. These materials are held during the evaluation process period only. The Promotion and Tenure Committee has specified the contents of the permanent files in the Office of Human Resources.

The VPAA reviews recommendations for faculty being considered for renewal and professional assessment. The Promotion and Tenure Committee reviews all of the recommendations for faculty being considered for promotion and/or tenure. After reviewing all reports, materials, and recommendations, the president submits recommendations to the Board of Trustees, which makes final decisions concerning promotion, tenure, or termination.

Faculty Support and Development: Professional travel, faculty development, research grants, curriculum related activities and retraining funds are described in the collective bargaining agreement. Ninety percent of the funds allocated for travel and faculty development are for use by full-time faculty members, and 10% for part-time faculty. The total amount appropriated for WestConn in 2001-2002 was \$261,390. Small grants are available from the CSU System to help support "Conversations in the Discipline," projects that involve collaboration between two or more System institutions.

WestConn faculty were awarded \$90,037 in CSU/AAUP Research Grants for 2001-2002, an increase of over 32% since 1993. Other CSU/AAUP funding categories that show an increase include awards for curriculum-related summer activities, faculty development grants, research-related reassigned

time, and funds for travel to conferences and workshops, a total of \$156,889 plus reassigned time. Part-time faculty receive 10% of faculty development and travel funds.

At least 10 sabbatic leaves are contractually guaranteed to WestConn faculty each year; the number actually granted over the past five years has ranged from 10 to 14. The application and award process for sabbaticals and other grants available through the contract is described in detail in the CBA.

The Office of Grant Programs is available to help faculty identify possible external funding sources and to assist with proposal preparation, submission, and with the post-award process. (For additional information, please see “Research and Scholarship” in Standard IV.)

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching was established in 2001. The Center coordinates, develops, and sponsors programs and services directed toward enhancing teaching skills. Staffed by a teaching faculty member with reassigned time, the Center organizes faculty forums, sponsors speakers and workshops on teaching, research, and assessment, coordinates the New Faculty Mentoring Program (see below), and collaborates with other divisions on programs of mutual interest.

There are a number of different mentoring initiatives available for faculty. A Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee (see above) assists with minority faculty recruitment and retention and provides direct support to minority faculty who have not yet completed their degree and/or credentialing requirements. Faculty members who serve as a mentor to minority faculty to assist with their academic development may be provided with reassigned time. A New Faculty Mentoring Program, begun in Spring 1995, provides initial orientation and several full group programs during the year, as well as one-on-one mentoring by experienced faculty.

Academic Freedom: The Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System and the Connecticut State University American Association of University Professors, the parties to the collective bargaining agreement, subscribe to the principles of academic freedom for faculty in research and publication, in the classroom, as representatives of their profession, and when faculty speak or write as members of society. The CBA also states clearly that the determination of grades is the responsibility of the instructor of the course.

Ethics: Several mechanisms are in place to ensure that faculty act responsibly and ethically, observe the established conditions of their employment, and otherwise function in a manner consistent with the Mission, Principles, and Values of the institution:

- Annual evaluations of non-tenured faculty
- Periodic professional assessment of tenured faculty
- A CSU statement on ethics (*Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*, 206)
- AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics

Appraisal

Seventy-six percent of full-time faculty respondents to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey indicate that they believe that WestConn employs an open and orderly process for recruiting and appointing faculty members.

Faculty numbers, as documented by the Office of Human Resources and by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, are adequate to carry out the Mission, Purposes, and Values of the institution. The AAUP has taken a strong stand in support of additional tenure-track faculty lines. The University, however, has cited state budget cutbacks and hiring freezes as reasons for part-time

and special (temporary) rather than tenure-track appointments. (For additional information on budgets, please see Standard IX.)

As a member institution of the CSU System, the University must maintain the contractual faculty workload level of 12 workload credits per semester. Any reassigned time for administrative or academic purposes, contractual or discretionary, must fit within this limit. In response to enrollment and/or programmatic needs, a faculty member may initiate an overload. However, overloads or underloads of three credits or more must be brought back to the contractual level within three semesters. Fewer than half of full-time faculty responding to the Fall 2000 Faculty/Staff survey indicated that they thought that the contractual workloads allowed them adequate time to continue professional growth, and even fewer indicated that they think workloads allow adequate time to participate in scholarship and research.

Although the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching has been in existence for only a short time and with limited funding, the Center has sponsored or co-sponsored a number of valuable forums and workshops for faculty.

As enrollment has increased, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of advisees. Declared majors are advised by the departments, with the increase in faculty advisee load depending on the increase in numbers within the major. For some departments, the increase has been considerable. (For additional information on advisement issues, please see Standard VI.) Teaching and advising underprepared students are very time intensive tasks and these have also increased demands on faculty. Although an Academic Advisement Center was established in the fall of 1996 to serve the needs of undeclared students, staffing levels have varied.

The fact that almost all of the full-time faculty who responded to the survey indicated that they had recently published or presented scholarly work gives persuasive testimony to their professional commitment despite the heavy teaching, advising, and service loads.

According to the AAUP Annual Survey reported in *Academe* (March-April 2002), WestConn faculty salaries are higher than national averages, and in New England, lead in two out of three categories:

Rank	Nationwide	WestConn	New England
Professor	\$64,508	\$79,400	\$84,660
Associate Professor	\$52,451	\$63,400	\$60,903
Assistant Professor	\$43,789	\$50,200	\$49,602

Salaries are negotiated System-wide, which means that WestConn does not get a cost-of-living adjustment for being in Fairfield County. There is a recruiting challenge related to the fact that the University is located in Fairfield County, adjacent to Westchester County, NY, two of the most expensive areas in the nation.

Part-time faculty members receive no compensation for advisement or other creative or service activities on campus, and most do not have individual offices. Not surprisingly, there is little involvement of part-time faculty in the University community beyond teaching.

The percentage of minorities (Blacks, Hispanics, and others) in faculty positions has increased from 13.9% in 1993 to 15.3% in 2002. Since 1997, the University has hired 84 new faculty members, of whom 17 (20%) were minorities. This improvement has come about through the concerted efforts of

departments and the administration to increase the number of minority faculty through pro-active recruitment and conscientious adherence to Affirmative Action goals and guidelines.

Full-time faculty evaluation procedures are carefully documented and appropriate to the University. Recently, policies have been clarified regarding what materials are kept permanently in Human Resources files. Instruments for course reviews by students and for peer reviews differ widely among departments, since the faculty have chosen to use instruments deemed appropriate to their disciplines rather than a standardized instrument. Moreover, since the criteria for renewal, promotion, and tenure are designed primarily for instructional faculty, there is a need for more appropriate criteria for counselors, librarians, and coaches. There is no University-wide policy or standard practice on evaluation of part-time faculty.

Between 1999-2002, 60% of new faculty (tenure track and one-year appointees) took advantage of the mentoring program, and participants consistently report a high satisfaction rate.

Projection

Faculty and administration will continue to work together through governance to resolve issues of concern in keeping with guidelines agreed upon in the Academic Plan. Progress in many areas will be contingent upon an improved financial climate and the availability of additional resources. Issues covered by the CSU/AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement may be resolved through negotiation. These issues include faculty workload and funding for CSU/AAUP research grants.

The University will need to consider carefully the implications for staffing that accompany an increased emphasis on research, for example reassigned time to develop grant proposals and projects. This need has special significance in degree programs at the graduate level, especially the new doctoral program, the Ed.D. Full-time faculty in this program will have reassigned time to engage in research and scholarship. Of the new full-time faculty recruited to teach in the program, at least two must be able to demonstrate productive research and scholarship in the area of instructional leadership.

The University will continue its efforts to hire and retain faculty members who reflect the diversity of institutional enrollment and the state's population.

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching will continue to provide programs directed toward enhancing faculty skills and effectiveness in the classroom.

STANDARD VI

STUDENT SERVICES

Description

Responsibilities for services for students are shared among various divisions of the University, as shown by the Table of Organization.

1. Student Affairs

Student Affairs staff members are committed to carrying out the University's mission to prepare students for lifelong learning and leadership as ethical and responsible citizens in a diverse and global community.

The Vice President for Student Affairs is in his third year in that office, having previously served as Dean of the School of Professional Studies

In order to obtain data from current students and recent graduates, the CSU System Office annually administers surveys, developed with the advice of the Institutional Research Advisory Council, composed of institutional research officers on each of the four CSU campuses, plus the System Office. The data from these surveys are reviewed and recommendations for changes are made on the basis of the results of the analysis of the data. The Division of Student Affairs' Assessment Committee, with the assistance of the Institutional Research and Assessment Office, distributed a survey with questions designed to elicit information about student learning objectives and participation in co-curricular programs. The Fall 2002 survey was distributed to 800 residential and 1000 commuter students and is currently being reviewed. The housing and residential life staff use an Association of College and University Housing Officers' (ACUHO) evaluation instrument to collect information from students who live in campus housing. Students in the Educational Achievement and Access Program (EA²P) students are also given questionnaires and their academic progress is monitored.

Mission and Planning: During the summer of 2000, the staff of Student Affairs developed revised mission and vision statements that are tied directly to the University's mission statement; after completing a strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats (SWOT) analysis, the staff formulated a strategic plan with eight major goals for 2001-2005. In response to findings of that planning session, two key committees have been established in Student Affairs: the Assessment Committee and the Technology Committee.

- Assessment Committee: The main purpose is to provide ongoing assessment of programs, services, and activities within Student Affairs, looking not only at student satisfaction surveys, but also at student learning outcomes in their co-curricular and extra-curricular world.
- Technology Committee: After appraising division needs in the areas of hardware, software, and training, the Technology Committee developed a three-year technology upgrade and

replacement plan. The plan also includes an implementation scheme for training staff, and several workshops have already been offered. The plan has been submitted to the University's Information Technology Committee (please see Standard VII for additional information on the ITC), and will be incorporated into University planning for technology.

Personnel and Funding: Student Affairs has a qualified, professional staff, with appropriate credentials and training (many are doctorally prepared); all are dedicated to student development. In addition to a new Dean of Student Affairs, the Director of the Counseling Center and the physician who is head of health services were new to the campus in Fall 2002. (The previous Director of Health Services had been on staff for approximately 18 years.) Two new coaches have been added, as well.

Many Student Affairs offices are located in the recently expanded and renovated Student Center on the Midtown campus. Athletic staff have new offices in the William A. O'Neill Athletic and Convocation Center on the Westside campus.

Budgets have increased in recent years in Student Affairs, but the current economic climate is not positive.

Student Center/Student Life Office: The Student Center/Student Life staff work with the Student Government Association, the Student Center Board, and student organizations to provide students with opportunities for educational and social experiences beyond the classroom. The Student Center/Student Life Office is responsible for student club advisement and organization publicity, as well as assisting with bulletin board postings, and meeting room reservations; free fax machine access is provided.

The Student Center/Student Life Office administers a variety of tests, including graduate school admissions tests and the Miller Analogies Test. The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests for students seeking credit by examination for a wide variety of undergraduate coursework are administered by the Student Center/Student Life Office.

Equal Opportunity and Diversity: The Pre-Collegiate and Access Programs, reporting through the Division of Student Affairs, are designed to develop and strengthen the academic skills of eligible middle and high school students to prepare them for a successful post-secondary experience, both academically and socially. These grant-funded pre-college programs (Upward Bound, Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation Program, and Connecticut College Access and Success Program) empower first generation, low-income students to achieve their highest academic potential through a program of educational activities and summer programs. The students have the opportunity to learn study skills and receive ongoing counseling to help them succeed in college.

It is the mission of the Office of Minority Affairs to serve minority students by developing programs to assist them throughout their University careers. The office also provides supplemental counseling for social, personal, and academic referrals, and the staff members work with the entire University community to enhance people's awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of minority students.

Campus Ministries: A variety of activities and programs are offered by WestConn's campus ministries. The Newman Center, operated by the Catholic Campus Ministry, and the WestConn Christian Ministry, with an office in the Student Center, sponsor worship, fellowship, outreach, and educational opportunities for students. Students of other faiths can also find spiritual counselors, activities, and programs on campus.

Career Development Center: The Career Development Center, located in the Student Center, offers three major career-related services: (1) Career Planning and Placement, designed to assist students in the job search (résumé writing and interviewing strategies, e.g.); (2) Cooperative Education and Internships; and (3) Career development workshops on a wide variety of career-related topics. More than 4,500 students visit the Career Development Center each year. The Center has a library of career-related materials, career guidance software (SIGI+), an electronic job referral system, and information on part-time jobs. Staff from the Career Development Center do discipline-based workshops, visit classrooms on request, produce a regular newsletter, and maintain an ongoing relationship with area businesses through internships and cooperative education placements. A Career Fair is held annually, with over fifty employers and more than 500 students present at the April 2002 event. Job postings arrive 24 hours/day. Staff critique résumés via fax and e-mail, and job applications and résumés are forwarded to prospective employers electronically.

Health Service: The University Health Service Office, located in Litchfield Hall on the Midtown campus, provides treatment to all full-time students; emergency care only is available for part-time students, faculty and staff. Ambulatory care is available for full-time students, and referrals can be made for specialized health care. Seriously ill students or emergency cases are referred to Danbury Hospital (located only a few minutes from the Midtown campus) for evaluation, treatment, and/or hospitalization. University Health Service is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A full-time physician and three full-time nurses are on staff.

Counseling Center: Located in the Student Center on the Midtown campus, the Counseling Center offers confidential, short-term counseling for personal, career, and academic concerns. The professional counselors on the staff offer interest and personality inventories. Outreach and group sessions are held on topics of interest to students. The Center is also involved at the beginning of each semester with a special orientation program for non-traditional students. Services (including response to emergencies) are available at no fee for students. A peer-tutoring program is also coordinated by the Counseling Center.

Student Government: The Student Government Association is the sole governing body for student organizations at WestConn. The purpose of the SGA is “to represent [students] on various University committees, serve as the voice of the student body, establish channels of communication within the university population, to develop and fund many campus activities, and to protect the rights and freedoms of individual students and student groups in academic and social areas.” Some twenty academic organizations (Biology Club, Finance Club, Nursing Club, e.g.), three fraternities and four sororities, three religious organizations, five oversight organizations (Greek Council, e.g.), ten recreational organizations, and a number of publications/media/theater organizations (*The Echo*, the student newspaper, and WXCJ 91.7, campus radio, e.g.), five honor societies, nine multi-cultural organizations, five residence hall associations, five special interest organizations (Phoenix Society for non-traditional students, Habitat for Humanity, Youth for Justice, e.g.), and three music organizations offer participation and leadership opportunities for students.

