

# **Periodic Review Report**

## **Bard College**

**Leon Botstein, President**

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**Michèle Dominy, Vice President and Dean of the College, Institutional Liaison to MSCHE**

**Ethan Bloch, Professor of Mathematics, Periodic Review Report Author**

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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Visiting Team Middle States Commission on Higher Education Visiting Team at Bard, March 5-8, 2007

AUCA	American University of Central Asia
BARC	Bard Academic Resources Center
BCEP	Bard Center for Environmental Policy
BCCCH	Bard College Clemente Course in the Humanities
BCCM	Bard College Conservatory of Music
BECNO	Bard Early College in New Orleans
BEOP	Bard Educational Opportunity Programs
BGC	Bard Graduate Center
BHSEC I	Bard High School Early College —Manhattan
BHSEC II	Bard High School Early College —Queens
BHSEC III	Bard High School Early College —Newark
BLC	Bard Learning Commons
BOP	Bard Opportunity Programs
CDO	Career Development Office
CIES	Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies
CAFE	Course and Faculty Evaluation
CEC	College Evaluation Committee
CFCD	Center for Faculty and Curriculum Development
CFCE	Center for Civic Engagement
CCS	Center for Curatorial Studies
CS	Citizen Science
CSOB	Community Standards of Behavior
CSP	Continuing Studies Program
DOSA	Dean of Student Affairs Office
DSO	Dean of Studies Office
DOC	Dean of the College
DMP	Difference and Media Project
EUS	Environmental and Urban Studies
ECLA	European College of the Liberal Arts
FEDRC	Faculty Evaluation Document Review Committee
FERC	Faculty Evaluation Review Committee
FAO	Financial Aid Office
FYS	First-Year Seminar
HACPH	Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities
HEOP	Higher Education Opportunity Program
HR	Human Resources
IRC	Information Resources Council
IL	Informational Literacy
ICP	International Center of Photography —Bard Program in Advanced Photographic Studies
L&T	Language and Thinking Program
MA-BHE	Massachusetts Board of Higher Education
MAT	Master of Arts in Teaching Program
MFA	Master of Fine Arts Program
MSCHE	Middle States Commission on Higher Education
NPS	Newark Public Schools
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges
NYC DOE	New York City Department of Education
NYSED	New York State Education Department

PBA	Paramount Bard Academy
PRB	Peer Review Board
PAC	Planning and Appointments Committee
RKC	Gabrielle H. Reem and Herbert J. Kayden Center for Science and Computation
RCP	Returning to College Program
SPbU	St. Petersburg State University
SOTC	Student Opinion of Teaching and Course
STARS	Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System
SJB	Student Judiciary Board
TLS	Trustee Leader Scholar Program
VAWG	Visiting Appointments Working Group

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## Section 1

### Executive Summary

#### A. Introductory Overview

Bard College is a liberal arts college of national repute that recently celebrated its 150th anniversary. Bard's mission has five major areas of activity: (1) to continually redefine undergraduate education in the liberal arts and sciences; (2) to promote graduate education in competitive, interdisciplinary fields of study that are underrepresented in higher education and that complement and enhance its undergraduate college; (3) to reform education, primarily in the public sphere, with an emphasis on the education of the adolescent and the articulation between secondary education and higher education; (4) to advocate for the arts, primarily those dependent on patronage and not on commerce and the marketplace, and to integrate the arts into the university; and (5) to expand the traditions and practices of liberal arts education abroad, especially in those parts of the world where education in a democratic setting has been denied.<sup>1</sup>

This mission has evolved out of the college's history in the twentieth century. It is based on the assumption that the nineteenth-century model of a purely undergraduate college, without linkages forged by graduate programs and institutional and curricular programs between the traditions of teaching and scholarship and the conduct of life, is no longer viable or appropriate. Some of the material in this review, such as discussion of curriculum, advising and faculty evaluation, can be viewed therefore as similar to other liberal arts colleges. Other items, including discussions of Bard's new programs, campuses, and affiliations in the United States and abroad, reflect an institution that is neither structured nor funded in the manner of a traditional liberal arts college. We ask that this be kept in mind when reading this report.

Bard has emerged as a visible pioneer in renewing the purpose of an independent undergraduate college. Its success can be measured by the rate of application to its undergraduate and graduate programs [Appendices 2.C.1-1 and 4-2], by the demand for its programs and its wider mission, and by its increasing access to the world of philanthropy. The scope and the reach of the college's current mission remain the single most powerful reasons behind Bard's ability to raise money. Without the goals numbered above (2) to (5), which are beyond the primary purpose of Bard—to be a leader in undergraduate liberal arts education at the highest level of excellence—the primary goal would not have been realized.

The primary shortcoming we face is the contrast between resources and the apparent scope of the agenda. However, as the mission has evolved over the past several decades, the many sides of Bard have crystalized into a coherent framework. What at first seemed opportunistic and random investments, and took the form of satellite programs surrounding the undergraduate college, have emerged as a coordinated strategy in education and the arts that have redounded to the benefit of the undergraduate college in spiritual and material terms.

That being said, the highest priority facing the college in the years ahead is achieving financial security. Bard is not a wealthy institution in comparison to other nationally recognized liberal arts colleges with whom it competes for students. Yet despite the national financial climate of recent years, the College continues to move forward. The second and related priority is consolidation through the integration and rationalization of the college's many parts. As we proceed on these two fronts, there will be some selective expansion, primarily in three areas. The expansion must result in strengthening what the college now does and not in diversifying its mission. The three areas where expansion is contemplated are: (1) international programs, (2) the high school-early college movement, (3) the scope of the curriculum, notably in the connections between the liberal arts and professional and graduate education. This includes further developing Bard's program for undergraduates in New York City.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.bard.edu/catalogue/>



The emphasis, during the next five years, must be on (1) consolidation of the college's gains, (2) capitalization of its financial base, (3) integration and institutionalization of its distinctive mission, and (4) selective expansion. For many years the college expanded and took risks to establish itself in terms of its standards of educational excellence, its institutional mission and its civic contribution all in the service of its competitiveness. Over the past decade Bard's admirable record of accomplishment, including the development of a national and international reputation has rendered the institution's capacity to meet the financial challenge it faces plausible if not probable.

## **B. Preparation of the PRR**

The preparation of this PRR included several phases. First, the issues that Middle States raised in 2007 came before the College administration and faculty. Representatives of the College attended a PRR workshop held in Philadelphia in spring 2010. Over the course of the 2010-2011 academic year, many small groups met to discuss issues that were raised in Middle States' review as well as Bard's 2007 self study. Issues were brought before the Faculty Senate, where substantive discussion took place. The PRR was drafted in fall 2011, followed by additional consultations to update information and resolve any remaining issues. The final draft was completed in May 2012.

As we complete the report, the president outlined the salient assumptions behind a new five-year strategic plan (2012-2017) to be presented to the Board of Trustees in October. The plan is being researched and developed into discrete plans of action with sufficient detail to assess the costs, the risks and the benefits. Its agenda is included in the Introductory Overview above.

This PRR exceeds the recommended 50 pages, not including supplements. We suggest that providing a comprehensive overview of the numerous new initiatives and affiliations that have taken place at Bard in the past five years—more than most colleges of comparable size would even attempt in a comparable amount of time—was necessary in order to present clearly and accurately the full scope of Bard as an institution. [Appendix 1.B-1]. This report contains responses not only to the 2007 Middle States Review, but the 2007 Bard self study as well, which also increased the length of the report.

We are grateful for having had the opportunity to examine the College's progress over the past five years, and we anticipate that this report will not only fulfill the requirements set out by Middle States, but will also prove useful in furthering Bard's internal processes of self evaluation.

The author would like to thank the many individuals who contributed to the preparation of this report. [Appendix 1.B-2].

## **C. Major Institutional Changes and Developments**

Bard has historically had a relatively large number of affiliated and external programs in relation to its size, and the number of such programs has grown substantially in the period since decennial accreditation.

Some of the major changes are:

### **New Affiliated Programs**

- 1 Al-Quds Bard Partnership
- 2 American University of Central Asia Partnership
- 3 The Longy School of Music of Bard College
- 4 Bard High School Early College II in Queens, NY

- 5 Bard High School Early College III in Newark, NJ
- 6 The Paramount Bard Academy and the MAT Program in the Central Valley of California

#### New or Changed Bard Programs

- 1 European College of the Liberal Arts
- 2 Bard Graduate Center: new name and new M.Phil. degree
- 3 Clemente: additional locations
- 4 Partnership with the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies
- 5 Bard Center for Environmental Policy: new M.S. degree in climate science
- 6 Bard Center for Environmental Policy: new M.B.A. degree
- 7 Bard College Conservatory of Music: new M.M. degree in conducting
- 8 Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities
- 9 The Bard New Orleans Initiative
- 10 Smolny College: change of status
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- 12 The International Center of Photography—Bard Program in Advanced Photographic Studies

#### Other Major Institutional Changes and Developments

- 1 Capital Campaign
- 2 Center for Civic Engagement
- 3 Citizen Science
- 4 BHSEC-Bard College Faculty Fellowship and Exchange Program
- 5 Difference and Media Project
- 6 West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture

[Appendices 1.C-1, 1.C-2, 1.C-3, 1.C-4].