The SGA Legal Clinic was established in 1999 with a mission to “prevent, ameliorate, or assist in the resolution of legal problems that confront students by providing initial legal counseling and advice.” The Legal Clinic also seeks to educate students about their rights and responsibilities through shared information and legal resources, various information programs, lectures and presentations, and individual student counseling. A faculty member in the Justice and Law Administration division who holds a J.D. degree and is a member of the Connecticut Bar Association serves as adviser to the clinic. The adviser does not serve as a clinic attorney nor does he accept students as clients. The attorneys who serve in the Legal Clinic are independent contractors with the SGA, and are not employees of the University. Attorneys counsel and advise students on general legal concerns,

consumer complaints, debts and bankruptcy, family law, landlord-tenant issues, wills and probate matters, litigation, criminal matters, administration agency matters (Veterans Administration, e.g.), and small claims. (The participating attorneys do not counsel and advise students on student vs. student issues, student vs. faculty, administration, SGA, University matters, or student disciplinary matters that are handled on campus.)

Athletics: Western Connecticut State University has a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III athletic program for both men and women, with students participating in twelve varsity sports (soccer, football, basketball, tennis, and baseball for men, and volleyball, tennis, soccer, basketball, swimming and diving, softball and lacrosse for women). The University has a full-time Director of Athletics and a full-time Director of Recreation and Intramural Programs. Club sports are organized on recreational, instructional, and competitive levels, with activities ranging from informal play to regular practice or instruction and intercollegiate and tournament competition. Funds are available from the Intramural and Recreation Department to hire instructors and/or coaches.

WestConn adheres to the principles of Title IX (equity of funding, programs and facilities for male and female athletics). All programs are budgeted on an annual basis, and budgets are closely monitored by the Athletic Director and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The William A. O'Neill Athletic and Convocation Center, on the Westside campus, houses a six-lane indoor running track and four full basketball/tennis/volleyball courts. The Westside campus also has fully lighted rugby, intramural, baseball and softball fields, a weight training facility, and a swimming pool. There is also a gymnasium and a weight training room in Berkshire Hall on the Midtown campus.

Residence Life: The University has three residence halls on the Midtown campus (Fairfield, Litchfield, and Newbury), and two apartment style residence halls on the Westside campus (Pinney and Ella Grasso; for additional information on the residence halls, please see Standard VIII). There are also some students housed at the local motor inn. The residence halls can accommodate up to 1,294 students. With 12 full-time professional staff members, 44 resident assistants, seven academic resource mentors, about 70 information desk workers, plus support and custodial staff, the Department of Housing and Residence Life is one of the largest departments at the University.

Information on housing and residence life is contained in *The Guide to Housing & Residence Life, 2002-2003*, distributed to all students living on campus. The guide provides quick access to information on campus policies and procedures, safety and security, community leadership opportunities, and the CULTURE Program. CULTURE (Creating Undergraduate Learning Through Unique Residential Experiences) includes peer academic support services, academic resource mentors, community standards, campus resources, and a system of priority points. This last feature involves awarding points for behavior, academic standing, and other criteria; an individual student's point value, combined with that of his/her roommates/apartment mates, determines status for room assignments.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Rules and procedures have been established for all four campuses of the Connecticut State University system; this information is published in *Guidelines for Student Rights and Responsibilities*, distributed to all students each year; a summary version appears in the *Student Handbook* and in the catalogs, as well as online. Copies of the guidelines are distributed at new student orientation and are also available in the residence halls and at the Information Desk in the Student Center, which is staffed 12 hours/day, five days/week. The summary version clearly delineates punishable offenses and sanctions, defines academic misconduct, establishes who may file charges, describes the pre-hearing investigation, enumerates the rights of the

accused, and defines disciplinary penalties. The Dean of Students is the hearing officer for all non-housing judicial issues.

Orientation: There is a new student orientation at the beginning of each semester, with opportunities for newcomers to meet other students and become more familiar with academic and co-curricular life on campus. The Student Center/Student Life Office is directly responsible for orientation, but faculty are members of a joint Student Affairs/Academic Affairs planning committee, and faculty are also very much involved in orientation activities.

Beginning in Fall 2001, orientation took on a more academic character with the establishment of a new tradition at the University: to mark the beginning of their new life, students march through the gates of the campus and are welcomed by faculty in academic regalia. Faculty, as well as student services personnel, student orientation leaders and resident assistants, are available to talk with students and parents on orientation day.

With a goal of working toward a shared learning community, the Office of Academic Affairs and faculty worked closely with the Office of Student Affairs to create a new student orientation program, as well as other joint program activities.

2. Academic Affairs

Freshman Seminar: A three-credit Freshman Seminar, developed after a year of planning by the School of Arts and Sciences and the Student Affairs Division, was offered for the first time in the Fall 2001 semester. Although the course is voluntary, there were five sections with 76 students in the first year; in Fall 2002, 83 students were enrolled. Data have been collected and are being analyzed in a grant-sponsored project.

Advising: All academic advising in the majors is done through the academic departments. Matriculated students who have declared a major are assigned an adviser within the first few weeks of their entering semester. Full- and part-time students who have been formally admitted to the University but have not decided on a major are advised through the Academic Advisement Center, which has up-to-date information on all academic programs. The Center will be supervised by the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, beginning in Fall 2003. The athletic director and the coaches maintain regular contact with student athletes and their faculty advisers in order to monitor student progress and achievement. Coaches hold regular study halls for students.

Academic Support Services: The Learning Centers include a Mathematics and Computer Science Clinic, a Study Skills Lab, and a Writing Lab. Based in departments of the School of Arts and Sciences, the Learning Centers provide academic services for students who need help in specific subjects or who want to improve their study skills. The labs are located on the Midtown Campus, where most of the first-year resident students live. The Mathematics and CS Clinic and the Writing Lab are open Monday through Friday; the Study Skills Lab is open Monday through Thursday. The Study Skills Lab offers workshops on a variety of topics.

Student Technology Training Center: The Student Technology Training Center (STTC), a collaborative effort between University Computing and the Office of Student Life, is directed toward empowering students with a practical understanding of current technology. The STCC offers workshops and tutorials throughout the academic year. Workshops are offered on library databases, Lotus Notes (e-mail), the Microsoft Office Suite, Microsoft Publisher and Microsoft FrontPage. One-on-one tutorials are available for a variety of software applications. The STCC is open seven days a week.

Admissions: Under the direction of the Enrollment Management Officer, the Admissions Office is responsible for the recruitment and admission of freshmen and transfer students. Admissions counselors meet with prospective students at open houses and college fairs, talking with them about academic and co-curricular opportunities at the University. The office adheres to principles of good practice and guidelines of the national Association of College Admissions Counselors (ACAC). Working with the Admissions Office is an Admissions Committee, with six faculty members and three students; the Director of Admissions serves *ex officio*.

Beginning in the Fall 2002 semester, graduate recruitment, admissions and registration are under the direction of the Dean of Graduate Studies and External Programs.

Student Financial Aid: The Financial Aid Office, located in Old Main, is responsible for administering all federal, state, and institutional grants, loans and scholarships; veterans' certifications, work study and student employment programs are also administered by this office. Information about various forms of financial aid is available in print (in the catalogs, and in pamphlets and brochures) and online through the University's web site.

Registrar: The Registrar's Office coordinates the scheduling of all (undergraduate and graduate, day and evening) credit-bearing classes offered by the University in all its academic terms (fall and spring semesters, intersession, spring break and summer). The office is also responsible for the registration of all undergraduate-level students.

There is a full page of information on educational records and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in the catalogs (print and online). Much of the same information appears in question-and-answer format in the *Student Handbook 2002-2003*. "Guidelines and Policies for Computer Use" and "WestConn Computer Policy" are printed in the *Graduate Catalog* and on the University's web site.

Continuing Education: In Fall 2002, the scheduling and registration functions of the Continuing Education Office were absorbed into the Registrar's Office. The University Center for Adult Education (UCAE) now reports to the Enrollment Management Officer.

3. Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services (Office of the President)

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University is fully committed to meeting its responsibilities to admit and provide reasonable accommodations and appropriate services to qualified students who have a disability. The Office of Disability Services directs and coordinates services for students with disabilities, such as advocacy, early registration, confidential counseling, empowerment counseling, complaint processing, accommodation planning and referrals, referrals to other University services, exam proctoring, and accessibility.

4. Finance and Administration

Bookstores: The two bookstores (one in the Student Center on the Midtown campus, the other in the Westside classroom building) are operated by Barnes & Noble. The Midtown bookstore is open approximately 45 hours/week; the Westside bookstore is open 32 hours/week. During the first week of classes, both bookstores are open until 8 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and until 5:00 p.m. on Friday.

Child Care Center: The WestConn Child Care Center, an accredited, licensed program for children ages three through five, opened in 1997 in Alumni Hall. The Center, open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays, primarily serves children of University faculty and students. Fund-raising events help pay for scholarships to make the service more affordable for students. Operated by Education Connection, the regional educational services agency, the Center also provides a learning laboratory for the University's Education and Educational Psychology Department.

Public Safety: The Department of Public Safety, under the direction of the Associate Vice President for Public Safety, includes the University Police Department, the Office of Health, Safety, and Environmental Affairs, Property Management and Shipping Receiving, and the Office of Technical Services. A Community Services Unit coordinates crime prevention programs and community policing initiatives. The Department of Public Safety is also responsible for the shuttle service that operates (a) between the Midtown and Westside campuses, and (b) between the local motor inn and the two campuses. A Community Oriented Police Service (C.O.P.S.) officer is responsible for coordinating all community-oriented police activities (e.g., liaison officer with University residence life offices and campus student groups). The C.O.P.S. position was originally established with grant support from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Food Service: Wood Dining Services holds the exclusive contract for food services at the University. There is a student dining hall in the Student Center, food courts in the lower level of the Student Center and a convenience store and a snack bar in the Westside classroom building. Midtown residence hall students are required to participate in one of three meal plans (19, 14, or 10, with the latter two having flex dollars that may be used at any campus food service locations). On the Westside campus, students may participate in either the full meal plan or two alternative plans (50 or 25, also with flex dollar options).

Appraisal

1. Student Affairs

Under the current Vice President for Student Affairs, the division has intensified efforts to enhance the connection between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs; the collaboration between Student Affairs and the School of Arts and Sciences to plan and develop the Freshman Seminar is a good example. Faculty and Student Affairs have collaborated in planning and conducting orientation for new students. In addition, the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Academic Affairs staff have worked together to produce information sessions and online materials to improve students' awareness of where to go and whom to see about academic and co-curricular needs.

Currently, there are limited student services available on the University's Westside campus. The Student Center/Student Life Office and the SGA share space in the Westside classroom building, and the office is staffed during the day, beginning at 7:30 a.m., either by someone from the Student Center/Student Life Office, an SGA senator, or someone hired by the SGA. With the cutbacks in student payroll, however, the coverage has been less than ideal.

The Information Technology Committee has been an asset to technology planning, training, and the acquisition of appropriate hardware and software. This committee and its recommendations have been fully integrated into the University-wide Information Technology Committee's (ITC) planning. (Please see Standard VII for additional information on the ITC). Offices have been supplied with the necessary equipment, and the staff have been appropriately trained, greatly enhancing the quality of services for students.

The Assessment Committee, working closely with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, has been able to make changes directed toward the improvement of services for students based on analyses of data from student forums and surveys of both current students and graduates. Library and technology services have been enhanced in response to survey data; “one-stop shopping” in the renovated Old Main building has been instituted to simplify and improve services; and the student handbook has been revised in a more user-friendly question and answer format.

In Spring 2002, the Jason and Ellen Hancock Student Endowment Fund began generating annual scholarships, 25% of which are to support student leadership initiatives (distinguished leadership program, workshops and seminars on leadership for club presidents, for example). Fifty percent of the interest has been designated for need-based student scholarships, and another 25% has been designated to integrate the creative arts and technology at WestConn. The Hancocks’ contribution was the first \$1 million gift in the University’s 100-year history.

Thirty-two percent of seniors who participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement in 2002, indicated that they were involved in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, social fraternity/sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, e.g.) at least 1-5 hours per week, with another 12% responding that they participated 6-30 hours per week. Since 61% of students reported spending at least 1-5 hours/week commuting to class, another 56% indicated that they spent anywhere between one and 30 (16%) hours per week providing care for dependents who lived with them, and 80% worked at least 1-5 hours per week off campus (with 30% indicating that they worked more than 30 hours/week), it is not surprising that the percentage of students participating in co-curricular activities is not higher.

The Survey of Graduates 1997-2000 indicates satisfaction rates with the following areas of student services:

- Campus Ministries: 97%
- Student clubs and organizations: 90%
- Student Government: 87%
- Social life on campus: 71%
- University-sponsored social programs: 74%
- Cultural events: 83%
- Recreational/intramural programs: 80%

Although students have many opportunities to serve on University-wide committees, including standing committees of the University Senate, participation has been disappointing. The hours and locations for these meetings are not always convenient for students, many of whom work off campus. Seventy-two percent of alumni (1997-2000) report being satisfied with the level of student voice in determining University policies.

Career Development Center: The Career Development Center evaluates the quality and effectiveness of its services through a number of surveys and instruments such as employer and student evaluations and individual follow-up on the Co-Op Program, employer evaluations of the recruiting program, and employer/attendee evaluations of the Career Fair. Although the budget for the Career Development Center has increased modestly and new computing equipment has been provided, the growing demand for services will be a challenge for staff. Ninety percent of the full-time faculty and 99% of non-teaching staff think that WestConn provides students with appropriate and effective career

development and placement counseling. Seventy-three percent of alumni (1997-2000) indicate they are satisfied with WestConn's career counseling and placement services.