Bard is a private institution that acts in the public interest. As a college deeply committed to civic engagement, Bard undertakes and fosters initiatives that reflect its principles: innovation, ambition, risk-taking, and a fundamental belief in the link between liberal education and democracy. Bard is distinguished by its willingness and ability to promote and sustain long-term projects that engage students, faculty, and administrators with some of the most critical issues facing society. While a small number of very wealthy liberal arts colleges have been able to afford to continue unchanged in spite of the rapid changes in the world outside their campuses, Bard—certainly not wealthy but firmly committed to the liberal arts and sciences—has been on a trajectory of innovation and engagement with the world. Bard will continue on this path, whether in Hudson Valley social service organizations; correctional institutions; high schools in New York City, Newark, New Orleans, and California’s Central Valley; or in universities in Russia, the West Bank, and Kyrgyzstan.

One might think the rate of expansion or number of new programs at Bard could weaken the focus on its core mission of undergraduate education, or overly tax Bard’s limited resources, but in fact the opposite is true. The College has continued to strengthen its commitment to educating undergraduates in the liberal arts tradition, while simultaneously attracting new donors via the College’s entrepreneurial and nimble approach to expansion, particularly in countries where historically there has been no liberal arts tradition.

Between 2006 and 2011, thirty-eight tenure-track faculty joined the College, representing an increase of sixteen new tenure-track lines. The number of FTE in the Division of the Arts (60) has remained constant. In written arts, the College has attracted Francine Prose, Paul La Farge, Binyavanga Wainaina, Joseph O’Neill, Wyatt Mason, and Teju Cole to the faculty. In languages, three tenure-track lines have been created in Arabic and Chinese. Faculty strength in the Division of Science, Mathematics and Computing has increased from 18.76 FTE in fall 2006 to 30.1 FTE in fall 2011, realizing the College’s commitment to invest in the sciences. Student

interest in social studies has been met with an increase of seven tenure-track lines representing macroeconomics, international affairs, anthropology, environmental and urban studies, and Middle Eastern history.

Seven endowed chairs (two of which were new gifts to the College) have been recruited; they are Mark Danner, Dawn Upshaw, John Ryle, Daniel Mendelsohn, Laura Kuhn, Walter Russell Mead, and Richard Aldous. Three tenured faculty in film and electronic arts, history, and literature have been promoted to endowed chairs. Bard has also recruited the composer George Tsontakis, as well as the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company which holds a residency at the College.

In spring 2011, Bard's innovative and expansive approach resulted in the award of a \$60 million grant from the Open Society Foundation in support of the College's ongoing institutional commitment to civic engagement. The Foundation typically does not fund American educational institutions, but in Bard's case, the funding supported the extensive work of the College in promoting a liberal arts education for those in the U.S. and abroad, who otherwise would not have access to such an education. This grant is an affirmation of the value of the Bard model of international education and of a private institution working in the public interest.

Bard is ambitious in a way that is not only consistent with the educational and civic ideals of the College, but also in promoting these ideals nationally and internationally through the many new programs and initiatives undertaken by the College in the period since the decennial accreditation. Bard's approach might not be a model that is appropriate for the majority of liberal arts colleges, but it has worked well for this particular college, and this approach will continue to guide the College.

It is important to note that in spite of all these new activities, the College has reduced its administrative overhead. Bard administration has learned to be efficient and adaptive, often training employees in new tasks and promoting from within. As the College continues to launch new projects, this pattern is not sustainable, and we are mindful of the pressures that expansion imposes upon its administration. The administrative structure continues to evolve with the College's domestic and global expansion. [Appendix P-1, Appendix P-2, Appendix P-3, Appendix P-4, Appendix P-5].

#### **D. Highlights of the PRR**

In the undergraduate college, two curricular improvements are noteworthy. First, in January 2011 the College initiated Citizen Science, a two and a half-week January workshop required of all first year students. The workshop addresses our commitment to teach scientific literacy to all Bard College students by immersing them in an intensive, collaborative experience in which they learn to gather, interpret, and use evidence as scientists do. [Appendix 1.C-3, Part 3].

Over the course of the past two years, the Division of Languages and Literature undertook a systemic review of its curriculum and major. Several faculty retreats and extensive discussions led to a variety of changes that we anticipate will significantly strengthen the education of literature majors at Bard. The division will focus on strengthening its world literature curriculum, expanding translation studies, enhancing the relation between languages and literature, and integrating the digital humanities across the curriculum. Discussions centered on specific criteria for a successful Moderation into the program, including the assessment of the skills at Moderation, criteria for promotion to the Upper College, expectations for the portfolio of writing submitted to the project board, and methods of reporting the results of the board's deliberations. The distribution of courses and requirements within the major were also of concern, including the different types of courses (for example, genre, single author, period-specific, theoretical and thematic) that should be required, and ensuring that post-Moderation students are prepared for writing the Senior Project. [Appendix 1.D-1].

Two recent co-curricular changes will substantially benefit Bard's undergraduates. First, a new position, the director of academic advising, was created in fall 2008. The director, who reports to the dean of studies, has promoted a number of significant improvements in the College's advising system. [Section 2.C.2]. Second, the Center for Civic Engagement was launched in spring 2011. Bard is committed to the principle that colleges and

universities occupy a unique role at the nexus of education and civil society, and the Center will unify Bard's network of innovative domestic and international initiatives. The Center engages in activity at the main campus in Annandale-on-Hudson, and across the globe. It will form a locus for activity that connects the undergraduate classroom education with a wider civic viewpoint. [Appendix 1.C-1, Part 2].

Bard's undergraduate faculty has taken positive strides since the 2007 review, tackling and solving problems related to visiting faculty contracts, titles, evaluation, and promotion. [Section 2.B.4]. In response to the recommendations of the Visiting Team in 2007, the Faculty Senate proposed, and the full faculty passed, legislation mandating an external review for each program every 12 years. [Section 2.B.2].

The College's broader network of campuses and affiliated programs has grown since 2007 in ways that positively affect the main campus [Section 2.C.11]. These programs, listed briefly in Section 1.C and described in more detail in Appendices 1.C-1 and 1.C-2, fulfill two aspects of Bard's vision—to provide opportunities for a liberal arts education in those parts of the world where such education has long been denied, and to contribute to the national debate on education reform, including secondary education.

Bard has embarked upon an ambitious capital campaign that has raised significant funds with which to boost the College's endowment, with the aim of providing a greater degree of financial stability in the future. [Appendix 1.C-3, Part 1].

The College continues to forge ahead with a series of necessary building projects [Appendix 1.C-4]. It solidified its commitment to sustainability by forming The Sustainability Council, and by signing the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. [Section 2.C.13].

The College created a new position of vice president for finance in fall 2011 to oversee the financial operations of the Annandale-on-Hudson campus, Simon's Rock, the Longy School of Music of Bard College, European College of the Liberal Arts (ECLA) and the Bard High School Early Colleges. This appointment is key in linking Bard's financial operations with those of its external programs. We anticipate more effective budgetary planning across the various programs and campuses of the College.

## Section 2

### Summary of Institution's Response to Recommendations From the Previous Team Report and Institutional Self-Study

#### A. General

##### 1. Mission

###### *From Visiting Team:*

###### **Standard 1: Mission, Goals and Objectives**

The Visiting Team recommends that the Bard community follow through soon on its first Action Point to produce a single, revised statement of mission, building on the strong unified sense of purpose that was developed through the Self-Study process. Bard's Periodic Review Report in five years should contain a description of the process by which the revised mission statement was developed and should provide an analysis of the ways that this mission statement has helped to shape Bard's programs and guide institutional decision-making.

Bard has a strong, unified sense of purpose. We believe this can be attributed to the history of the College, the leadership of the current president and senior administration, and a faculty that has been hired according to criteria reflecting this sense of purpose, who in turn pass this on those more recently hired. The mission statement that was crafted subsequent to the decennial accreditation, is essentially a brief encapsulation of an overarching strategic plan that was prepared for the Board of Trustees in summer 2010. The statement reflects the strategic plan for the College for 2010–2016. All constituencies of the College contributed to the plan. Its formation was informed by a five-year academic strategic plan submitted by the dean of the college, as well as the foundational document of Bard's newly formed Center for Civic Engagement.

A large part of the reason that Bard has survived and thrived, both intellectually and financially, is because it is a dynamic institution that engages in new initiatives and innovative organizational alliances. Bard has the energy and ability to respond to the ever-changing intellectual and political climate of the country by recognizing and taking advantage of opportunities to extend its mission.

###### *From self-study:*

###### **Action Point 1.1**

That a definitive mission statement is made available to the community on the College website and in the College catalogue. In crafting this statement, we should pay special attention to the strengths of Bard's campus culture, its civic-mindedness, its support for professional as well as artistic and scientific ambition, an increasingly vigorous interplay between athletic and academic achievement, as well as the commitment to excellence and high standards the College sets for its faculty, students, staff and curriculum that is the hallmark of a Bard education.

The College has fulfilled this action point without mentioning athletics. The role of athletics continues to be developed at Bard, as seen in the recent promotion of the College to the Liberty League conference. Bard College's mission statement appears in both the College catalog and on the College website, under the heading "Academic Mission." [Appendix 2.A.1-1].

#### B. Faculty

##### 1. Faculty Governance

Faculty governance at Bard consists of three 4-person committees: the Executive, Curriculum, and Planning and Appointments Committees, which meet jointly as the Faculty Senate. Each committee has a representative from each of the four academic divisions. This structure was put into place in spring 2006, and hence was relatively new at the time of the Middle States 2007 review. Prior to 2006, faculty governance consisted of a 4-person Executive Committee and a 4-person Faculty Senate. As the College grew the small-sized Faculty Senate became non-representative of the faculty.

The Faculty Senate assessed the new faculty governance structure in fall 2010. Discussions within the three committees and at Faculty Senate retreats were held before and after each semester. The consensus was that the new structure of faculty governance has proved to be substantially better than the previous one, though some slight improvements were suggested and subsequently implemented. The size of the Faculty Senate is large enough to have a diversity of opinions, but small enough for all members to participate. Issues that formerly were discussed in full faculty meetings now receive more thorough treatment in discussions in the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty Senate has become an effective forum for proposing, evaluating, and implementing changes at the College. For example, the Faculty Senate appointed both the Faculty Evaluation Document Review Committee, and the Visiting Appointments Working Group [Sections 2.B.3-4]. It shepherded the legislation proposed by these two committees via faculty discussion in various fora, and oversaw the voting process as well. The Faculty Senate has proved to be effective in helping to resolve substantive faculty issues, and determining the appropriate faculty processes.

A noted weak point was the lack of coordination of the three committees. In response, a Dean's Council was created. The Council consists of the dean of the college, chairs of the three constituent Faculty Senate committees, and the chair of the Faculty Senate. The Dean's Council meets monthly. The dean of the college has initiated monthly meetings with the three divisional representatives to the Faculty Senate from each division. We are implementing regular meetings of the Student Educational Policies Committee with the Dean's Council, and more frequent meetings of program directors in each division. Effectiveness of this new meeting structure will be reviewed in the next accreditation report.

Discussion of faculty leadership in Faculty Senate meetings brought to light a concern about the variations in size and organization of academic programs. Some programs function very well, but others less so. Successful programs in general hold regular meetings, have a structure in place for ongoing curriculum review, and they communicate well with the college administration, as well as keeping track of their majors. The Faculty Senate is currently discussing how to improve the general functioning of each of the programs, and what might be the most feasible ways to help new program directors learn good practices. One suggestion was for every program to submit an annual report to the Curriculum Committee. Additionally, the Faculty Senate has proposed expanding the dean of the college's staff in order to provide more organizational and curricular support to the programs.

***From Visiting Team:***

**Standards 4 and 5: Leadership and Governance; Administration**

The Visiting Team applauds the reforms that have been instituted in faculty governance, and recommends that their impact be monitored closely to ensure that they realize the goals of greater dialogue and engagement by all faculty in the College's vision and programs. The enlarged Faculty Senate, with its new committee structure, provides a more formal means of communication and collective decision-making within the faculty and with the administration.

As noted above, there have been thorough discussions of this topic, though further work needs to be done.

***From self-study:***

The Bard faculty adheres to the values of faculty autonomy and the preservation of strong faculty governance structures, and is represented by the Executive Committee of the American Association of University Professors. Even so, governance structures are loose and informal and faculty committees are difficult to staff. The force of the president’s vision and his commitment to the institution in terms of the areas of primary importance to the teaching mission of the College—the curriculum, general education, and faculty hiring and evaluation—sometimes place his authority in tension with this strong tradition of faculty governance. By definition, presidents and senior administrators are relied upon to make difficult choices in a context where resources are finite, and faculty allegiances often are divided between their loyalty to the College, to their students, and to their colleagues. The evaluation process documented above and under Standard 10 would suggest this is the case at Bard. The senior administration aims to mediate the institution’s commitment to curricular and fiscal innovation with the particular needs of changing generations of faculty.

**Action Point 4.1**

Continue to implement innovative structures for dialogue and engage faculty in the vision.

This Action Point refers to the need to increase the dialogue between faculty and administration, and to engage the faculty in shaping a vision for Bard’s future. The College continues to benefit from the long-term leadership of its president, during whose tenure the College has grown in size and stature. Incremental steps have been taken to increase communication between faculty and administration. Faculty would like a more systematic way of responding to the president’s ideas before they are implemented. One step toward this goal is the recent institution of a meeting between the Faculty Senate and the president at least once per semester. Similarly, the Planning and Appointments Committee has begun meeting with the executive vice president at the start of every academic year.

**Action Point 11.1**

The Curriculum Committee should strive to publish clear guidelines for the course approval process that are consonant with the mission of the College. Focus groups and faculty discussion are called for in arriving at such guidelines. Assessment of the work of the new faculty committees will be a primary concern for the newly expanded Faculty Senate.

*[The aspect of this Action Point relevant to the present section is the last sentence; see Section 2.B.8 for a discussion of the first two sentences.]*

This point was addressed above.

**2. Program and Concentrations**

In the decennial accreditation, the Visiting Team made two suggestions regarding Standard 11: “implementation by the Curriculum Committee and the dean of a system of regular program review,” and “greater standardization of the number of requirements for each program.” Bard has addressed both of these issues.

As the Visiting Team correctly observed, the number of courses required for each academic program at Bard was not standardized, ranging from a low of five required courses to a high in the teens (not including the Senior Project). The faculty realized, before the decennial accreditation, that standardization of program requirements was needed, and implemented a process leading to approval of a proposal for standardization by the full faculty in spring 2008.

Standardization of program requirements is as follows (taken from the new legislation): “A (non performance based) program requires 3-5 courses by the time of Moderation and a total of 7-10 four-credit courses (or other configuration of courses totaling 28-40 credits) by the time of graduation; exceptions to these limits can occur only by petition to the Curriculum Committee. The required courses can be either specifically designed courses

or menus of courses, and may be offered by the program or by other programs.” The 7-10 courses do not include the Senior Project. [Appendix 2.B.2-1]

Faculty discussions led to adding new language to the Faculty Handbook in 2009, outlining the guidelines for “joint majors.” [Appendix 2.B.2-1]. These guidelines state that a student who undertakes a joint major must complete the course requirements for two programs of study and produce a single, unified, integrated Senior Project incorporating both disciplines. This option requires a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, and approval by the Executive Committee. Since its implementation, the Joint Major System has received mixed reactions from the faculty. The Faculty Senate intends to assess the success of the Joint Major.

The legislation standardizing program and concentration requirements also mandated regular review of programs: “Each year the Curriculum Committee will review several programs and/or concentrations. As a rule, each program or concentration will be reviewed every sixth year” [Appendix 2.B.2-1]. This review process was not implemented systematically, so the Faculty Senate again took up the topic of program review, and appointed a working group to prepare a new proposal to include a more workable mechanism and schedule for review of programs, but also to strengthen the process by adding external evaluation of programs on a 12-year cycle. The working group defined a set of criteria that will be used to assess the functioning of programs. This new methodology of external review of programs will begin fall 2012. [Appendix 2.B.2-2, and Appendix 2.B.2-3].

***From Visiting Team:***

**Standard 11: Educational Offerings**

The Visiting Team recommends implementation by the Curriculum Committee and the Dean of a system of regular program review, as well as greater standardization of the number of requirements for each program.

These recommendations have been fully addressed, as discussed above.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 11.2**

The Curriculum Committee, in concert with the dean, should establish a rotation for regular program review, reserving the possibility of external evaluation (cost permitting) at the request either of the program or of the CC.

This topic has been discussed above.

**Action Point 11.3**

Move toward standardizing program requirements. An acceptable number of program requirements would be between 8 and 11 (including Senior Project).

The recently standardized number of requirements ranges from 7 –10, excluding Senior Project, or 9–12 including Senior Project.