Athletics: Approximately 300 athletes participate in varsity sports annually. In addition, club sports, intramurals, and recreation programs offer students the opportunity to develop leadership skills, athletic abilities, self-discipline, and a lifelong appreciation of the importance of physical activity for good health. The freshman-to-sophomore retention rate for male and female athletes (80% and 85%, respectively) exceeds the rate for non-athletes (66% for males, 72% for females).

Residence Life: The CULTURE Program, developed in response to feedback from housing and residential life surveys, has made a number of improvements in residential life, many of them focused on the students' academic life, with quiet hours, a faculty fellows program that brings faculty members into the residence halls, peer tutoring, and visits from faculty, for example. While the staff members in Student Affairs are trying to develop attractive and worthwhile programs for the growing population of residential students, they are also trying to provide appropriate services for commuters, who are often non-traditional students.

Four-year averages from the Survey of Graduates (1997-2000) indicate that 84% are satisfied with the University Housing Office, 83% with residence hall services and programs, and 85% with resident assistants.

Health Services: As part of its overall assessment plan, Student Affairs invited consultants from the American College Health Association to visit the campus in December 2002 for a two-day assessment of health services with a view toward providing the best possible health care for students. Eighty-six percent of alumni (1997-2000) report being satisfied with student health services.

Counseling Center: The Counseling Center has added a full-time staff member, though the counselor to student ratio is still below recommended national norms (1:1500 for universities of WestConn's size). The case load for counselors is very time intensive, and the number of students seeking counseling continues to grow. Several options are being discussed, including the possible involvement of master's degree students in the Counselor Education Program, but there is clearly a need for additional professional staff. Ninety-one percent of alumni (1997-2000) report being satisfied with counseling services.

2. Academic Affairs

Advising: More than two-thirds of seniors who participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement in 2001 and 2002 indicated that the quality of advising at WestConn was "Excellent" or "Good," with approximately a quarter rating advising as "Fair." The remaining 12% said that advising was "Poor." Eighty percent of graduates (1997-2000) indicate they are satisfied with the academic advising they received while they were students.

There is concern about advising for students who are only on campus in the evening, since not all full-time faculty are available.

Seven percent of seniors report that they had studied abroad; 24% of freshmen say they plan to study abroad, and another 38% are undecided.

Learning Centers: Effectiveness of the Learning Centers has been assessed by informal surveys. Students who participated in the surveys recommended an increase in the number of tutors and in hours of operation. The University Senate's *ad hoc* Committee on Remediation prepared a report that

recommended increased hours of operation, more tutors, and a full-time supervisor for all three labs. This proposal was approved by the University Senate but has not yet been implemented.

Admissions: The Admissions Office is currently located in Warner Hall on the Midtown campus. Technology has enabled online applications through the WestConn home page. (For additional information, see Standard IV.)

Financial Aid: The Financial Aid Office is on the front line with students and parents; financial aid is a complicated and potentially sensitive area. Most full-time faculty, staff, and recent graduates responding to surveys indicated satisfaction with the services provided by the Financial Aid Office.

Registrar: The successful implementation of SCT Banner 2000, a suite of administrative software applications, was a lengthy and difficult process. The Registrar's Office and University Computing work closely together to resolve problems. The Banner System greatly expands and improves services offered to students, faculty, and staff. General registration information is now accessible from the University's home page, and it is now possible for previously enrolled students to register for classes electronically once they have obtained a Personal Identification Number (PIN) from their advisers. Using their student identification number and their PIN, students may add and drop classes, order unofficial transcripts, view account summaries, and pay their bills online. However, there are problems with posting transfer credits in a timely fashion. Seventy-three percent of alumni (1997-2000) report being satisfied with the registration process.

In 2002, the Registrar's Office, Continuing Education, University Center for Adult Education (non-credit courses), the Cashier's Office and Financial Aid were relocated to the renovated and attractively designed first floor of Old Main, providing comprehensive, centralized services for all students. Increased work and storage space are also now available for staff.

Of the students who responded to the National Survey of Student Engagement in 2001 and 2002, 80% thought the institution provided the support they needed to help them succeed academically.

3. Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services (Office of the President)

A Coordinator of Disability Services was added to the staff in Fall 2002.

More than two-thirds of the full-time faculty and three-quarters of the non-teaching staff think that WestConn delivers appropriate services to students with special learning needs; a similar number of full-time faculty and non-teaching staff agreed with the statement: "WestConn delivers appropriate services to the physically disabled." Three-quarters of alumni (1997-2000) report being satisfied with services for people with disabilities.

4. Finance and Administration

Most alumni (1997-2000) responding to the 2000 Survey of Graduates report satisfaction with the Cashier/Billing Office in the Division of Finance and Administration and indicate satisfaction with campus police; the bookstore, and student ID card services. More than half report they are satisfied with food services.

Projection

1. Student Affairs

Because of the state's current financial situation, there are not likely to be increases in staffing in the coming year. With economic recovery, however, positions in Student Affairs may be added on a prioritized basis.

The Student Affairs division will continue to work to ensure that programs and activities are fully integrated with the academic plan for the University.

A drug and alcohol task force, made up of members from Student Affairs, faculty, and students, is preparing recommendations for programs and staffing for initiatives to address identified needs in this area.

The Student Affairs Division and standing committees of the University Senate are looking at ways to encourage student participation in University governance.

A new model for orientation for new students will begin in Summer 2003. The revised and enhanced two-to-three-day program will combine testing, advising, registration and orientation. The fact that the program is not mandatory continues to be a problem because not all incoming students participate. The Student Affairs staff, the Office of Academic Affairs, and faculty members who work together to plan orientation will continue to try to find ways to address the needs of commuter and transfer students.

A new residence hall on the Westside campus will provide housing for 350 additional students; construction is scheduled to begin in Fall 2003. Long-range plans include a satellite health service operation on the Westside. An option under discussion for enhancement of health services is a project that would involve nurse interns from the Nursing Department's Post Master's Certificate Adult Nurse Practitioner Program.

The completion of a planned Westside Student Center (Fall 2004) will create a visible presence for the Student Affairs Division on the Westside and fill a critical need for student life/center services on the Westside campus.

The data from the survey developed by Student Affairs and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, administered to students in the Fall 2002 semester, will be analyzed. Student Affairs will review programs and practices and make appropriate changes.

2. Academic Affairs

Orientation: The staff of Student Affairs, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the faculty will continue to work together to enhance programs for entering students. Assigned readings for discussion are planned for the class that enters in Fall 2003, another element in the overall plan to include academic experiences in the orientation process.

Advising: Faculty in the academic departments and the Advisement Center will continue to find ways to improve the advising process. An advisement training workshop for new faculty may be reintroduced in Fall 2003. More permanent quarters for the staff of the Advisement Center would

make it easier for students to find and use the services offered. Although technology has made registration procedures easier, students (and particularly students who have not declared a major) will continue to consult in person with their advisers about their programs. The University will look at ways to meet the needs of students who need to talk with an adviser in the evening. In addition, some faculty concerns about online registration and advisement are being considered. Further expansion of programs for students would require hiring additional advisers.

Admissions: Admissions counselors have a complex and full recruiting schedule. The workload is such that a counselor and one additional administrator would enhance services for prospective students. At the direction of the President, the Office of Admissions is developing recruitment strategies to increase enrollment of international students, particularly in the sciences, but in other programs, as well.

Financial Aid: The issue of short-staffing in the Financial Aid Office is being addressed which will improve services to students.

An online degree audit system will become accessible to students by the Fall of 2003 so that they can readily monitor their own progress toward the degree.

3. Finance and Administration

When the new Westside Student Center is opened, the bookstore and food services will offer enhanced services on that campus.

The Department of Public Safety will continue its outreach programs designed to help prevent crime and promote safety for all members of the University community. The opening of a new dormitory on the Westside will eliminate the need for shuttle bus service to and from the Ramada Inn where some students are currently housed.

Ethical Standards: The University will continue to adhere to the highest ethical standards in its policies and procedures.

STANDARD VII

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

The three areas covered in this Standard (Libraries, University Computing, and Media Services) have experienced tremendous growth since 1993. All three involve substantial use of technology resources, and consequently, there is a significant amount of overlap. Although the three departments are discussed separately, they are clearly interdependent. Moreover, there is considerable potential for even better integration and a greater degree of collaboration among the three.

A. Library

Response to Fifth-Year Review: The NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education requested in 1990 that in its next comprehensive self-study the University include information on the steps it has taken to “provide sufficient library resources to support graduate programs and increased faculty research activity and to hire adequate numbers of library staff as the libraries continue to expand.”

Library Staffing: Nine FTE were added from 1998 through December 2002 using Connecticut State Office of Policy and Management funding related to the doubling of the Haas Library Space. Positions added include three professional librarians (one as Associate Director), four staff members, and two custodians. Library personnel now include the Director, the Associate Director, 10 full-time professional librarians, and 11 technical support personnel (23 full-time staff), plus six part-time librarians, part-time clerks, University Assistants, and custodians. The University has made a strong commitment to ensure that the library is well staffed.

Library Resources: Library resources to support graduate programs and increased faculty research have been allocated above and beyond regular funding in targeted areas. For example, the Staff Report of the Connecticut Board of Governors Advisory Committee on Accreditation, which conducted a campus visit in Fall 2002 preparatory to recommending state accreditation for the M.F.A. in Visual Arts, took note that in accord with the acquisition plan for the program, 327 new art books and 14 periodical subscriptions have been purchased specifically for the M.F.A., the Grove Dictionary of Art database has been made available, and the library is in the process of making additional purchases as agreed in the program proposal.

The proposal for the Ed.D. program includes an additional annual commitment to the library for three years and an increase in regular funding thereafter.

Resources specifically designated for other graduate programs include The American History and Life database (History M.A.), the EBSCO Health Source Nursing database (M.S.N.), and Interdisciplinary Gerontology Studies (post-baccalaureate certificate in Gerontology).

Resources to support faculty research include the WestLaw database (Justice and Law Administration), the Scientific and Technical Information Network (Chemistry), JSTOR Arts and Sciences databases (general faculty), and Yale Library privileges (general faculty).

Recognizing that increased costs of all materials have eroded buying power, steps need to be taken to further enhance library resources.

Description

The mission of the Western Connecticut State University Library is to consistently and fully support the mission, purposes, and curriculum of the university; to promote the development and growth of quality information services; to provide effective methods of accessing, acquiring, and evaluating information, and instruction in their use; and, through effective use of resources, to strengthen the scholarship, intellectual inquiry, and cultural development of its students, faculty, and staff.

In the years since the last NEASC self-study in 1993, the State of Connecticut and the University have committed considerable resources and energy toward fulfilling this mission, most notably with the 1999 renovation and expansion of the Ruth A. Haas Library on the Midtown campus. The reconstruction added 50,000 square feet to accommodate collection growth and provide ample study space. The resulting 100,000 square-foot building provides an attractive, inviting, spacious teaching and learning environment. The improvements, detailed in the university's *Fifth Year Report* to the CIHE, met with NEASC/CIHE approval.

The Robert S. Young Library, a branch facility located on the Westside campus, is organized much like a corporate library. The business collection supports curriculum in the areas of accounting, finance, management, marketing, management information systems and, to some extent, the Division of Justice and Law Administration. The library operates with funds from the State and a generous endowment from the Young family.

Librarians at WestConn and at Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC) have worked together to provide services for students who attend WestConn at Waterbury. Reserve readings, for example, are available in the NVCC library, although ERes (the electronic reserve system) is becoming increasingly popular. The WestConn Libraries' website has a page ("WestConn@Waterbury") that provides information and links to access library resources.

The Haas Library, located at the center of the Midtown campus, is fully accessible. The collection and services are available during the 82 hours the library is open each week, and nearly all materials, with the exception of certain archival and special collections and reserves, are housed on open stacks. Library privileges are available to students, faculty, staff, emeriti faculty, WestConn alumni association members, Naugatuck Valley Community Technical College students, the Council of Connecticut Academic Libraries directors (and member schools' faculty and staff), and students at Charter Oak State College. Staff assistance and the usual bibliographic access tools (online public catalog, periodical holdings lists, indexes) facilitate the use of the collection. The Young Library, open 65 hours weekly, provides most of the same services as the Haas Library, and is also fully accessible. The catalog and other electronic resources are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, through the library's web site. The library has become increasingly central to the instructional and scholarly life of the University, and is also positioning itself as a technology innovator on campus, providing state-of-the-art services in support of the growing number of distance learning students, for example.

In addition to supporting the educational and curricular goals of the University, the newly renovated Haas Library provides an excellent venue for offering cultural enrichment opportunities to the public, as well as to the campus community. Since opening in Fall 2000, the library has hosted a number of events (including a very popular quilt exhibit, poetry readings, art exhibits, and musical offerings).

A highly qualified full-time staff administers the libraries, including the director, the associate director (a position created in 2001), and 10 full-time professional librarians. Librarians are faculty members at WestConn with all faculty rights and responsibilities. Librarians serve on University Senate committees and are required to meet criteria equivalent to those required of teaching faculty for promotion and tenure. Also on staff are 11 technical support personnel and 6 part-time adjunct librarians, who help to cover evenings and weekends. In addition, there are a number of University Assistants and part-time clerks. During FY 2001-02, there were 23 staff members (excluding students). Because virtually all librarians and other staff have responsibilities that involve administration, technical, and public service, staff time cannot be divided into numbers of hours in any one specific area.

The Media Services and Library Policy Committee, a standing committee of the University Senate, supports the staff in improving library services, and helps to provide the users' perspective. Additionally, student and faculty suggestions are solicited through comments received on instruction evaluations and through informal discussions with the staff. In Spring 2002, 86 students participated in a pilot project interview-type library utilization and satisfaction survey that provided many suggestions for enhancing services.

Librarians work closely with classroom faculty to design and deliver library user instruction to various classes, including general orientation for students in English composition courses. These library-user classes, offered in the Haas Library's new 27-laptop education lab, are carefully designed to meet instructional and information literacy objectives and involve a wide variety of delivery methods and materials.

The library's departmental liaison program continues to evolve. The staff has identified this initiative as an opportunity to increase the library's visibility and effectiveness in information literacy programs, collection development, and communication.

Physical description. The new Ruth A. Haas Library opened in September 2000. The building encompasses 100,000 square feet on six levels and 414 seats. In 1993, the library contained 49,718 square feet on five floors and a mezzanine.

A new CyberCafé where students can gather informally and enjoy snacks and beverages has been extremely popular; the CyberCafé also serves as the venue for the cultural enrichment presentations mentioned above. New individual study rooms on the third and fourth floors, two group study rooms, and several comfortable seating areas were incorporated into the design of the expanded library.

The Robert S. Young Library, completed in 1981, was recently refurbished. Major projects included re-carpeting and repainting and, most importantly, renovations that brought the library into full compliance with ADA standards. Ramp accessibility was added to the study/instruction room, the spaces between the stacks were widened, and an ADA-compliant security gateway was added. Library chairs were reupholstered and a new circulation/reference desk has been installed. The Young Library contains 3,447 square feet on one floor, and includes 56 seats.

Collections. Individual departments and faculty members select over half of the titles purchased by the library. The selections are approved for expenditure from department allocations by chairpersons or their designees; occasionally, approval by the appropriate School dean is required. The remainder of the book budget is used to provide materials for interdisciplinary use, reference materials, and continuations, for example. Students may also recommend items for purchase.

Major review and weeding of the general collection were undertaken before the move to the “swing space” (the temporary building occupied during the library renovation, now called Warner Hall). Faculty members have been asked to review again the holdings in their areas of expertise and to recommend the purchase of new materials.

WestConn and its sister institutions in the State University System share their catalogs through CONSULS, a centralized, system-wide bibliographic database.

Two major gifts were donated to the library in 2001. The Geddes collection, a gift of the widow of the former dean of men at WestConn, consists of approximately 6,000 volumes on military history. The Whitney Video Collection consists of 1,446 videos, dating from 1922 to 1999 and includes films featuring many classic Hollywood stars such as Rudolph Valentino, Clara Bow, Mary Pickford, Myrna Loy. This collection will be a major asset in support of a new course in the History of American Film. In 1997, the Direct Marketing Educational Foundation, Inc., designated the University as a site for its collection of teaching materials to be used in support of the direct marketing certificate program offered by the Ansell School of Business; books (6-10) are added to the collection annually.

The addition of a full-time Archivist and Special Collections Librarian in 2001 filled a critical need. The Archives almost immediately became the main repository for campus information of historical value; the archivist has solicited and received several important gifts from former faculty members and has been instrumental in research and in preparing materials for the University’s centennial celebration. Special Collections is dedicated to preserving the history of Danbury and Fairfield County, Connecticut, as a reflection of the history of the town that helped shape the University.

Included in the Haas and Young libraries’ holdings are 206,036 volumes (186,926 titles), approximately 1,612 periodical titles (including currently received, gifts, microforms, back runs, etc., but not electronic periodicals), approximately 40 databases, 7,998 audio-visual titles, and 62,793 items in the government documents section (not including microforms). Many of the databases (e.g., EBSCO’s Academic Search Elite, JStor, etc.), provide full-text access to hundreds of periodicals.

Annual Reports, containing detailed information on both libraries, are available in the Team Workroom.

Appraisal

The completed Haas Library reconstruction project has had a major impact on library services and library usage in the University and the region. The importance of providing an appealing, welcoming environment conducive to the learning process cannot be overstated. Since the renovations were completed, the number of visitors to the library has increased dramatically and the collections and services are much more visible to the University community and to the region.

Student and faculty satisfaction with library services and collections seems to be relatively high. In a Spring 2002 pilot survey conducted by library administration, a majority of the respondents (all undergraduates) indicated overall satisfaction with the library. Most full-time faculty responding to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey agreed with the statement: “Communication between the library and your department is effective.” Responses to the Current Student Survey and NSSE also indicate general satisfaction with library services.

Library statistical data reveal that the number of books (i.e., traditional library materials) circulated has decreased over the last five years. This is a national trend, reflecting society’s reliance on online

resources. The library is adapting to this new environment, as evidenced in the percentage of the materials budget now devoted to e-resources.

Demand for e-resources and computing equipment has grown significantly since the opening of the new Haas Library; the 20 public computers are in constant use, and additional workstations are needed. To alleviate congestion, the library purchased and configured several laptop computers that may be checked out for use in the building.

In addition to the physical renovation project, the library has enjoyed a major upgrade in its virtual environment. Beginning in 1995, the library mounted a web page on the University network that provides a remote audience with databases, information and instructional materials. The web page has developed and matured over time and is currently the point of access to all library information and holdings. The library has discontinued nearly all CD-ROM subscriptions in favor of web access to databases. Through the CSU consortium and a shared proxy server, the library provides remote access for registered WCSU students, current faculty, and staff.

The library has purchased and installed ERes, an electronic reserves program, to provide 24/7 access to materials teaching faculty have chosen to make available. ERes, inaugurated in January 2002, has been steadily growing in popularity and now accounts for nearly 5% of all library reserves.

Interlibrary loan (ILL) remains extremely active. WestConn has established its position as a net lender with the OCLC service by consistently lending more materials than it borrows. In August 2002, a new ILL management software system (ILLiad) was installed that allows interlibrary loan users to submit, manage, and receive requested material electronically via the web.

Keeping pace with the need to provide resources to support new programs (particularly in the graduate area) is a challenge, and the difficulty of serving two growing campuses remains an issue. The Young Library on the Westside campus was originally designed and endowed to serve the Ancell School of Business programs only. However, the course and degree offerings on the Westside now also include Justice and Law Administration (JLA), Education/Educational Psychology, and Computer Science. Faculty and students in these departments must come to the Midtown campus to consult books and other printed materials in the Haas Library. Online periodical and reference databases have alleviated some of the problems, but hard copy materials still pose a challenge.

Library funding has been, and continues to be, a major challenge. When inflation and the rising costs of serial subscriptions are taken into consideration, overall funding has decreased in real terms in the last ten years, keeping WestConn below the ACRL recommended standard percentage of the University's educational and general budget (5%). Lack of funds has made it necessary to cut periodicals and other ongoing cost commitments, thus limiting the library's ability to pursue new strategic initiatives. Some additional state funding was allocated for costs associated with the expanded building, but most of these monies necessarily went to adding faculty and staff positions.

The library constantly strives to spend funds as prudently as possible. To that end, the library has begun to collect electronically and analyze statistical information regarding database usage, book circulation, reserves usage, interlibrary loan requests, cataloging processes, and other relevant data.

Projection

The mechanisms already in place to strengthen partnerships with the classroom faculty (for example, the liaison program and information literacy services) provide opportunities to discuss and brainstorm curricular connections to information literacy and the acquisition of search skills. These partnerships

will also help the library to improve the quality of the print and non-print collection, and will facilitate the continuing improvement of collection development.

The Haas Library anticipates that WestConn's funding of an Ed.D. program in Instructional Leadership will enable it to provide satisfactory support of doctoral level teaching, learning, and research. As with all the academic disciplines it supports, the Haas Library will also continue to utilize longstanding cooperative agreements with CSU System libraries and other libraries, as well as document delivery services, to provide access to more specialized information resources needed for research.

To supplement the current print collection and to provide additional information resources to the remote user population, the library is considering the addition of an e-book service (e.g. netLibrary). Such a service would provide immediate access to thousands of full-text titles with recent publication dates. The service will be carefully researched before being selected, however, to ensure that the collection is in alignment with University curricular and educational goals.

Interlibrary loan services will be revolutionized with the installation of ILLiad, an integrated ILL management package. The program will not only streamline the back-office functions of the interlibrary loan process, but also give patrons more flexibility and control over their requested items. The most radical change resulting from implementation of ILLiad is the fact that over 80% of all requested articles will be delivered to the user's desktop in electronic form; items may be picked up anywhere, any time.

Further enhancements to the electronic reserves (ERes) project are also moving ahead as the library begins to experiment with streaming audio and video. Such complements to text-based electronic reserves will be invaluable in supporting distance education initiatives.

The library's technology environment is maturing and librarians are in discussion with University Computing regarding greater independence and access to network resources. With the addition of a full-time Systems Librarian (January 2001) and a full-time Systems Assistant (August 2001), the library is now prepared to take on more responsibility for servers and applications. Expanded access and privileges will allow the library to move forward with important technology initiatives at its own pace, reducing the burden on University Computing.

The library web pages have been redesigned to match the new University web environment and the pages moved to a Windows2000 web server. This migration should provide even greater stability and robust access for on-site users and the growing population of remote users. The library also expects the number of ERes users to continue to grow over the next two to three years. Technological enhancements have been made to the Interlibrary Loan module that allow patrons to manage their own ILL requests and to receive articles electronically.

In addition, the library anticipates delivering more content on the web (via open source software), both for on-site users and for distance learners. Currently, the library is experimenting with remote, and live reference services via Internet chat. Librarians are getting a good sense of the need for and interest in expanded reference services, again without taxing the resources of University Computing.

The library will use the analysis of newly gathered statistical information to inform future decisions about subscriptions and purchases. The data will also be used to ensure that funds are distributed as equitably as possible.

In accordance with standards outlined by the Association for College and Research Libraries, WestConn is beginning to develop an information literacy program. The first pieces of the program are now in place in the form of traditional library instruction and an online information literacy tutorial entitled BILT: Basic Information Literacy Tutorial. BILT, an adaptation of the award-winning TILT (Texas Information Literacy Tutorial), was developed cooperatively with librarians from the other CSU institutions. Plans to expand information literacy offerings include subject-specific web-based tutorials and instructional outreach to distance education students as well as to on-campus students.

The library submitted a proposal to University Computing requesting 20 additional PCs for the Haas Library to meet the current demand for workstations and provide greater flexibility for students studying and doing research. The date set for installation of the first group of additional PCs was January 2003. In addition, library staff and University Computing are looking into the feasibility of a wireless network (with additional laptop computers) for the CyberCafé and throughout the upper levels of the library.

In order to diversify sources of funding, the marketing of services and events has become more commonplace in the library world. The library director will be spending energy and time promoting these services (both traditional and emerging) and the cultural events the library sponsors. To meet the challenges presented by fiscal constraints, the library will also be working with Institutional Advancement and the Office of Grant Programs to expand fundraising activities in support of new initiatives and to ensure that the library will continue to offer the highest quality of service possible.

B. University Computing

Description

University Computing's mission is to provide an information technology environment that delivers a seamless learning atmosphere for students and faculty while also meeting administrative needs. The University will be a leader in using technology to enhance teaching and learning to meet the educational needs of a diversified student body, faculty and administration. University Computing supports the University mission of empowering students, assuring effective teaching, strengthening partnerships with people and institutions while supporting continuous improvement and intellectual integrity.

Institutional Resources:

The budget for University Computing has increased significantly in order to keep pace with administrative and academic computing needs. As is typical nationally, the largest single expense is personnel (47%), followed by hardware (26%). Software represents 5% of the budget, services 3%, and the remaining 18% is used to cover a number of different expenses (furniture, supplies, whiteboards, e.g.).

WestConn's network, based on an advanced CISCO fiber optic network and leased line ATM links, provides data, voice, and video services to both campuses and within the CSU system. Our TCP/IP network currently supports over 2,300 computers (PCs, Macs, and Sun workstations), all with a connection to the Internet and 100 MB to the desktop. The network also supports over 925 residence hall network connections. Our environment consists of 36 Windows NT/2K and Mac servers providing access to network-based software, file services designed to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, Lotus Notes web-based services, and network delivery of CDs.

The Information Technology Committee (ITC), a standing committee of the University Senate (and therefore under governance), reviews and assesses student and faculty computing needs on an ongoing basis. Established in 1999, ITC membership includes: (1) the elected chairs of the technology committees from each of the three schools; (2) the director of library services (or designee); (3) the director of media services; (4) the director of information technology; (5) computer science and management information systems faculty members; (6) two student representatives (one of whom is the SGA president); and (7) the Chief Information Officer. Committee members are responsible for representing the needs of their respective constituencies and may also bring concerns and proposals to the committee. Advocacy for administrative computing needs is the responsibility of the Chief Information Officer and the director of Information Technology (IT).

Instructional Technology: Labs and Classrooms

The ITC developed the University's three-year plan to upgrade, modernize, and expand the technology in classrooms and labs. The plan calls for six to nine classrooms each year to be fitted with basic technology including an instructor workstation, projection equipment, laptop connections, and a document camera and/or a VCR. Faculty members' computers (laptops and/or desktops) are refreshed at least once every three years. The computer science department replaces their hardware every two years, and some faculty get replacements every year. The decisions about who gets what equipment and when is made by the School technology committees, whose chairs serve on the ITC.

University Computing covers the cost of all standard software updates for classrooms and labs. In addition, the ITC makes funding available to faculty for software for classrooms and laboratories required for specific disciplines or courses, and additional funding is available for software to support faculty research. In both cases, faculty apply through their departments and the request is forwarded to the Information Technology Committee. To date, all requests have been approved.

Faculty Training

University Computing currently has a budget of \$15,000 annually for faculty training. Training is arranged through each School's Technology Committee, and faculty members are paid to conduct workshops for their colleagues. The money also supports training off campus for faculty who request special classes.

Student Training

Developed in 1997, the WestConn Student Technology Training Center (STTC), supported by the student technology fee, has 13 IBM P4s equipped with DVD/CDRW drives, zip drives, flat panel monitors and 2 G4 Power Macs with Zip drives, DVD /CDROM drives, and flat panel displays in Room 225 of the Student Center. The STTC's mission is to provide students with out-of-classroom, hands-on experience. Through one hour, student-taught workshops and tutorials, students can enhance their comfort level with a number of software packages (Quark, PowerPoint, and Excel, for example). The Center is open to faculty and staff on a space-available basis.

Computer Labs

The two general computer centers (one on the Westside and the other on the Midtown campus) are each equipped with approximately 40 IBM desktop computers. The Midtown center also includes Macintosh computers. These facilities support a diverse selection of software packages. The computer

centers are equipped with one or more group workstations for multiple users, a graphics station with specialized software, and network printing capabilities.

At the close of the Fall 2001 term, the STTC had logged 3,776 student users, the Midtown lab (MTCC) had 21,373 student users, and the Westside lab (WSSC) numbers were 11,947.