**Action Point 14.2**

In its periodic reviews of each of the academic programs in the College, the Curriculum Committee could suggest requirements or recommendations of areas that it thinks would be fruitful for enhancing the quality of a major. One natural area might be a foreign language recommendation for students in areas of Social Studies with an international focus.

The general question of enhancing the quality of a major and the particular question of promoting the study of foreign languages for students in relevant programs will be addressed as part of the assessment of each program



that will take place according to a regular schedule, as outlined above. Using external evaluators will enable a more robust assessment than would be possible if conducted solely by the Curriculum Committee.

### **3. Faculty Evaluation**

The Faculty Evaluation Document that was in place during the decennial accreditation was adopted in 1999, with a mandate to be reviewed after five years. That review led to the adoption of substantial revisions, with a second review mandated after a subsequent five years. In fall 2008, the Faculty Senate appointed the Faculty Evaluation Document Review Committee (FEDRC) to carry out the mandated review of the Faculty Evaluation Document, and to submit its recommendations to the Faculty Senate.

The FEDRC met weekly from spring 2009 through fall 2010. The Committee ultimately proposed keeping the current Faculty Evaluation Document, though with substantive modifications aimed at improving the fairness, thoroughness, clarity and efficiency of the College's evaluation process. The FEDRC considered criteria for reappointment, tenure and promotion; the role of divisional evaluators; the structure of the Faculty Evaluation Review Committee (FERC) and the College Evaluation Committee (CEC); the evaluation of non-tenure-track faculty members; voting in divisions; senior evaluations of tenured full professors; open vs. closed files; and miscellaneous minor problems in the existing document.

The full faculty approved a revised version in spring 2011. Among the approved changes is the provision that divisional voting on evaluation cases be restricted to tenured and tenure-track faculty members who have been rehired after the first evaluation; that the CEC (which evaluates non-tenure-track faculty members) will be expanded to five members, two of whom are senior non-tenure-track faculty members; that divisions will vote on the initial rehiring evaluation of tenure-track faculty members; and that the format for the evaluation of full professors will be modified to include a meeting of the dean of the college, program director and division chair with the evaluatee to discuss future plans. [Appendix 2.B.3-1].

#### ***From self-study:***

##### **Action Point 10.3**

The faculty should reconsider extending the term of service on the Faculty Evaluation Review Committee beyond two years, perhaps asking the AAUP to negotiate for some release-time for this service, as is common at peer institutions.

After deliberating, the FEDRC rejected the idea in this Action Point on the grounds that it would be very hard to recruit faculty members to serve on the FERC if the term of service is three years. The FEDRC proposed that a two-year term on the FERC entail a single course release, but this proposal did not receive the support of college administration.

##### **Action Point 10.4**

Bard may wish to think about increasing the input of outside review, since two or even three reports can fail to establish a full portrait of the scholarly work and specialties.

The FEDRC agrees in principle that increasing the number of outside evaluators would be beneficial, but decided not to make such a proposal since the Committee's recommendations included many changes that were more urgently in need of attention. Plans are to address this issue in the next round of revisions to the Faculty Evaluation Document.

### **4. Visiting Faculty Appointments**

In fall 2008, the Executive Committee appointed the Visiting Appointments Working Group (VAWG) to rethink the contractual arrangements for visiting faculty, and to submit its recommendations to the Faculty Senate. The VAWG, which included both faculty (tenured and visiting) and senior administrators, worked from spring 2009 through spring 2010.

The variety of contractual arrangements for visiting faculty is enormous. Visiting faculty can range from one - course one time adjuncts, to full-time faculty members with non-renewable appointments, to administrators who regularly teach courses such as First-Year Seminar, to artists who are nearly full-time and who have been at the College for decades, to distinguished faculty members in named chairs. This profusion of different types of contracts and unclear guidelines for visiting appointments has been confusing for the dean of the college, and for the adjuncts, particularly those who have been long-term faculty at Bard, and who ought to have contracts longer than one year.

Moreover, the lack of contractual distinctions resulted in an ineffectively uniform evaluation process. Prior to the work of the VAWG, the Faculty Handbook required that all visiting faculty members, whether teaching an occasional course at Bard or teaching at the College for decades, would be evaluated by the same process (that is, by the college-wide committee College Evaluation Committee (CEC), and on a fixed schedule). That uniformity led to short-term visitors being evaluated even without the prospect of reappointment, and also to long-term visitors having insufficiently robust evaluations.

In programs such as Studio Arts and Theater Programs that have more visiting appointments, the requirement that CEC members be tenured faculty members, combined with the disproportionate number of visiting faculty to tenured faculty, created a situation where some veteran faculty members were unable to adequately participate in the evaluation of their junior colleagues.

In light of all these problems, the VAWG made far-reaching proposals regarding the hiring and evaluation of visiting faculty members. These proposals were adopted the full faculty in fall 2010, and will be implemented in fall 2012. [Appendix 2.B.4-1]. The new visiting faculty guidelines will apply to all newly hired non-tenure-track faculty members, and will be phased in over a period of seven years for current non-tenure-track faculty members.

The number of visiting faculty members FTE has remained essentially constant in the period since the decennial accreditation. The percent of faculty members (actual, not FTE) who are full-time has slightly increased. [Appendix 2.B.4-2, Table 2.B.4-2 ].

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 10.1**

Ref. I.D.1-5 of the Faculty Handbook detailing the different kinds of faculty appointment is inferior to analogous sections of handbooks of peer institutions.

As stated above, this Action Point has been thoroughly addressed.

**5. Tenure-Track Faculty**

The decennial Visiting Team suggested that the College attend even more to junior faculty mentoring and workload. The College has continued to address these issues..

A mentoring system for new tenure-track faculty has been instituted. New tenure-track faculty members are paired with more experienced colleagues for pedagogical and professional support throughout the first year, on everything from advising and criteria sheets, to committee work, to balancing teaching preparation with scholarly research. The Center for Faculty and Curriculum Development (CFCD) hosts a kick-off event for new

faculty and their mentors in the beginning of the school year, followed by a year-long series of events called the “New and Newer Faculty Seminar.” [Appendix 2.B.5-1]. The associate dean of the college and the director of CFCD are currently working on an assessment protocol for the New Faculty Support Network during the 2011-2012 academic year: the results will not be available at the time of this report.

Sixteen new tenure-track faculty joined the College in fall 2010. The dean of the college met with each new member at the end of the first semester, and again at the end of the first year. Faculty were invited to complete an optional “professional activities sheet,” which would then provide a basis for yearly discussion. The Executive Committee rejected the idea of making annual professional activities sheets mandatory. All tenure-track faculty members past the first year (excluding those standing for review in the third year or tenure in the sixth year) are invited to meet with the dean each semester. The dean hosts a welcoming reception for all new faculty members, regardless of fraction and status, and in addition hosts an annual reception for faculty members in their first two years.

A decline in overall attendance at divisional and faculty meetings, indicates a need for improvement in socializing new faculty members into faculty governance. This decline in attendance is not uniform across the College; the Division of Science, Mathematics and Computing and the Division of Languages and Literature have nearly perfect attendance at meetings, whereas the Division of Social Studies and the Division of the Arts have noticeable gaps. This disparity, which cannot be fully explained by the presence of part-time and visiting faculty members, needs to be investigated.

The College administration, along with Bard’s chapter of the AAUP (the negotiating body for all undergraduate faculty contractual matters), are presently discussing offering pre-tenure faculty a 2-2, rather than a regular 3-2, course load in one of the first two years. Another junior faculty workload concern is a disproportionate number of Senior Project advisees. Students often seek junior faculty as Senior Project advisors. To avoid an uneven distribution of Senior Project advising, programs have begun to assign Senior Project advisors centrally.

Contractually guaranteed support for faculty research continues to be supplemented through the Bard Research Fund, and through generous start-up packages for science faculty to support equipment, student research, and professional development activities. At the time of this report, the faculty grants officer reports that faculty have been awarded \$2,955,252 in currently active research funds. Professional development for faculty at Bard is further supplemented via the Faculty Seminar series and the Faculty Book Celebrations. [Appendices 2.B.5-2 and 2.B.5-3].

***From Visiting Team:***

**Standard 10: Faculty**

The Visiting Team recommends that the administration pay close attention to junior faculty mentoring and junior faculty workload.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 10.6**

Junior faculty mentoring should be a continuing subject of planning and discussion at the College.

As discussed above, a system for mentoring tenure-track faculty has been developed. The workload issue is more complex, and continues to be addressed in a variety of ways, also as noted above.

## **6. Program Budgets**

The Bard Faculty Handbook states “The Planning and Appointments Committee (PAC) will oversee programmatic and divisional budgets.” In practice, the PAC does not review budgets. This is due partially to the

increased size of the College and the resultant large number of hiring proposals the PAC must discuss every semester, hence the Committee's time is taken up almost entirely with reviewing proposals for new or replacement positions. A systematic review of program budgets by the PAC is not feasible.