There are two 24-hour labs at WestConn: one located on the Midtown campus in Student Center Room 214, and the other at Westside Room 247c. These facilities are not staffed and are intended for the use of students who need 24-hour access to computer technology and equipment. Each facility is equipped with 4 IBM PCs, 4 Macs, Zip Drive Access, and at least one printer, as well as a variety of software including the Microsoft Office Suite and Internet Explorer.

In addition to the Computing Centers, STTC, and 24-hour labs, University Computing supports other technology facilities and departmental labs on campus. Fifty-four classrooms (more than 70% of WestConn's classrooms) are equipped with basic technology (projection equipment, instructor workstation, VCRs; some have document cameras). Thirteen are multi-station computer classrooms, with a desktop or laptop for every student (ten are PC, three are Mac). Responsibility for each technology classroom is assigned to a specific academic department, giving the department "ownership" of the facilities for security and maintenance purposes.

Nearly all of WestConn's full-time faculty have computers in their offices, compared with 50% in 1993 at the time of our last self-study. Some faculty members have both desktops and laptops.

In 1997, as a follow-up to a comprehensive information technology study completed two years earlier (see above), the decision was made to merge academic and administrative computing functions and staffs into a single entity – University Computing. The CIO now has primary responsibility for decisions regarding information technology planning, implementation, and support throughout the University. Also in response to the findings of the 1995 study, technology committees were established in each of the University's three Schools to ensure that faculty curricular and scholarly needs are addressed.

University Web Site: WestConn launched its first web site in January of 1995. Since then, the site has grown from a modest collection of school information and hyperlinks to a much more robust offering of information and services. The web site has gone through many changes and versions, and with each iteration it has become a much richer resource for users.

ResNet connections in every room in the residence halls provide students with Ethernet access to WestConn's network and to the Internet. Over 70% of residence hall students have opted to connect to WestConn's network. Dial Up Networking (DUN) allows faculty, staff, and students the ability to connect from off-site to WestConn's network using a modem. Instructors can use the class shared drives to make resources available to their students, and file shares are now available to students as well.

Lotus Notes e-mail via a web-based interface makes e-mail available to all faculty, staff, and students. At present, 435 faculty and staff are using Lotus Notes e-mail. Lotus Notes R5 Domino was made available as a pilot to students in the Spring 2002 semester. Seventy-eight students were using Lotus Notes as of Spring 2002; 674 students in Fall 2002. The majority of students, however, have been using their own accounts.

In 1996, the CSU System Office decided to convert core administrative and academic systems from stand-alone, mainframe-based applications to an integrated client/server-based Enterprise Resource

Planning (ERP) system. SCT's Banner Suite of Finance, Human Resources, Student, Faculty, Admissions, Financial Aid and Alumni modules was selected. The Alumni and Finance modules went live in 1999, and the remaining core modules (Human Resources, Student, Financial Aid, Faculty, and Admissions) were put into operation in 2001. Since Spring 2002, students have been able to register for classes, make payments, view schedules and courses, and access personal information through the World Wide Web. Faculty members can now view class lists, teaching schedules, and student transcripts.

As of Fall 2002, University Computing's staff consists of the CIO, 17 full-time administrative faculty, 3 full-time clerical employees, with four vacancies (two new positions), six part-time employees, and more than 30 student workers.

There is some support for information technology at the CSU system level, e.g. system-wide contracts for major hardware and software purchases, bond fund requests for technology equipment, and the implementation of major software systems. WestConn has collaborated with the System Office on telecommunications and programming projects and in planning technology for new facilities. Three of the four state universities (Central, Southern, and Western) and the System Office cooperated in the CISCO purchase, and the Oracle license is system-wide. The System negotiated a Microsoft licensing agreement that covers faculty and staff home computers, as well as on-campus use.

Appraisal

Until recently, the highly competitive nature of the business environment within Fairfield County made it difficult for University Computing to hire and retain skilled employees because the University's contractual requirements precluded offering competitive salaries. With the downturn in the high tech areas that resulted in many layoffs, however, the University has been more successful in recruiting. The department's goal is to provide a high level of technological support to the University community. Replies to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey indicated that a strong majority of full-time faculty respondents believe that WestConn provides adequate technological support for their department. By Summer 2002, five of the nine vacancies had been filled, and an aggressive recruitment effort is under way to fill the remaining positions. Short staffing has meant that staff development and training was not at the desired level; moreover, the staff often felt that there was insufficient time for planning and research.

Although the budget for technology has increased dramatically over the last ten years, the costs continue to rise. Personnel costs, here as elsewhere, are the biggest single expense in the technology budget. Enterprise Resource Planning software and training are also significant items in the technology budget at WestConn, as is the case at institutions of all sizes all over the country (see "Third Annual EDUCAUSE Survey Identifies Current IT Issues," in *Educause Quarterly*, Number 2, 2002, p.15; hereafter *EQ 2:2 {2002}*). To supplement budget allocations, an instructional technology fee was instituted in 1996. The fee for full-time students, \$60 per semester in 1996, has risen to \$100 per semester in Fall 2002; the fee is standard throughout the CSU system. These fees help defray the costs of bringing technology into the classroom.

Computer and network security, "the predominant challenge of the information age," (*EQ 2:2 {2002}*, 18) is a prime concern at WestConn. University Computing recently added a network security person to its staff. Among his duties are the development of a comprehensive security policy, a review of server vulnerabilities, and the setting up of Virtual Private Networks. WebCT (the course management system) and Campus Pipeline (a campus-wide information web portal) consultants have worked with University Computing on security issues specific to their products.

Educause's 2002 annual survey found that faculty development, support, and training have moved to the top-ten list of issues for IT leaders. (*EQ*, 2 {2002}, p. 8). This is certainly the case at WestConn, as well. A more consistent technology training plan for faculty and administrative staff would enable them to take full advantage of all available technologies and would result in a more knowledgeable, technologically proficient user base. Ongoing training received a significant boost during the summer of 2002 when library personnel offered a grant-supported three-day workshop for faculty on technological supports for student learning. So many faculty signed up for the workshop that University Computing provided funds for a second workshop the following week.

Chief among the prerequisites for successful faculty development programs in the use of available technologies are: (1) understanding faculty culture and its differences from IT culture; (2) recognizing that various academic disciplines turn to technology to meet different needs; and (3) gaining faculty interest and respect by recruiting advisers who are known to share discipline values. (*EQ*, 2 {2002}, p. 18). As new technologies are implemented throughout the campus, departments are taking more responsibility for computing, particularly through the School technology committees and membership in the University-wide technology group. University Computing has endeavored to serve the needs of the campus community, although understaffing has sometimes meant that individual faculty members and departments have had difficulty resolving technology issues in a timely fashion. Ensuring that technology is fully accessible to persons with disabilities is a challenge. There are resources that are not easily made use of by people who are visually impaired, for example.

One of University Computing's greatest assets has been the reliability and integrity of WestConn's network and server environment. This backbone of CISCO communications equipment and IBM and Compaq Servers ensures that information will be delivered to the desktop in a secure, timely, and dependable fashion.

The Information Technology Committee has been a tremendous asset in planning, implementation, and training. The ITC has done its work so successfully, in fact, that the University Senate has cited the group as a model for committees that require special expertise.

The recently redesigned website increasingly provides valuable resources to WestConn students, faculty, and staff, as well as prospective students, alumni, and the community in general. It is essential that the information be kept up to date and accurate. University Computing is working to include a broader range of departments and individuals in managing the growing amount of content on the web site. The main web site recently moved off the old VAX/VMS mainframe to a new Windows-based server platform, making it possible for University Computing to offer state-of-the-art features and services from the web server. Work is underway to move the remaining sites (mostly faculty, staff, and student web pages) from the VAX to the new web server platform. Because of understaffing in University Computing, it has not always been possible to deliver services.

Implementation of the Banner ERP system core modules has brought about the integration of the University's Administrative Systems (Finance, Accounts Receivable, and Human Resources) with Academic Systems (Registration, Financial Aid, Admissions, and Alumni). Sharing of data between modules provides faculty, staff, and students with more accurate, up-to-date information, delivered in a standardized format across all applications. Some departments have felt the need for more training in order to use the software effectively.

Through the system-wide Online CSU initiative, approximately 40-50 courses in a variety of disciplines have been offered. Although the courses are offered through the System, faculty usually contact University Computing at WestConn when there are technical problems. The System Office has paid WebCT to work with faculty to convert courses in the existing E-College format to WebCT.

Space for training is currently an issue on both the Midtown and Westside campuses because of the ongoing renovation and building projects. Finding adequate space for faculty and staff training, multimedia resource centers, and experimental projects with the CS and MIS departments is currently a challenge.

Projection

Once staffing levels are adequate, University Computing expects that response to requests for services and support will improve, and there will be more time for staff development and training, as well as for planning and research. While the University Computing staff has always worked beyond conventional hours, the demand for services is such that provision will have to be made for more technical support in the evening, on weekends, and from remote locations.

In an effort to address the faculty and staff training issue, University Computing will be hiring an instructional technologist to work with faculty on the integration of technology into the classroom. In addition, licenses for online hardware and software training for faculty and staff have been purchased through a commercial vendor. The students who staff the Student Technology Training Centers will be taking a proactive role by going into the classroom to help faculty and students learn how to use software efficiently and effectively. The Centers will also be offering one-hour workshops and one-on-one tutoring sessions. The Western Technology Association, a student group, will be offering web services to departments and to faculty members, and will be paid by the departments for their services.

The availability of adequate space for doing training workshops will improve significantly once the new science building opens and the ownership of Roberts Avenue School reverts to the University.

A goal is to have all appropriate classrooms equipped with appropriate technology (instructor stations, projection, e.g.; note: some classrooms are not appropriate for projection) by the Fall 2004 semester. A new multistation PC classroom will be added on the Midtown Campus in 2003, and a similarly equipped room will be added on the Westside in 2004.

WestConn's web site will continue to grow and become a much more comprehensive resource for all university information, from academic and administrative documents to course content to current campus information. These enhancements will make it possible for University Computing to provide a more comprehensive and seamless online experience for the WestConn community. Implementation of the Campus Pipeline portal and the WebCT authoring environment will be critical to this effort.

Additional Banner Web modules for Student and Faculty Services will be added so that more information will be available and fewer transactions will require students to go from office to office, building to building. Other Banner Web modules such as Web for Employees, Web for Alumni, Web for Financial Aid, and Web for Admissions will be implemented to increase the level of service available to the University community. Other functions such as fixed assets, grants processing, and web features will be added. Administrative infrastructure, including the Banner administrative software system, will be built to handle a doctoral-level program.

Security management is an issue of strategic institutional importance that will demand more and more of the attention of the leadership of University Computing, as on other campuses nationwide. The challenge will be to stay ahead of the hacker community's ability to breach security. The network security specialist's responsibilities include developing a draft of a comprehensive security policy,

examining servers for vulnerability, and setting up virtual private networks. In 2002, PricewaterhouseCoopers did a Windows NT security audit that brought in specialized equipment and hackers to test the system. University Computing is reviewing the findings with the auditors and will make appropriate adjustments. Obviously, the key is to address security concerns while at the same time respecting and preserving the open and flexible nature of computing in an academic institution.

The System Office has made the decision to purchase and implement a portal (Campus Pipeline) that will streamline access to University and student resources. The Student Affairs division and graduate and undergraduate students will be very involved in the discussion with Campus Pipeline consultants and trainers about which options should be available and when. The University is also investigating wireless technology with the expectation that it will introduce wireless on a pilot basis in the most heavily used locations on campus (e.g., the Haas Library Cybercafé and the Student Center).

One of the great uncertainties is whether or not the University will continue to receive funding adequate to support the required staffing and services, replacement of existing technologies, and the purchase, implementation, and support for new technological initiatives. Additional funding from external sources will be required to support campus-wide initiatives and the future technology needs of faculty, students, and staff. University Computing will work with Institutional Advancement and the Grants Office to identify and secure additional monies and gifts in kind.

C. Media Services

It is the goal of Media Services to provide the WestConn community with the optimum media and media technology in support of instruction and promotion of the University. Media Services assesses, implements, and supports media technologies, produces the highest quality media materials, and educates the University community on the use and application of media and media technology.

Description

There are currently three full-time staff members in Media Services: a director, an assistant director and an office assistant. In addition, there are two University Assistants (non-students) and ten student assistants. The director serves *ex officio* on both the Information Technology Committee and the Media Services and Library Policy Committees.

The department operates two Media Centers, one located on the Midtown campus and the other on the Westside campus. Two viewing rooms and a production studio are located in White Hall (Midtown). The Midtown Center is open 69 hours per week; the Westside Center is open 40 hours per week. Services are also available to faculty who teach in Waterbury.

Media Services offers a wide range of services, including video/audio production, WCSU-TV, equipment distribution, event support, teleconferencing and videoconferencing, presentational media, digital media development, technology classroom support, media equipment maintenance and repair, and a number of other support services.

The department, which owns high quality digital editing and camera equipment, regularly produces the University's recruitment video, television and radio commercials, and public access shows coordinated by the Office of Public Relations ("Western Weekly" and "Parent Power"). Staff also tape University events, such as commencement, Centennial Day, the Annual Board of Trustees video, and forums presented by the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. WCSU-TV consists of three television channels offering student development programs, weather broadcasting by Meteorology students ("The Weather People"), and Media Arts course projects.

Faculty, staff, and students may borrow equipment from any of the Centers, which are supplied with LCD projectors (3), television/videocassette recorders (15), DVD players (4), CD/cassette players (2), overhead projectors (12), audio cassette recorders (8), camcorders (4), tripods (6), portable screens (8), a laptop computer (1), a portable sound system (1), microphones (10) microphone stands (16), 16mm projectors (2), slide projectors (18), a document camera (1), opaque projectors (3), and podiums (3).

The department is equipped with a satellite dish to downlink programs and live teleconferences that can be routed to the Center's Viewing Rooms or to Channel 78 on WCSU-TV. Media Services staff also assist faculty and staff with videoconferences (live, two-way audio/video through phone lines). The University owns three PictureTel systems (two are at the Midtown campus, the other on the Westside).

Other services include video and audiotape duplication (with strict adherence to copyright laws) and film and video rentals. The Media Center also coordinates the maintenance and repair for all approved media equipment at the University.