In preparing this report, the PAC was asked to assess its own functioning, and to consider the matter of faculty review of program budgets. The Committee concluded that it simply does not know how to conduct such a review that would treat all programs fairly, considering the vastly different needs of the various programs. For example, equipment-dependent programs such as Theater and Chemistry have different needs than predominantly text-based courses such as History and Literature. Finally, program budget review guidelines were never formulated when the PAC became part of the current faculty governance structure, and the current PAC does not consider the formulation of these guidelines to be high priority.

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 2/3.1**

Create a board to review the total amount to be allocated to program budgets and/or for complicated requests or changes.

Because the PAC has not been able to fulfill its role as programmatic and divisional budgets overseer, the possibility of creating a separate budget-reviewing committee was discussed. While a separate budget-reviewing committee would relieve the PAC of budget review, the faculty is hesitant to create such a committee. Many faculty members expressed a reluctance to oversee the budgets of their colleagues, as well as a concern about taking on the burden of finding faculty members to staff such a committee. Some faculty also noted that the faculty dissolved the previous Faculty Budget Committee decades ago. The Faculty Senate will engage in continued discussions, but at this time the matter is not resolved.

Even in the absence of regular faculty oversight of program budgets, it would be helpful for faculty and administration to increase communication regarding budgetary matters. To that end, the PAC has begun meeting with the executive vice president at the start of every academic year to discuss faculty budget matters related to faculty hiring. The Faculty Senate and executive vice president will begin to meet annually in the spring as well, to discuss program budget matters.

## **7. New Faculty Positions**

When programs initiate requests for new faculty positions, they are required to submit written proposals outlining the rationale and anticipated curricular impact of the new position. They must provide relevant data that supports the need and rationale for the creating a new position. Before such a proposal is forwarded to the administration, it is reviewed first by the division, and then by the Planning and Appointments Committee (PAC), which votes to recommend it or reject it. If a proposal receives a positive vote and gains administration's approval, the PAC recommends the constitution of the search committee.

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 10.2**

The process by which programs initiate proposals for new faculty positions should require consultation with related programs with overlapping interests and needs. Currently this is not uniformly the case.

In response to the action point above, guidelines for submitting proposals for new faculty positions have been revised to include a requirement for "a summary of discussions with related or interdisciplinary programs." Proposals submitted to the PAC that show evidence of insufficient consultation may be sent back to the proposers without action.

## 8. Course Approval

The current course review process at Bard starts at the programmatic level, where ideas for new courses and lists of courses for the following semester are proposed and discussed. The list of courses is reviewed at the divisional level, and forwarded to the Curriculum Committee for further review. Finally, the dean of the college and the registrar review all courses.

Faculty and administrators have observed that curriculum review at the divisional level focuses too much on individual course descriptions (especially for new courses) and too little on overall coherence of course lists on programmatic and divisional levels. This is less of a problem for divisions whose curricula consists mostly of sequenced courses that move students from beginning to intermediate and advanced. In other divisions, such as Languages and Literature or Social Studies, where courses are more likely to be designed according to a wide range of topics and faculty interest, it becomes more problematic. In those cases, more thought needs to be given to the balance of 100-, 200-, and 300-level courses, and to program curriculum coherence as a whole.

The remedy for this situation is two-fold. First, the Bard faculty should undertake a broad review of curriculum, including college-wide topics such as distribution requirements, and programmatic topics such as the need for more structured curricula in some programs. The college president and Faculty Senate both support this idea. Second, the course review process must shift focus from individual courses to overall course lists. This will not only help to more fully meet the needs of all students, it may also help alleviate uneven course enrollments. At the programmatic level, the problem appears to be not a lack of understanding of the need for such course list review, but rather a lack of active leadership and proper organization within certain programs. Some programs have leaders who are active in setting up regular faculty meetings wherein substantive curricular planning can take place. Other programs have less active leaders who hold few regular meetings.

Bard's course list review has recently switched from taking place at full division meetings to having divisional program directors lead course list reviews. This is a step in the right direction. At the college-wide level, the Curriculum Committee is well poised to review course lists more thoroughly.

When programs submit course lists, each course now includes a proposed enrollment cap. These projected enrollment caps help the course reviewers assess whether there are enough available spaces for students, as well as helping students assess their prospects for admission to the course. Moreover, the need for such enrollment caps has spurred some programs to revisit what the appropriate enrollments should be for courses at the 100-, 200- and 300-levels; in such discussions. In our review and planning processes, we are well aware of the need to keep classes small for pedagogical reasons, while at the same time keeping classes sufficiently large to meet distribution and program major requirements.

### *From self-study:*

#### **Action Point 11.1**

The Curriculum Committee should strive to publish clear guidelines for the course approval process that are consonant with the mission of the College. Focus groups and faculty discussion are called for in arriving at such guidelines. Assessment of the work of the new faculty committees will be a primary concern for the newly expanded Faculty Senate.

*[The aspect of this Action Point relevant to the present section is the first two sentences; see Section 2.B.1 for a discussion of the last sentence.]*

In its discussion of this action point, the Faculty Senate noted that the problem is not a lack of guidelines for the process of course approval, but rather the need to change the overall approach used by academic programs in curricular planning and in evaluating proposed courses and course lists, as discussed above.

## 9. First-Year Seminar

As was reported in the College's self-study, a few years prior to 2007 the Bard First-Year Seminar (FYS) underwent a substantive curricular change "aimed at re-emphasizing the First-Year Seminar as a shared common experience for all incoming students and enhancing the core reading list as a challenging encounter with fundamental ideas and problems that would serve as a basis for their subsequent undergraduate years." Although the co-directors of FYS and the texts taught in the course have changed since then, we believe that Bard has successfully achieved the goals stated above. FYS continues to be a vitally important and positive shared experience for Bard students and faculty.

Several positive changes in FYS have taken place since the decennial accreditation. These include:

- Regular lunch meetings for FYS faculty, one per text, have been instituted. These are led by an expert who contextualizes the text and makes pedagogical suggestions, with time for open discussion
- A common syllabus was developed and is roughly adhered to by all FYS faculty
- The number of texts per semester has been reduced to 7-10
- Symposia have been decreased to 6-7 per semester
- More scrutiny of the success of FYS faculty members has occurred; for example, there has been an increase in class visits
- A faculty advisory board for FYS meets at least once per semester to discuss ideas for improving the course. The advisory board includes former directors and other experienced faculty members
- The director of multicultural affairs runs sessions to assist FYS students from underrepresented groups in their encounters with FYS texts
- An archive of secondary texts pertaining to the primary FYS texts has been created for faculty. Many have found it very useful
- A component on teaching writing in FYS has been added to the faculty orientation program
- The pre-semester orientation retreat for FYS faculty has been reduced from two days to one day

### *From self-study:*

#### **Action Point 12.1**

Underway is an initiative to develop a student evaluation form that is specifically tailored to First-Year Seminar.

In fall 2010, a FYS course evaluation form was created. The form was distinct from the online Course and Faculty Evaluation (CAFE) form used college-wide in other courses, in that it contained several questions specific to FYS. It was presented to students in hard copy, unlike the CAFE forms. In spring 2011, the Executive Committee, dean of the college, and FYS co-directors decided that FYS would return to using the standard CAFE forms. It was determined that the CAFE forms provide more valuable evaluative data. The forms that are used college-wide separate the evaluation of instructor from the evaluation of the course, unlike the form specific to FYS. The fact that the form was hard copy and did not use numerical evaluation prohibited the data from being efficiently incorporated into the rest of the College data. This would not allow, for example, data providing a complete picture of an individual faculty member's teaching.

#### **Action Point 12.2**

Given the enormous investment the College puts into the First-Year Seminar, the College may want systematically to review the issue of how many of the program's faculty come from the full-time tenure-track or tenured lines. A healthy participation has always been viewed as beneficial; a considerable recruitment effort within the regular faculty ranks has kept a steady participation (roughly 7 to 15 per semester).

Although positive steps have been taken, the recruitment of tenure-track and tenured faculty members to teach FYS is an ongoing concern to the FYS co-directors and the dean of the college. In order to gather broader input on this topic, the Executive Committee and co-directors of FYS meet annually to discuss staffing issues.

The bulk of FYS faculty falls into three categories: tenure-track and tenured faculty members, senior administrators (including the president, the vice president for administration, and the registrar) and visiting faculty. It is important to note that many of the visiting faculty members have taught FYS repeatedly and with great success; so while the overall teaching staff of FYS is not currently composed primarily of tenure-track and tenured faculty members, the FYS faculty as a whole is certainly not transient. Our goal of having 1/3 of the FYS faculty be tenure-track and tenured [see Appendix 2.B.9-1] has been attained in recent years. We will continue to work toward maintaining that success.