Media Services has taken over equipment distribution for the Communications and Theatre Arts Department. Services are available from 8 a.m. until 11 p.m., offering better access for instructional purposes.

Appraisal

Media Services has taken advantage of a drop in pricing to upgrade its editing systems and camera equipment so that is fully digital. The department now has professional, industry-standard production equipment.

Staffing levels have not kept pace with the significant increase in demand for services such as multimedia presentations and video production. University Assistants, more permanent than student staff and more highly skilled, have been helpful in video production and event support. Students have assumed increasing responsibilities, although as short-term employees they may complete their service just as their skills are nearing a high level of expertise. Students enrolled for a BA in Media Arts (Communications and Theatre Arts department) can give valuable assistance in Media Arts while gaining experience in their chosen field.

Despite these challenges, the department has provided the University community with video production of professional quality, including materials for instruction, marketing, and public relations.

Projection

The fact that staffing and budget levels are likely to remain the same or even decrease presents a continuing challenge to Media Services in their efforts to keep pace with the growing demand. These constraints also limit the department's ability to adapt to new technologies.

Media Services' production staff will be offering new technologies (e.g., DVD/CD, web based, streaming video, etc.), and will assist faculty with implementing digital-based media into their courses, both traditional and non-traditional.

In January 2003, Media Services will convert to logging requests electronically.

STANDARD VIII

PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Description

The 34-acre Midtown campus, the University's original campus, currently has four classroom buildings, a student center, three residence halls, the Ruth A. Haas Library, an administrative building, Alumni Hall (with offices, a child care center, and meeting space), seven parking lots, and a parking garage. The University acquired the armory in downtown Danbury in 1990. The Westside campus is a 364-acre site, with a classroom building, two residence halls, the Charles Ives Center for the Arts (a 40-acre outdoor amphitheater), the William A. O'Neill Athletic and Convocation Center, an observatory, tennis courts and athletic fields, and the 33-acre Westside nature preserve. Shuttle buses run on a regular schedule between the Midtown and Westside Campuses, seven days a week. There is also shuttle service to a local motor inn where 202 students are living. WestConn offers bachelor degree completion programs in nursing and management in Waterbury on the campus of Naugatuck Valley Community College. WestConn at Waterbury also offers general education and elective classes as needed so that nursing and management students can fulfill their degree requirements; classes in response to community needs (e.g., graduate Education and English) are occasionally offered as well.

At WestConn, the master planning process works from the bottom up. First, a facility database is created; in the next stage, academic programming is reviewed (Does an existing program need new space? Is there a new program? What kinds of space does it require?) In the final stage, architects design the facility. Plans are put on reserve in the library, and meetings are set up with department chairs and appropriate faculty to discuss the plans.

Over the last ten years, the State of Connecticut has invested more than \$250 million in new facilities and improvements to every building on the Midtown and Westside sites, as well as WestConn's space in Waterbury. The enhancements have all been planned to benefit the growing population of students, faculty, and staff. While there has been a significant expansion of building space, there is also concern for aesthetics and green space: On the Midtown Campus, a quadrangle has been created where there was once a street and a parking lot, trees have been planted, and brick walkways that complement the traditional architecture of the buildings have been added. The area is well lighted, and benches and tables have been placed along the walkways. A project to replace all of the underground steam lines, domestic water lines, and storm water lines made it possible to construct the Quad and walkways throughout the Midtown Campus. Code Blue Student Safety phones have been installed on both the Midtown and Westside campuses, and the University has begun to implement a one-card campus access system. A new phone system was installed eight years ago, supporting voice and data communication on both campuses, and the Midtown Campus now has a new electrical distribution system (double-feed) so that electrical outages will be only momentary. All of the buildings on the Midtown Campus have been re-roofed.

New Construction (1992-2002):

- Pinney Hall (Westside Campus; completed in 1999), a \$22 million, 425 bed suite-style residence hall
- Warner Hall (Midtown Campus): 30,000 square foot facility constructed as a temporary “swing space,” while Haas Library was being renovated (please see below)
- A three-level, 900-car, handicapped-accessible parking garage on White Street (Midtown Campus)
- A covered skywalk across White Street (Midtown Campus) to facilitate accessibility and to provide a safe, weather-proof walkway from the parking lot to classroom and office buildings
- Observatory (Westside Campus): Construction is underway on a 5,000 square foot addition to the observatory. The \$500,000 new facility will house a planetarium, classrooms, faculty offices, and a data room.
- A new multi-sport stadium and concession stand are under construction on the Westside campus and will be ready in the Fall of 2003.

Renovations and Expansion:

Midtown Campus:

- Student Center: The existing Student Center was renovated and expanded (1998) to serve the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse student population. The Center, which doubled in size, houses an auditorium, a new bookstore, new snack bar, commuter lounges, meeting rooms, club offices, an interfaith office, and student life administrative offices.
- Ruth A. Haas Library (completed in 2000): The library was renovated and expanded, doubling the size of the facility. (For additional information, please see Standard Seven.)
- Old Main: Extensive renovations, to be completed in 2004, will convert the oldest building on campus into a modern, efficient one-stop center for student-focused administrative services (e.g., Student Affairs, Registrar, Admissions and Financial Aid, Minority Affairs, and Disability Services).
- Warner Hall (“swing space,” above): Warner Hall has been refitted with technology-equipped classrooms, seminar rooms, an archeology laboratory, and office space for academic clusters designed to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and cooperation. The offices of the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of Graduate and External Programs are also located in Warner Hall.
- University Hall: University Hall, purchased in 1999, was completely refitted in 2000 as an administrative office building with over 20,000 square feet of office space for University management. The building also has a video-conferencing room.
- White Hall: One of the most heavily used buildings on the Midtown Campus, White Hall has a recently renovated 600-seat auditorium. The building now has a number of technology-equipped classrooms, a comprehensive photography laboratory area with a state of the art heat recovery exhaust system, modernized elevators that make the building fully accessible, three Media Center studios, including one that is used as a public access TV studio, art studios, a ceramics lab, and renovated restrooms. Air conditioning was added in many areas.
- Higgins/Higgins Annex (Science Building): In Higgins Hall and Annex, a hazardous materials room and fume hoods have been added, there is a new chemistry laboratory, and the auditorium/lecture facility (Room 114) has been equipped with projection equipment and a smart lectern. Higgins Annex is air-conditioned.
- Berkshire Hall (classroom/faculty office building): A modern, electronically equipped studio space was created on the lower level as a Communications and Theatre Arts laboratory. An addition to the building, with an elevator for accessibility, provides faculty offices and a

gathering space for people to sit and talk or study. The seating in the auditorium was reupholstered, and new ceilings and lights have been added in the gymnasium.

- Alumni Hall: Formerly St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, Alumni Hall is a 6,000 sq. ft. building with meeting space, offices, and the WCSU Child Care Center, opened in September 1997, which offers an accredited and licensed program for children ages 3 through 5.
- Litchfield and Newbury Halls on the Midtown Campus, and Ella Grasso Hall on the Westside Campus, have been renovated over the past seven years, and all are now fully accessible. Student rooms, bathrooms, and lounge areas have all been refurbished.

Westside Campus:

- O'Neill Center: A Hall of Fame room in the O'Neill Center has been added to honor WestConn athletes.
- Westside Nature Preserve: The preserve has been expanded and improvements made, such as new signage and boardwalks, to provide better public access and to encourage wider community use.
- Westside Classroom Building: A bookstore has been added to the Westside Classroom Building. An addition to the building houses Westside University Computing offices. The President's Meeting Room and the Robert S. Young Library have been renovated, many of the classrooms are now equipped with technology, a videoconferencing room has been built, there is a new air conditioning system, and the building's roof was replaced.
- WestConn at Waterbury: Over \$600,000 of state funds have been spent to renovate existing space on the Naugatuck Valley Community College campus for use by WestConn and Central Connecticut State University. The site now has technology-equipped classrooms, a nursing laboratory, and administrative office space.
- Athletic Facilities: Ten years ago, there was one athletic field on the Westside Campus. Now there are three practice/soccer fields, a men's baseball stadium, a women's softball facility (all of which are lighted), six cushioned tennis courts, and a new athletic stadium.

Appraisal

The growth of Western Connecticut State University's physical resources over the past 10 years has been extraordinary.

Students, faculty, and staff on the Midtown Campus, in particular, temporarily experienced inconveniences and frustrations but then the rewards of an aggressive building and renovation program. The completion of the Haas Library project has meant that Warner Hall could be refitted with classrooms and faculty and administrative office space. A number of faculty members whose offices have been in the basement of White Hall moved to Warner Hall in January 2003.

There are significant costs associated with having two campuses, but the uses of each have become more focused, with the Westside Campus increasingly used for graduate and professional programs, and for athletics. Currently, there are only two Arts and Sciences departments on the Westside Campus: Mathematics and Computer Science (these departments will move to the Midtown Campus when space becomes available).

At present (Fall 2002), the Art Department's M.F.A. students are using temporary space in Warner Hall for their studios, a less than ideal situation that will be resolved with the opening of the Westside Center for the Fine and Performing Arts.

For the past two years, because of a shortage of residence hall rooms, approximately 200 students have been housed at a local motor inn. A full-time Student Affairs staff member has been on site. For the most part, the arrangement has worked well.

Currently, the only food service on the Westside Campus is a snack bar located in the classroom building. The suite-style rooms in Pinney Hall, however, are equipped with kitchens and a Westside student center is planned.

As the number of students with cars has increased, concerns about inadequate parking, particularly on the Midtown Campus, have been raised by a number of faculty, staff, and students.

Projection

Facilities planning consultants were brought to campus in late Fall 2002, and the revision of the facilities master plan has begun. The process typically takes one year. Faculty, staff, and students will be involved in the academic programming portion.

Ground was broken for a new 122,000 square foot science building (50% larger than existing science facility, Higgins Hall) in Fall 2002. The building, which will cost approximately \$49 million, is being constructed on the site of the Midtown Campus football field (the new field is being built on the Westside Campus) and should be completed in Summer 2004. The new facility will be a significant improvement over the current space in terms of classrooms, laboratories (teaching and research labs), equipment, and faculty offices. Planning for the building and for equipment has also served as an occasion for faculty to begin to create a new vision for the sciences at WestConn.

The University has retained an architect to design its new Westside campus center. This will be a 50,000 square foot, \$13 million building, used for food services, student meetings, clubs, etc.

The University will hire an architect in Spring 2003 to plan a new fine and performing arts building on the Westside Campus. This building will consolidate WestConn's music, art, and theater undergraduate and graduate programs.

The City of Danbury will build a magnet school on property that until recently was part of the Westside campus.

A number of construction and renovation projects, scheduled to begin within the next few years, will serve to alleviate many of the space problems the University has experienced recently as the student population grew, programs were introduced and expanded, and the numbers of faculty and staff increased. White Hall is scheduled for \$11 million in renovations, beginning in 2005. Renovations are planned for Higgins Hall and Berkshire Hall. The University will begin a \$19 million renovation of the Westside classroom building in 2006 or 2007, and an architect will be hired to develop plans for an \$8M addition to the O'Neill Center. In 2002, WestConn at Waterbury received a \$250,000 appropriation from the state for renovations and new technology. In late 2003, construction will begin on a 350-bed residence hall on the Westside Campus. In late 2003 or early 2004, a 600-car five-tier parking garage will be constructed on the Midtown Campus; additional parking will be provided on the Westside Campus, as well.

Although the State of Connecticut is currently experiencing financial stress, WestConn expects to continue to have the support of the legislature and the governor to build and maintain facilities that promote the Mission, Principles, and Values of the University.

STANDARD IX

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Description

The State of Connecticut, like most of the nation, is currently experiencing an economic recession. The University had to cut 5% from a very lean budget in 2002-2003 after the legislature reduced the General Fund Appropriation. All state agencies experienced budget cutbacks. The legislature appropriates the General Fund to the Connecticut State University system (CSU), which in turn allocates funds to each campus and to the System Office. There are signs of a slow economic recovery, but interest rates are still low. Clearly, the current environment poses a major financial challenge to the University.

WestConn has gradually evolved from a “state-supported” to a “state-assisted” institution; it currently (2002-2003) receives only 51.1% of its operating funds from state appropriations. The University’s operating budget for 2002-2003 is over \$61 million.

In the early 1990s, the University struggled financially because General Fund appropriations remained static. Operating losses were managed through a combination of tuition and fee increases, level funding, and careful use of reserves. During the mid-1990s, the situation worsened as the General Fund formula was changed to a distribution based on each institution’s percentage of the total System full-time enrollment. The result for WestConn was a 10% reduction in its overall budget. Since the decrease was too large to be absorbed in one year, the reduction was spread over ten years. In addition, the System Office allotted funds from reserves to offset the adverse effects of the new formula for WestConn. From 1995 through 1998, budgets were very carefully scrutinized, equipment and operating expenses were cut, positions were held open, and some reserve dollars were used to manage deficit spending from year to year. This careful fiscal management made it possible for the University to operate despite the very restricted environment. Flexibility Legislation implemented in 1999 (PA 99-285), gave management greater control over purchases of equipment, supplies, and contractual services, but nonetheless, the University has had to refocus programmatically and fiscally in order to accomplish its Mission and to remain competitive in the marketplace.

Despite the reduction in funding, the University ended fiscal years 1999-2001 with an operating surplus. This was possible in part because there was an increase in enrollments beginning in 1999 and an improvement in freshman to sophomore retention rates (from 65% to 71% for the 1999 and 2000 entering cohorts). Prudent budgeting and the use of position control have made it possible to generate savings by holding non-mission-critical positions temporarily vacant. State budget cuts in FY2002 have resulted in a deficit of approximately 1% of the operating budget. Planned increases in tuition and fees are expected to offset the deficit.

Another major factor contributing to the University’s growth and financial stability is an increase in bond and interagency funding. Bond funds make it possible for the University to purchase equipment and implement campus-administered minor capital projects. The interagency funds make it possible for the institution to undertake additional capital projects that are administered by the Department of Public Works. For example, the University broke ground for a \$49 million science building on the Midtown campus in Fall 2002.