To help persuade regular Bard faculty members to teach FYS, the Planning and Appointments Committee (which approves requests for new faculty positions) has, in some cases, made approval of a new faculty position contingent upon the relevant program providing faculty members to teach in FYS. In other cases, the dean of the college offers, when it is both needed and feasible, to replace the course that a program would lose if a member of the program teaches FYS. The College integrates expectations for regular participation in FYS in appointment letters for most faculty in the humanities. The question has been raised as to whether such expectations should be made of all faculty members at the College, regardless of discipline.

## **10. Participation in General Education**

General education at Bard currently includes the Language and Thinking Program, Citizen Science, First-Year Seminar, and courses designed to satisfy distribution requirements. [For a discussion of the staffing of First-Year Seminar, see Section 2.B.9]. The Language and Thinking Program and Citizen Science do not take place during the regular academic year, hence the staffing of these programs, which is organized by their directors, is outside the standard contractual structure for Bard faculty members.

Faculty participation in courses designed to satisfy the distribution requirements presently is not a large concern. The College has systematically hired tenure-track faculty members in fields that have greater demands in course distribution requirements. After a period of growth in the undergraduate population, the number of undergraduates at the College has stabilized, which we anticipate will enable a more effective and long-term assessment of the need for various types of courses that fulfill the distribution requirements.

### ***From self-study:***

#### **Action Point 12.3**

The College may want to consider, through more explicit language, formalizing participation in general education programs and development as part of the faculty hiring and evaluation guidelines.

This issue has been addressed in the newly revised Faculty Evaluation Document [Appendix 2.B.3-1].

## **11. Moderation**

### ***From self-study:***

#### **Action Point 14.1**

To continue the current initiative in the dean of the college's office to enhance sophomore advising, establish clear criteria of assessment on the Moderation report, and consider formalizing student submissions in a Moderation portfolio.

Prior to 2007, Moderation reports were written in narrative format, lacking clearly established criteria. The new Moderation report form initiated in Spring 2007 has helped establish uniform assessment criteria on Moderation reports. [Appendix 2.B11-1].

It has been suggested that creating a portfolio that includes students' earliest work at Bard from first year courses such as Language and Thinking, First-Year Seminar, and Citizen Science, might be a beneficial way to track and evaluate student progress. Such a portfolio could be beneficial in assessing a student's academic development from arrival at Bard to the time of Moderation (normally toward the end of the sophomore year). The Faculty Senate will continue to discuss this idea

The Moderation process at Bard varies greatly from program to program. All Moderations require two short papers from students, an evaluation of his or her lower college work, and a projected plan of study for upper college. All Moderation boards consist of three evaluators for each student. Some programs have additional Moderation requirements. For example, a student moderating into Film must submit a completed 16mm film and videotape, as well as a full-length script or 10-page historical/critical essay. Moreover, different programs employ different strategies in both scheduling and assigning Moderation boards to students. It has been suggested that it might be beneficial for all program directors to meet enmasse regularly. This would provide the opportunity to share information and ideas, including those related to Moderation. Another suggestion for improving the Moderation process was to list the names of Moderation board members in Banner, Bard's central database, in order to track and ensure uniform distribution of faculty workload. If implemented, this would likely be done for Senior Project board members as well.

Advising is discussed in Section 2.C.2. As stated above, the first of these ideas regarding Moderation has been addressed, and faculty will continue to discuss the second..

## 12. Writing

### *From self-study:*

#### **Action Point 12.4**

The College should actively discuss the question of a writing requirement beyond FYS and L&T: what might be gained by designing such an additional distribution requirement? Could the course offerings through the Bard Academic Resources Center (BARC) be expanded to meet such a need? Or should each academic program design its own writing intensive seminar to help train students in writing both within—as well as across—the disciplines?

Writing consultants from Columbia and Carleton suggested that rather than instituting a separate writing requirement, the best strategy for Bard would be to change the writing ethos by generating enthusiasm for and placing more emphasis on writing rather than an additional distribution requirement.

Currently we are focusing on generating courses in a variety of disciplines that use writing in laboratory sections and with dedicated student Writing Fellows. The emphasis is currently on sophomore and junior years, since a strong focus on writing already exists in the freshman and senior years via First-Year Seminar, Writing and Thinking, and the Senior Project requirement. To promote this goal, the program of writing intensive courses was initiated in fall 2008. [Appendix 2.B.12-1].

Presently, 54 faculty members have participated in the Writing-Rich Workshop (a requirement for writing teachers, but open to all), and 29 writing intensive courses have been offered in the following: Languages and Literature 11; Social Studies 10; Science, Mathematics, and Computing 4; and Arts 3.

While it is unlikely that a writing intensive course will be mandated for all programs, there has been an increased focus on writing at Bard. The Biology program's two 200-level biology courses that are required of all



bio majors are writing intensive courses. The Philosophy program has discussed adding a writing intensive course for their majors as well. The Literature program is currently piloting three sections of a new course required of majors, entitled "Introduction to Literary Studies," which is not formally designated a writing intensive course due to not adding an extra hour of class time, but does employ other writing intensive course features: working with a trained Writing Fellow, and increasing writing time during class. The Division of Languages and Literature will begin following this model in fall 2012. Similarly, for the past two years the religion program is offering a new required course called "Sacred Pursuits" that employs some aspects of writing intensive courses as well.

Since the decennial accreditation, the Dedicated Peer Tutors program has been replaced by the Writing Fellows program. The new program is conceived of as a learning experience for the tutors, rather than merely as a service to other students and faculty. The College offers more training for student tutors, and a 4-credit, semester-long course on pedagogy is required of all Writing Fellows. The tutors are required to submit written reflections on their tutoring experiences as well. In fall 2005 eleven sections of First-Year Seminar worked with dedicated peer tutors. In fall 2011, twenty sections of First-Year Seminar, as well as over 30 other classes, worked with writing fellows.

As discussed in Section 2.C.4, the Bard Academic Resources Center (BARC) has been reorganized as the Bard Learning Commons (BLC). The new director and new assistant director of BLC oversee the entire tutoring program. The former director of BARC has become the Director of College Writing, which allows him to focus entirely on curricular, rather than managerial, issues; specifically, he is able to spend his time working with the faculty in various formats on writing-related matters in general, and writing-intensive courses in particular.

The action point is will continue to be considered by the faculty and the administration (including the dean of the college, the dean of studies and the Bard Learning Commons staff).

## **C. Administrative**

### **1. Admissions**

The number of applicants applying for admission to Bard continues to rise [Table 2.C.1-1 (1), Appendix 2.C.1-1]. This positive trend is particularly significant at a time when families are questioning the value of a private college education. We believe the continued increase in applicants is due to the increasingly strong reputation that Bard has built over the years, and to the excellent recruiting and admissions processes that were instituted many years ago at the College. We believe that improvement in Admissions at this point is simply a matter of fine-tuning.

The College's partnership with the Posse Foundation in fall 2008 has had a positive impact on our admissions demographics. The Posse Foundation, which works in partnership with a number of excellent colleges and universities, has three goals: to expand the pool from which top colleges and universities can recruit outstanding young leaders from diverse backgrounds; to help these institutions build more interactive campus environments so that they can be more welcoming for people from all backgrounds; and to ensure that Posse Scholars succeed in their academic studies and graduate, so they can be leaders after college. The majority of students admitted to Bard through the Posse Foundation are from underrepresented groups; of the 30 students Bard has admitted 12 are African American females, 8 African American males and 2 Hispanic females. Bard's work with Posse to date is viewed as a success [Appendix 2.C.1-2].

In 2008, Bard created the Bard Educational Opportunity Programs (BEOP), an expansion of New York State's Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), whose guidelines stipulate that in order for students to be admitted via HEOP they must be New York State residents, have no prior enrollment in college (this would disallow, for example, BHSEC students), and fall within the designated poverty range. This has had a positive impact on admissions and retention. Under the newly created Bard Opportunity Program (BOP), the College has

more flexibility to admit low-income students from across the United States as well as transfer students from community colleges, BHSEC or elsewhere. BOP Scholars possess a high level of achievement in either academics and/or leadership, which indicate a strong potential for success in a competitive academic environment. BOP scholars often exhibit a nontraditional profile, and do not have the financial means to afford a college such as Bard. BOP scholars are offered an optional pre-first year summer program, workshops, tutoring services, as well as assistance with career development, internships, and alumni networks.

BEOP supports students admitted to the College through HEOP, BOP and the Posse program. In addition to financial assistance, BEOP works closely with the Dean of Students Office, the dean of the college, the Office of Admissions, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Learning Commons and the faculty to insure the success of these students at Bard. BEOP provides academic counseling, academic and administrative support, and is an on-campus advocate for the students admitted through these scholarship programs. In fall 2011, BEOP oversaw 35 HEOP Scholars, 37 BOP Scholars and 28 Posse Scholars.