Institutional Advancement: In 1999, the position of Vice President for Development and Public Affairs, vacant for two years, was reorganized. The title was changed to Vice President for Institutional Advancement and fundraising became a priority. The position was filled later that year, and staffing has since been added in three areas: development, public relations, and alumni affairs. The University hired a full-time Director of Alumni Relations in 2002. Consultants were hired to work with the University staff on the Centennial Capital Campaign, which has a goal of raising \$4,000,000.

Foundation: The Western Connecticut State University Foundation, Inc., was established in 1971 to receive and administer funds donated by corporations and individuals to promote the educational mission of the University. Board members cultivate prospective donors, fund scholarships, advise on asset investments, participate in campus activities, represent the University at ceremonial occasions, serve on Executive, Budget/Investment, Development, other sub-committees of the Foundation, and provide financial support for educational, cultural and research functions of the University. The Foundation operates as an independent, non-profit organization, with its own bylaws and board of directors. Annual audits are conducted.

Planning and Budgeting: The Strategic Plan and the Academic Plan provide the structure for planning and budgeting and serve as the standards for determining priorities in accordance with the University's educational mission. The four vice presidents evaluate all budget requests from the constituent units, using the Strategic and Academic Plans as guides. The Vice President for Finance and Administration consolidates the budget requests and presents a spending plan to the University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC) for review and comment. The proposed budget is forwarded to the President, who reviews the document and the UPBC's recommendations; appropriate changes are made, if necessary, and the proposed spending plan is forwarded to the CSU Board of Trustees (BOT) each April. The Board grants final approval only after holding formal spending plan hearings to review the budget.

Policies: The University adheres to State policies concerning investments, insurance, contracts, grants, transfers, inter-fund borrowing, fundraising, and other forms of institutional advancement-related activities that have been developed for the CSU system and/or are mandated by State statute. The University, as a state institution, is mainly self-insured. However, it does carry fire insurance on all buildings.

Debt-Service Management: Construction, renovation and acquisition projects involving facilities funded by student fees are financed through the sale of self-liquidating bonds that are authorized by the General Assembly. These facilities include residence halls, student centers, food service areas and parking structures. The CSU System Office tracks the amount of debt on these bonds and projects the principal and interest payments for future bond fund requirements. This centralized process identifies the revenue amounts necessary to finance the debt service. CSU then develops an appropriate fee level, which is charged to all full-time students at the four campuses. All the fees are deposited into a central account that was established by the BOT and used to pay off the debt. When setting fees, the System Office takes into consideration the size of System-wide enrollments, whether or not the projects can be bonded, bond sales scheduled by the State Treasurer, and bond interest rates. The centralized system makes it possible for the fees to be used to pay off the bond debt regardless of project location.

Budgeting and Accounting Information: Statement 35, *Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for Public Colleges and Universities – an amendment of GASB Statement 34*, was published in November 1999 by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Statement 35 requires the University retroactively and retrospectively to report all

capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, including infrastructure in the statement of net assets, and also to report depreciation expense in the statement of revenues, expenses and changes in net assets. Retroactive reporting of capital assets will require a prior period adjustment to net assets.

Budgetary Controls and Fiscal Autonomy: WestConn operates under the applicable provisions of the Connecticut State Statutes that mandate responsibility and accountability to the Board of Trustees of the CSU System. The State of Connecticut Auditors of Public Accounts conduct an annual audit, examining the University's financial and other operating records to ensure that fiscal policies are in compliance with accepted ethical and sound business practices. An independent auditing firm conducts the University's yearly financial audit and renders an opinion concerning the financial statements.

Collective Bargaining: Listed below are the six bargaining units and their contract periods:

- CSU American Association of University Professors (AAUP): August 23, 2002 through August 24, 2006
- State University Organization of Administrative Faculty (SUOAF): July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2005
- Administrative and Residual: July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2003
- Protective Services: July 1, 1999 through June 20, 2003
- Maintenance & Service Unit: July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2002 (currently in arbitration with the State of Connecticut)
- Administrative Clerical Bargaining Unit: July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2002 (currently in negotiations with the State of Connecticut).

Appraisal

Despite the challenge of decreased State support, the University has been able to accomplish its academic mission, expand its programs, and meet its financial obligations through efficient fiscal management involving targeted reduced spending, position control, and selected use of reserve funds. For example, as enrollments increased significantly, full-time tenure-track faculty positions were added, primarily in the School of Arts and Sciences to accommodate students in required general education courses.

The pressure of deadlines sometimes means that the University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC) sees the spending plan only after it has been submitted to the System Office.

For FY 2002-2003, because of fiscal constraints, approximately half of the currently open positions have been filled. In addition, the University has reduced the reserve transfer for planned capital purchases and reduced operating expenses by 5%. The goal is to minimize the amount of reserves necessary in FY 2003 so that the funds are available in the immediate future to keep the University financially stable until the economy recovers.

There are financial and logistical challenges -- equipment and transportation, for example -- associated with having two campuses. In Fall 2001, the transportation expenses increased significantly (from \$120,000 to \$325,000) with the addition of a third location to be served by shuttle buses after the University entered into a contract with a local motor inn to provide rooms for students who could not be accommodated in the existing residence hall space. Required police and maintenance department travel between the two campuses adds to the fuel costs. Redundant

maintenance equipment purchases for tools and mowers are necessary because it is not feasible to transport the machines back and forth between the campuses.

To augment the University's resources, the Western Connecticut State University Foundation, Inc., has increased its fund balance significantly since the last self-study: from \$1.9 million in 1994 to \$5.1 million in 2002. The increase came about as the result of a somewhat more aggressive investment strategy and fundraising, enhanced by a policy initiated by the State in 1998 of a 50% match for endowment gifts. Endowed chairs at identified Centers for Excellence are matched dollar for dollar. The System Office has set WestConn's endowment goal at \$20 million by 2010. The University's first Capital Campaign has already yielded \$3.5 million in gifts toward the campaign's \$4 million goal. Significantly, the University has received its first two million dollar gifts (1999 and 2002). An endowed visiting professorship/chair, the first privately funded professorship at WestConn, has been established with a \$500,000 donation to be matched 1:1 by the state.

Participation in Alumni giving, which in the past rarely exceeded 1% of graduates annually, has now reached 10%. Alumni activities, both on campus and in other areas of the country (e.g., Florida), have increased significantly under the new full-time director. Alumni who are now visiting the campus for the first time in many years are impressed with quality of programs, as well as with changes in the physical plant, and a tradition of giving is being established. Telemarketing was instituted in 1999, with approximately \$60,000 raised from 1,500 alumni and other contributors, many of whom are first-time givers.

After several years with temporary staffing in the Office of Research and Grants, a full-time Director of Grant Programs (as the office is now called) was hired in March 2001. In academic year 2001-2002, faculty and staff members received approximately \$388,000 in grants, fellowships, and gifts-in-kind from a variety of funding sources, private and public, not including \$90,000 in faculty research support from the State mandated by the collective bargaining agreement.

The implementation of a fully-integrated enterprise software system was begun in late fall of 1998. Banner Finance replaced the old FRS accounting system with a new version of a client server, shared data accounting system. The finance module was successfully implemented during FY 2000 and has provided management with more flexible access to data and tools for data analysis. The development module has been implemented as well but with somewhat less success, in part because of insufficient staffing.

Projection

Clearly, the state's financial situation presents a serious challenge, but the University has successfully weathered such crises in the past and there is every reason to expect it to do so this time, as well. For the time being, WestConn will have to continue to formulate its budgets very conservatively, reduce operating costs, monitor position control, increase enrollments, and selectively use reserve dollars to meet expenses.

The expenses associated with having two campuses will continue, although once the new residence hall opens on the Westside campus, the University will no longer have to pay for busing students from the motor inn to campus.

The Office of Institutional Advancement and the Office of Grant Programs have embarked on ambitious programs of aggressively seeking external funding, particularly for initiatives that directly support students: scholarships, faculty-student research, state-of-the-art technology and equipment,

and new programming initiatives. The advancement and grants offices can be expected to become important supplementary sources of revenue for institutional enhancements.

Enrollments are expected to increase over the next decade, without any changes in admission standards, as the number of eighteen-year-olds in Connecticut continues to rise (with the peak expected in 2008). The number of non-traditional students is also likely to increase. The enhancement of current graduate programs and the addition of new programs, including the doctoral program in Instructional Leadership, which has been approved through the State level, will also lead to increased enrollments.

Currently, WestConn's reserve balances are at an acceptable level. It is likely that the revenue base will increase, but in the meantime, the University monitors the reserve levels carefully, and approves use of these funds very selectively. The Connecticut State University System Board of Trustees passed a resolution (BR #01-02), establishing fund balance guidelines for the CSU universities. This resolution calls for each university's unrestricted fund balance to range between five and ten percent of its total budgeted educational and general expenditures and auxiliary services expenditures for the current fiscal year. Maintaining fund balances within this range will help to provide each university with financial stability in the event of unfavorable economic conditions. WestConn's FY 2002 current fund balance, excluding compensated absence accruals, was \$6,537,804. This number represents roughly an eight percent reserve balance on total qualified expenditures of \$72,259,965.

As staff in the various departments become more familiar with the Banner system, complex budgetary and data analyses will become easier, facilitating the development and implementation of improvements that result in cost savings and revenue enhancement.

STANDARD X

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Description

As an institution within the Connecticut State University system, WestConn has an obligation to present itself accurately to its various constituencies and to the general public. Moreover, it is in the University's best interests and in accord with its Mission, Principles, and Values to make information available about students, faculty, staff, programs, events, and opportunities on our campuses. This was particularly the case during the University's celebration of its Centennial (2002-2003).

The University's core values -- quality, intellectual integrity, and respect -- are strongly adhered to in the preparation and dissemination of information about the institution, whether by verbal communication, in print, on the web site, or other media.

WestConn conforms to all applicable federal and state laws, protecting the privacy of individuals, but also fully disclosing information that the public and appropriate University officials have a right to know. The University conscientiously complies with the 1974 federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, together with the "Buckley Amendment"). Student records, with the exception of dates of attendance and degrees earned, are not disclosed to a third party unless the student authorizes the disclosure. Appropriate faculty and staff are given access to student records.

All non-exempted documents (medical and personnel files are exempt, as is any other information that might constitute an invasion of privacy) are subject to disclosure to the general public and the news media under the provisions of Connecticut's Freedom of Information Act. The University assures that all information it provides is truthful and accurate.

The University will publicize the CIHE's review at least one month before the October visit, and will provide an opportunity for third-party comment on the self-study.

Information on all undergraduate and graduate programs is provided in the *Undergraduate Catalog* and the *Graduate Catalog*, respectively. The catalogs include comprehensive descriptions of the University's Mission, Principles, and Values, expected educational outcomes, admission policies and procedures, financial aid information, degree requirements, faculty, and course offerings, as well as a listing of the obligation and responsibilities of both the institution and its students. The Office of Academic Affairs supervises the revision of the catalogs to ensure accuracy and completeness. Every new student receives a print copy of the appropriate catalog, but the documents are also conveniently and readily accessible online through the University's website. To ensure consistency between the website and the printed catalog, updates to the website catalog are made when a new catalog is printed. Corrections may be made in the website version before a new printed version is available.

Other key publications include: the *Student Handbook*, the *Faculty Handbook*, the "Policies and Programs Manual," the schedule of classes, financial aid publications, the Admissions Office viewbook, the President's *Annual Report, Communiqué*, "WestConn Report," and *The Pillars*. All of the publications are reviewed regularly to ensure that the content accurately reflects and is consistent with the University's Mission, Principles and Values.

The schedule of classes is published three times a year (Fall, Spring, and Summer) in both print and online versions. The schedule lists all courses offered during the current or upcoming semester or session, as well as fees and charges. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for assuring that courses listed in the catalog are in fact offered.

Information on educational services and co-curricular and non-academic programs is provided in published brochures and websites, as well as in the catalogs. Many academic and administrative departments have their own websites, linked to the official University website. Each lists the e-mail address of the person responsible for the site. Appropriate telephone numbers and the Universal Resource Locator (URL) for WestConn's web site appear on advertisements for the institution and its programs. The main telephone number for the University connects callers to an automated message system that directs them to specific offices and provides an option for them to speak to a campus operator. The Information Desk in the Student Center is staffed Sunday through Saturday (Monday-Thursday, 8: a.m.-11:00 p.m.; Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; Sunday, 1:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.).

A copy of the University's most recent audited financial statement may be obtained from the Interim Director of Fiscal Affairs/Controller.

Departmental assessment plans are on file in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. The plans include measures of student attainment of departmental learning objectives, as well as timetables for collection of data. Each October, the University submits an accountability report to the state legislature through the Department of Higher Education. Faculty achievements are listed in the University's annual report, the annual reports of the School deans, and the program booklet for the Faculty Recognition Ceremony held in the Spring. Information about program excellence and learning outcomes for programs with external accreditation can be found in accreditation reports available in the Office of Academic Affairs. The Alumni Office maintains a database of information on graduates.

The University's Public Safety Office regularly publishes a public safety report, providing information on campus crime statistics and reports of the department's efforts to create a safer environment. Programs and services available to the campus community are also listed.

Appraisal

Overall, the University makes a concerted effort to meet NEASC standards for public disclosure. Efforts are made to ensure consistency and accuracy in both print and online information.

A new print phone directory was published for 2002-2003. There is no online University faculty and staff directory on the University's web site. This information is available on the Connecticut State University System website, but there is no link from WestConn's home page. Faculty who are on Lotus Notes are listed in the software's electronic directory; there is no listing of e-mail addresses for faculty those who are not, however. It would be helpful to students especially if instructors, including adjunct faculty, were listed in the online schedule of courses.

Some years ago, names of alumni who did not continue their membership in the association were dropped from the alumni list, but a major effort is underway to build a more comprehensive record. Individual departments also make an effort to track alumni and to highlight their accomplishments. The Art Department, for example, in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Advancement, has a

new web site called “Art after Western,” devoted to alumni. The Communications and Theater Arts, Biology, and Chemistry departments, among others, also highlight alumni achievements.

Faculty submit information for the Faculty Recognition Ceremony booklet on a voluntary basis. As a consequence, the booklet’s listing of faculty accomplishments may be incomplete.

The University catalogs state the institution’s Mission, Principles, and Values, and these documents, as well as other publications, state obligations for student behavior, standards relevant to academic responsibilities, admissions, purpose, and non-discrimination policies. The catalogs represent the University’s role and Mission accurately. The Mission, Principles, and Values should be included in publications such as the *Student Handbook for 2002-2003*, the “Policies and Programs Manual,” and information materials prepared for new students.

Regular review of printed information about the University ensures accurate and current information. WestConn’s website pages indicate a date and time when they were last updated, and there is a direct link to the web master. Specific changes of information on the web site can be authorized only by University Computing’s web master. Departmental web sites should be updated frequently to ensure that they are current.

Projection

The University’s website is rapidly becoming the primary source for current information about WestConn. The University’s web team has 10 members: the Chief Information Officer, the Director and the Assistant Director of Public Relations, the Director and Assistant Director of Publications and Design, the Enrollment Management Officer, an assistant librarian, a graphic designer/photographer, the client-server programmer from University Computing, and the Director of Media Services. This team will continue to ensure that the site maintains high standards of integrity, public disclosure, reliability, timeliness, accessibility, cost, and good design. Strategies for featuring and updating information will be added. The Banner ERP system provides a database that will facilitate the posting of complete and accurate information.

The availability of student web expertise through the Western Technology Association should help some departments to bring their websites up to date, but clearly the University will need to develop a plan for regularly reviewing and updating departmental sites for accuracy and timeliness.

All University information pertaining to the Mission, Principles, and Values, admissions policies and procedures, student fees, student behavior, and other academic and co-curricular requirements and policies will continue to be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

A searchable directory that includes e-mail addresses for all faculty and staff would be very helpful.

The University will continue to provide accurate information regarding its current accreditation status in its catalogs, recruiting materials, and its web site. Procedures for reporting and correcting information in both printed and online materials will be made clear and more easily accessible. All University offices should have procedures for quick review and updates of information. As University Computing conducts its review of the website functions and develops the website management plan, these recommendations will be taken into consideration. Suggestions for improving the user-friendliness of the website will be solicited and incorporated wherever feasible.

STANDARD XI

INTEGRITY

Description

Western Connecticut State University strives to adhere to the highest ethical standards in the conduct of its affairs. Among the documents establishing those standards are the statutes governing public higher education in the State of Connecticut (Connecticut General Statutes 10a-1 and 10a-87), 1-83 (the “Ethics Statutes), 10a-6 (the Freedom of Information Act), and the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which protects students’ privacy.

The University’s Mission includes a statement of Principles and Values. The first principle speaks directly to integrity, pledging to empower students “to attain the highest standards of academic achievement, public and professional services, personal development, and ethical conduct.” As an institution, WestConn is committed to: “Quality in all that we do,” “integrity in the process of teaching and learning,” and “respect for the dignity and rights of each member of our University community.” The third principle addresses academic freedom: “Promoting a rich and diverse cultural environment that allows freedom of expression within a spirit of civility and mutual respect.” The Mission, Principles, and Values are published in a number of publications, including the catalogs and the faculty handbook.

Policies and procedures are described in widely disseminated documents, including the *Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*, *Personnel Policies for Management and Confidential Professional Personnel*, *The Western Connecticut State University Policies and Programs Manual*, the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, and the student handbook. Instructions on how to file complaints and/or grievances are available in print (the faculty and student handbooks, e.g.) and also online. A pamphlet, “Sex Offenses: What To Do If It Happens To You,” prepared by the Division of Student Affairs and the University Police Department, was widely distributed in Fall 2002.

Accreditation reviews and studies are opportunities for collaborative assessment and evaluation of department, program, and institutional integrity and adherence to established standards. In addition to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the University is accredited by the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education. Departmental accreditations include the American Chemical Society (ACS), the National League for Nursing (NLN), the Council on Social Work Education (baccalaureate level), and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The music program is awaiting final word on accreditation by National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Accreditation is being sought by the Ansell School of Business from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The Justice and Law Administration Division is seeking approval for its paralegal program from the American Bar Association (ABA).

The University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity educator and employer, fully committed to the goal of providing equal opportunity and full participation in its educational programs, activities, and employment without discrimination because of race, color, religious beliefs or association, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or physical disability. The Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services is involved throughout the search process for faculty and administrative positions (this process is clearly described in the President’s

Affirmative Action Policy Statement, January 29, 2002). The policy statement affirms the “policy of the leadership of Western Connecticut State University to advance social justice and equity by exercising affirmative action to remove all discriminatory barriers to equal employment opportunity and upward mobility.”

The Affirmative Action Plan incorporates and lists federal and state constitutional provisions, laws, regulations, guidelines, and executive orders that prohibit or outlaw discrimination. Protections extend to the areas of race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disability, genetic information, mental retardation, physical disability including, but not limited to, blindness, learning disability, veteran status, and prior conviction of a crime (except for bona fide occupational qualifications).

Persons who wish to file a discrimination complaint are advised to contact the Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services. The University ombudsman is also available to assist. The University submits an annual Affirmative Action plan directed toward developing and maintaining a diversified workforce with the Connecticut Human Rights Office. Funds to support the recruitment and retention of protected groups are set aside under the faculty and administrative staff collective bargaining agreements (CSU-AAUP and CSU-SUOAF).

In keeping with efforts to establish an environment in which the dignity and worth of all members of the institutional community are respected, sexual harassment of students and employees at the University is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. Persons who feel they have been sexually harassed may contact the Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services. Confidential counseling is also available. Administrators at the vice presidential, dean, and director levels have all participated in training on sexual harassment and diversity issues.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Connecticut State University, the American Association of University Professors and the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System sets forth a series of principles of academic freedom and procedures for filing and deliberating complaints. An Academic Freedom Committee has the power to “adjudicate substantive issues and to direct a remedy.... The Committee’s decision shall be final and binding on all parties.” A pamphlet (“Important University Policies Students Should Know About”) in the section on Guidelines for Public Forums and Demonstrations contains a preamble that speaks to freedom of expression: “Western Connecticut State University is committed to providing an educational community that disseminates knowledge by means of teaching, research, and service. To fulfill these functions, a free exchange of ideas is encouraged both within its walls and between the University and the outside world. Western is committed to doing everything possible to insure the greatest degree of intellectual freedom. These rights apply to all members of the Western community. Few institutions in our society have this same vital purpose; accordingly, few assign such high priority to the freedom of expression.”

The collective bargaining agreements for faculty, professional administrative personnel, and support staffs also include standards of conduct as well as procedures the University must follow in addressing alleged violations.

WestConn has adopted a Policy on Scientific Misconduct in Research in accordance with regulations outlined by the National Science Foundation (45 CFR 689) and Public Health Service regulations (42 CFR Part 50, Subpart A). The University also has a policy on conflict of interest pertaining to sponsored projects in accordance with regulations outlined by the National Science Foundation and the Public Health Service (42 CFR, Part 50). An Institutional Review Board reviews protocols for research with human subjects for compliance with federal and state regulations. The Institutional

Animal Care and Use Committee performs a similar function for the vertebrates used in laboratories and research. (Please see *Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*.)

Guidelines on academic integrity and definitions of plagiarism and cheating may be found in the *Undergraduate Catalog* and the *Student Handbook 2002-2003*.

The University has a “Policy Statement on Photocopying of Materials for Classroom and Research Use” (*Faculty Handbook*, 128-135). The statement is intended to apprise faculty members of the legal limitations on duplicating copyrighted materials for research and classroom use, and clearly indicates that compliance is expected.

WestConn also has campus-wide policies and guidelines in place for computer use (*Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*, 240-241, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, 17-20, *Student Handbook 2002-2003*, 44). Policies on software ownership were adopted in 1985 and revised in 1987 by the Board of Governors for Higher Education. These policies, general guidelines, and penalties for misuse are published. The CSU System has also issued a policy statement on student use of university computer systems and networks (*Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*; *Student Rights and Responsibilities*). The statement spells out rules of computer conduct that require students to use “University computer resources in an efficient, ethical, and lawful manner.” The University reserves the right to define what constitutes unauthorized student uses. Procedures for dealing with offenses are clearly spelled out.

The student handbook for 2002-2003 contains University policies and regulations on alcoholic beverages, the grade appeal process, parental notification (drug and alcohol violations), public forums, demonstrations, marches, and protests, and student confidentiality, as well as nondiscrimination, affirmative action, multiculturalism, and sexual harassment. The Connecticut State University System has published guidelines that state student rights and responsibilities, create fair and appropriate judicial procedures for the protection of these rights, and provide for the implementation of the stated responsibilities.

Appraisal

While no single entity is charged with evaluating the effectiveness of the University’s ethical policies and procedures, the University Senate reviews academic policies. Various committees (including standing committees of the University Senate), offices, and organizations review areas that relate directly to them, and the Board of Trustees ultimately holds the president accountable for implementation of Board policies in an annual evaluation of his performance.

University policies and procedures are consistent with NEASC standards and in general appear to be working effectively at every level.

Although information on academic integrity, including definitions of plagiarism and cheating, may be found in the 2002-2003 *Undergraduate Catalog* and the *Student Handbook*, this information is not included in the *Graduate Catalog 2002-2003* or in the booklet “Important University Policies Students Should Know About,” distributed for academic year 2002-2003. Access to the Internet has vastly increased opportunities for plagiarism (see also Standard VII); the process of investigating suspected cases of plagiarism has become much more difficult and time-consuming.

The processes in place for resolving grievances are working effectively. Since 1993, relatively few grievances have been filed by AAUP faculty. As of Fall 2002, only two grievances filed by full-time faculty (none by part-time faculty) were still pending. Of the grievances filed by members of other

bargaining units during this period, all have been resolved but one, and a single arbitration is currently under way.

Since 1993, several complaints were filed with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities/Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (CHRO/EEOC). Five cases were dismissed, one has been stayed because a federal lawsuit has been filed, and one is pending. The CHRO issued a Release of Jurisdiction letter in one case after a suit was filed in US District Court.

Two recent cases (October 2000) involving student protests and subsequent arrests were discussed at length in the University Senate and an *ad hoc* committee was established to study the cases. In March 2002, the Senate passed the following four resolutions:

- To urge the Administration to approve and put into force the “Guidelines for Public Forums and Demonstrations” drafted by the *ad hoc* committee, and to urge the Vice President for Public Safety to monitor and provide WestConn police officers with training in conflict resolution, similar to the training given to their counterparts in the larger community
- To urge the President to encourage robust debate in the University community, and to ensure that all members of the Administration, especially those likely to be involved in policing protests and demonstrations be trained in constitutional issues surrounding freedom of speech
- To urge the Administration to ensure that the police officers’ code of conduct/ethics exclude activities that might be construed as “conflict of interest”
- To request the University President to designate one person in the University who will receive and record complaints from all members of the University community about protests and demonstrations and initiate appropriate referral. That person’s contact address and phone number must be made available to everyone in the University community

Although information on fair use in copying copyrighted materials is not included in either the current student handbook for 2002-2003 or in the CSU System’s pamphlet on student rights and responsibilities, librarians include information on copyright in bibliographical instruction sessions; librarians have also posted the policy near each copy machine.

There was a period of several years between the retirement of the previous Director of Research and Grants and the hiring of a Director of Grant Programs when there was no one person serving as liaison to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees. The present Director of Grant Programs has worked with the chair of the IRB (formerly the Human Subjects Review Committee) to familiarize members of the committee with new federal regulations on research with human subjects and to arrange professional development for both the members of the committee and the faculty in general to assure that the University is in full compliance. The IACUC is being reconstituted, and the members of this committee are also involved in professional development activities that will keep the members current on federal and state regulations related to animal care and use.

The annual affirmative action plan, prepared by the Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services, serves as a vehicle to assess the effectiveness of the University’s non-discrimination and equal opportunity principles. The University’s *Fifth Year Report* described significant progress in systematically addressing diversity, including the hiring of a full-time affirmative action and diversity officer, additional staffing in the affirmative action office, prejudice reduction workshops on campus, a diversity forum, and a series entitled *Dialogues on Race*.

WestConn also reported that it was able to retain minority faculty (with only one resignation), and an improvement in minority representation at the management and administrative level from 10% in 1993 (when there were no black females in the group) to 13% in 1998 (with a black male associate

vice president, a black female dean of student affairs, and a black female director of affirmative action and multicultural affairs). As of Fall 2002, there are two black male deans, a black male associate vice president, and a black female Director of Public Relations. There is now a white female serving as associate vice president for academic affairs (a new position) and four white female deans. The University has continued to make progress on these issues. Affirmative action and disability services are now the responsibilities of the Executive Assistant to the President for Multicultural Affairs and Disability Services, who reports directly to the President; the Coordinator for Minority Affairs now reports to the Executive Assistant.

Basic standards of integrity and civility apply regardless of the time and place. New technologies (e-mail, the Internet, voicemail) have greatly enhanced communication (synchronous and asynchronous) among the University's various constituencies, but they have also vastly increased the potential for abuse. The University has procedures in place to reduce the likelihood of misuse. For example, messages that are broadcast to all faculty or to the entire campus go through the President's Office or the office of a vice president, a safety feature that works well. Only the web master can post pages to the University website, another gate-keeping procedure that appears to work effectively. Access to the Internet, however, increases opportunities for plagiarism exponentially; detecting and proving literary theft is both very difficult and time-consuming. Privacy issues and security are also of great concern. The University has been very diligent about protecting these rights while respecting the openness that must characterize a university environment. (See Standard VII for additional information on University network security.)

Projection

The University will continue its commitment to integrity, honesty, and accuracy in the management of its affairs and in its dealings with all members of the University community and its external constituencies.

Although the University conscientiously distributes information about policies and procedures, it will endeavor to disseminate these documents even more widely by posting all of them online to ensure that everyone has easy access to information about rights and responsibilities, as well as procedures for filing grievances and reporting violations.

The University will ensure that information on academic integrity appears in all appropriate publications (in print and online) and that this information is widely distributed.

The Institutional Review Board and the Institutional Animal Care & Use Committees will continue to collaborate with other appropriate groups (the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, e.g.) to educate faculty and staff about federal and state regulations with regard to research with human subjects and the care and use of vertebrates.

Modern technologies present special advantages for rapid, asynchronous communication, but they also carry risks. The University will continue its efforts to ensure that privacy and security are protected.