Seven Peer Mentors (which will increase to ten in fall 2013) function as positive role models for, and foster relationships with, the BEOP scholars to provide additional support. Combining their own experiences with skill development training from BEOP staff, the Peer Mentors are equipped to identify needs and concerns of scholars to provide supplementary college success support. BEOP and other college staff provide training on topics including, getting involved on campus, time management skills, close reading skills, peer editing, active listening, confidentiality, and stress management. Peer Mentors have hosted a First-Year Seminar discussion group, drop-in hours for peer editing, various study groups, and a variety of social programs. During the 2011-2012 academic year, Peer Mentors have aided in retaining all 15 members of the BEOP class of 2015 in their first year of college. They have also provided support to the 10 members of the Posse class of 2015. During the current academic year, only one of the other BEOP supported students withdrew from the College, and that was for financial reasons.

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 8.1**

Develop targeted recruitment efforts in all areas where we have regional admission representatives (i.e., Chicago, Boston, Austin).

Targeted recruitment and the use of regional representatives is being reevaluated, as the College focuses on high yield territories and electronic communication.

**Action Point 8.2**

Consider raising the College's minimum TOEFL score and conduct interview by telephone to assess fluency.

Bard's current minimum TOEFL score is 600 (paper based), 250 (computer based), and 100 (Internet based). Bard also accepts the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum band score of 7 in the academic module. These scores are similar to peer institutions [Appendix 2.C.1-3]. To test for fluency in English, Bard conducts interviews via Skype, which is more effective than telephone interviews and cuts down on the cost of interviews.

**Action Point 8.3**

Increase targeted recruitment and Bard's presence in new international markets, specifically China and other East Asian nations as part of BCCM's search and recruitment of music students.

Bard will continue to do targeted recruiting. At present Bard already has sufficient recruitment in China and East Asia, and intends to look more at Latin America, an untapped market. The Bard College Conservatory of Music has been successful recruiting in China and East Asia, and is focusing more on developing a domestic audience.

**Action Point 8.4**

Raise the level of guidance counselor and science/math teacher awareness with regard to our science offerings (Bard-Rockefeller Program, DSS, new science facility) and culture of students who love science AND the arts (we are the premier place, in other words, for an aspiring chemist to continue studying the violin).

Bard has initiated Counselor Appreciation Days to bring counselors to campus. The College emphasizes to counselors and others the ever-growing strength in the sciences illustrated by the Reem-Kayden Center for Science and Computation, the DSS scholarships, the innovative Citizen Science program [Appendix 1.C-3, Part 3], and expanded Research Experiences for Undergraduates. Evidence for Bard's recent success in science is the increase in the number of students graduating in the Division of Science, Mathematics and Computing. [Tables 2.C.1-1 (2), 2.C.1-1 (2), Appendix 2.C.1-1]. Bard's Admissions staff enthusiastically continues to market Bard's strengths in the sciences. The College aims to increase the number of science graduates.

**Action Point 8.5**

Institute a system that will enable applicants to check the status of their applications online.

More than 75% of Bard's applicants use the online Common Application, but there is no simple way to transfer such information into Bard's Banner system. Bard does not have the technological infrastructure at present to allow for applicants who do not use the Common Application to check their status online.

**Action Point 8.6**

Develop and initiate a "virtual campus tour" for the Admission section of the Bard website that allows prospective students to get 360-degree panoramas at key locations throughout the campus.

A virtual campus tour has been implemented, including panoramas at key locations (both outdoors and inside some buildings). Video tours are available for use on iPads.

**Action Point 8.7**

Move toward a paperless admission system (eventually to include reading applications, essays, and recommendations online), where application files can easily be forwarded to and shared among admission counselors regardless of their geographical location.

Bard is moving toward a paperless process. Some high schools do not have the capacity to upload transcripts and references, so such input will continue to be accepted in paper format. Admission decision letters are still sent hard copy, even for online applications. The use of a paperless admissions system raises the question of which information should be forwarded to the Registrar's office, and how that transfer of information can be facilitated technically.

## **2. Advising**

A major improvement in the Bard advising system was the creation of a new director of academic advising position within the Dean of Studies Office. This position was first staffed in fall 2008. The creation of this position has led to positive change in the advising system. The most substantial change concerns incoming first-year and transfer students. In the system that was implemented by the director of academic advising in fall 2008, 50 faculty "super advisers" advise and register the roughly 570 incoming students during the two days before the start of the fall term. One month into the semester, the advising assignments are redistributed across the

faculty, so that, whenever possible, advisees are matched to advisers with whom the students have a course in their intended major.

This new system appears to be successful. The faculty members who participate in this system can devote sufficient time to each individual incoming student. Because these faculty members also register for their respective programs, they are well versed in the requirements. Occasionally a faculty member needs additional guidance. The College is addressing this by increasing the number of advising training sessions for faculty. The registrar reports that not a single complaint from a first-year student has been received since the inception of the new advising system.

The retention rate from the first year to the second year for the classes has improved, though it is not yet clear if this can be attributed to the recent changes in the advising system. [Appendix 2.C.2-1]. The first year to second year retention rate at Bard is comparable to that of similar institutions.

The director of academic advising has resurrected the Guide to Academic Programs and Concentrations, an online reference tool designed to help students and advisers navigate the academic structures at Bard. The Guide, which is updated regularly, has a 1-page snapshot of each program and concentration and summarizes the Moderation and graduation requirements for each, lists the faculty who advise in the program, and provides a sample program of study. The guide also summarizes the general graduation requirements of the College, and the various pathways to graduation.

Another improvement is the scheduling of an Advising Day, which takes place prior to the opening of course registration, and affords students the opportunity and time to discuss academic plans with their advisers. No classes are scheduled that day. In the spring semester, the day before Advising Day is reserved for Moderation boards.

A team of administrators serves as supplemental advisers. This team meets weekly to discuss students who are struggling academically, and to ensure that no student slips through the cracks. Faculty members and advisors who identify students in need of extra academic support refer students to the advising team, and one of the administrators reaches out to the student. At any given time, the advising team considers approximately 150 students.

A fund has been made available to encourage advisers to host meals, on or off campus, with their lower college advisees twice a semester. The fund also covers the cost of any meal that a faculty member eats in the student section of Kline Commons.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 11.7**

Consider implementing first- and second-year advising deans from among faculty to help with student advising.

Two members of the dean of student affairs staff have been appointed as director of the First-Year Experience and director of the Sophomore-Year Experience, respectively. [[inside.bard.edu/dosa/firstyear/](http://inside.bard.edu/dosa/firstyear/) and [inside.bard.edu/doso/sophomore/](http://inside.bard.edu/doso/sophomore/)].

**Action Point 11.8**

Implement a more thorough and ongoing way of imparting best advising practices to the faculty. This method would entail a more involved orientation session for new faculty and regular working dinners where new faculty can discuss advising issues with select senior colleagues. Essays could also be solicited from two excellent advisers among our faculty, one dealing with first-year advising, and the other dealing with second-year advising. These essays could be placed online on the CFCD website and serve as discussion prompts for follow-up meetings.

The College is reviewing this Action Point, under the guidance of the director of Academic Advising. We are considering having the director of academic advising meet with divisions and/or programs to discuss advising issues.

**Action Point 11.9**

Create a more specific framework for implementing the advising guidelines already laid out in the Faculty Handbook (detailing how many meetings advisers should have with advisees per year, when discussion about Moderation should begin, and so on.)

The director of academic advising sends out the relevant information to the faculty. Scheduled meetings between advisers and advisees has changed since Bard's 2007 self study. The schedule of regular adviser/advisee meetings is no longer in practice, and the new Advising Day that has replaced it has proved very beneficial. The College will continue to assess the success of various models for scheduling meetings between advisers and advisees.

**Action Point 11.10**

Clear communication and transparency are important goals in the advising process, both one-on-one and in the Moderation/Senior Project board setting. Criteria based assessment of student work is a goal towards which the College should continue working (see Standard 14).

The Assessment Council is handling this topic. [Section 2.B.11, Appendix 1.D-1].

**3. Assessment**

As observed by the Visiting Team in 2007, "A culture of assessment has begun to grow at Bard." We are pleased to report that Bard continues to make advances in this area.

The Assessment Council, formed in fall 2011, is the central locus of educational assessment activity at Bard. The Council is chaired by the associate dean of the college, with representation from faculty and administration. It provides a useful forum for exchange of ideas, as well as initiating and overseeing educational assessment projects designed to assess educational outcomes.

One task of the Council is to oversee the distribution and collection of Course and Faculty Evaluation (CAFE) forms, a College-wide form used by students to evaluate courses and faculty members. Initially, the CAFE forms were collected electronically via a web-based interface, what we thought would be an improvement upon the Student Opinion of Teaching and Course (SOTC) forms used previously. After a trial period, that return rates were too low, so it was decided that paper assessment forms will be collected in class, then scanned and stored electronically, beginning fall 2012.

The Assessment Council's current goal is to make good use of the longitudinal data the College received from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education. Toward that end, the associate dean of the college, the registrar and the dean of studies (all members of the Assessment Council) attended a workshop at the Center for Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College in the fall 2011. Bard's participation in the Wabash study is a step forward in assessment related to student activity, both curricular and extra-curricular. Bard's participation was extremely useful, particularly in relation to assessing student activity, both curricular and extra-curricular. Participation in the Wabash Study affords Bard not only access to new assessment instruments, but a means of comparing results with those found at other participating institutions. This will provide valuable, broader-based information that in-house evaluation alone would not have produced. [Appendix 2.C.3-1].

A number of changes have been implemented as a result of this study. As discussed in Appendix 2.B.12-1, the study was a factor in the institution of the new writing intensive courses [Section 2.B.12]. Also, after analyzing

the Wabash data, we discovered that students with relatively low “environmental mastery” skills seem, on average, to struggle more at Bard than at other institutions. In response, substantial changes in the academic support offered to students have been initiated, particularly via the Learning Commons, including the Super Adviser System [Section 2.C.2], and the Faculty Fellows program [Section 2.C.5].

To make the most thorough use of the Wabash data, Bard hired Carol Trosset, the director of institutional research at Hampshire College. In summer 2011, she studied the data set and consulted with a number of participating colleges. [Appendix 2.C.3-2]. Trosset presented her findings to Bard faculty and administrators in fall 2011. Her analysis spurred the reorganization of the Bard Academic Resources Center into the new Bard Learning Commons [Section 2.C.4, liberalarts.wabash.edu/].

Bard is now digitizing all newly submitted Senior Projects, which can be used for assessment purposes. More significantly, we are part of a consortium, begun in fall 2008, with six other colleges— Hampshire College (lead), Bennington College, Colorado College, New College, Smith, and Wellesley—which was awarded \$145,544 by the Teagle Foundation for a cooperative project entitled, “Assessing the Senior Thesis to Improve Teaching and Learning.” Work on this project has focused on a general rubric, which had been piloted earlier at several schools, for the evaluation and assessment of the written senior thesis/project. The main goal is for the campuses to work (together and individually) in using the rubric to generate formative discussions that lead to improving the senior thesis/project experience on their campuses. [Appendix 2.C.3-3].

In spring 2012, our ongoing Teagle Foundation grant sponsored two faculty workshops focused on the senior thesis. At the first workshop in February, a group of 15 faculty from across the College piloted a rubric to assess senior thesis work. Participants have shared this work with their respective programs and a number of programs, using the findings from this meeting, will be piloting a rubric-based approach in assessing senior thesis work in 2012-2013. In April, a second workshop was held for the practicing arts faculty (including faculty from Bennington and New College). The aim of this workshop was to develop the draft of a rubric for the practicing arts. The faculty will be working on the rubric in the coming academic year. [Section 5].

Participants throughout Bard actively are involved in institutional assessment, though no formal committee has been formed. The director of institutional research gathers data for required reports (for example, IPEDS, NYSED), and assessment is overseen by the executive vice president, the vice president for administration and the dean of the college. Bard uses assessment tools not only on institutional levels, but on programmatic ones as well. [Section 5].

The dean of graduate studies, the dean for international affairs and civic engagement, and the dean of the college each oversee assessment in their respective parts of the institution, the latter being responsible for the undergraduate college in Annandale-on-Hudson. The Advisory Councils (Bard faculty) for each of the overseas campuses engage in assessment and oversight. The president has recently established a committee on standards for the Bard Early Colleges, chaired by the dean of the college.

### ***From Visiting Team:***

#### **Standards 7 and 14: Institutional Assessment and Assessment of Student Learning**

A culture of assessment has begun to grow at Bard, and the Visiting Team offers three recommendations for continuing that growth. First, the Office of Institutional Research should be supported as fully as possible. It is very important that plans be made for how it will function in terms of data gathering, reporting etc. Second, the faculty’s efforts at assessment of student learning, particularly through the Teagle and Wabash initiatives should be aggressively pursued in conjunction with developing local efforts at assessment of policies or programs. Understanding the reasons for the loss of students in the sophomore year is also important, even if Bard concludes that it is an inevitable consequence of its Moderation process and the relatively high number of artists in the student body. Finally, the Visiting Team recommends that there be efforts made to formalize institutional assessment in terms of planning, goal-setting, allocation of resources, and measures for success, all of which require the establishment of structures and practices to do so.

First, the Office of Institutional Research continues to receive administrative support, though financial support for the office has not increased in recent years. The College has increased its funding for more targeted aspects of assessment, for example providing professional development opportunities related to assessment for some key administrators, including the associate dean of the college, the registrar and the dean of studies.

Second, faculty involvement in educational assessment has grown via the newly strengthened Assessment Council. The associate dean of the college has been accepted to the Teagle Assessment Scholars Development program, which is run out of the Center for Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College and is funded by the Teagle Foundation. [[liberalarts.wabash.edu/assessment-scholars/](http://liberalarts.wabash.edu/assessment-scholars/)].

The loss of students after the sophomore year has been, and continues to be, a topic of discussion at the College, particularly within the Dean of Student Affairs Office. We have learned that the Visiting Team's suggestion that the high number of students majoring in the arts contributes to attrition after the sophomore year is not borne out by the data: students majoring in the arts do not leave the College at a higher percentage rate than students with other majors.

Third, regarding the recommendation that "there be efforts made to formalize institutional assessment in terms of planning, goal-setting, allocation of resources, and measures for success, all of which require the establishment of structures and practices to do so," three significant steps have been taken in terms of structures and practices that enhance these three imperatives. First, goal setting at the College has been clarified by the existence of a strategic plan [Appendix 2.A.1-2]. Second, an important new structure has been created: the president meets with the cabinet of vice-presidents, which consists of the executive vice president, the vice president and dean of the college, the vice president and dean of graduate studies, and the vice presidents for development and alumni/ae affairs, student affairs, international affairs and civic engagement, administration, academic affairs, and special global initiatives. Third, at the start of 2012 Bard created a new position of vice president for finance, which will help with budgetary planning and resource allocation.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 7.1**

Though the College does not plan to have a committee assigned to design and recommend assessment activities, a check of the breadth and depth of institutional assessment should be taken annually by the Office of Institutional Assessment.

The Assessment Council will design and recommend educational assessment activities. The College continues to generate data, particularly from the Office of Institutional Research, and is in the process of developing effective structures in which to make use of this data.

#### **4. Academic Support Systems**

The Dean of Studies Office (DSO) provides support to students who are facing challenges in their academic programs. It has been enhanced significantly in the period since the decennial accreditation, and now affords students a centralized place to which they can bring academic concerns that require assistance beyond that of what their professors can offer. DSO collaborates closely with faculty and staff working in residence life, campus life and multicultural affairs.

Two recent structural changes have allowed DSO to function more effectively. First, positions that had been located elsewhere in the administration have been moved to DSO, uniting a number of support services under the same administrative umbrella. This was done to create more programmatic connections and collaborations in working with students. The associate and assistant deans of students moved to DSO, as did the new director of academic advising, who had been located in the registrar's office. [Section 2.C.2].

Second, in summer 2011, the Bard Academic Resources Center (BARC) was reorganized as the Bard Learning Commons (BLC), within DSO. The College hired a new director and a new assistant director for BLC. The reorganization and move to DSO allows for a focus on a wide variety of student needs, such as study skills and time management, in addition to the ongoing work of tutors, and for the integration of the services offered in BLC with supplemental academic advising. BLC offers regular environmental mastery workshops, and the director/assistant director work individually with students in managing time and assignments. [Appendix 2.C.4-1].

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 11.4**

Increased student input via evaluation forms, outside reviews, on-line tracking systems of users and programs (all under discussion in the CFLC with a tool called “Sans-Space”), and more discussion between faculty and academic support staff are all ways to evaluate academic support systems more efficiently in the future.

This Action Point calls for the creation of mechanisms to assess and enhance the academic support systems. Evaluations forms are used currently in the Learning Commons and a Scantron system to process the Course and Faculty Evaluation forms will open the possibility of developing systematic evaluations of other support programs such as the library and the Language Center. Outside reviews and online tracking systems are not viewed as cost-effective, though the new director of BLC has visited comparable programs at other colleges and universities, and invited them to visit Bard. Discussion among faculty and academic support staff and the introduction of successively more highly credentialed directors of BLC has helped.

**5. Dean of Students Office**

The dean of students has the new title of dean of student affairs, and her office is now called the Dean of Student Affairs Office (DOSA). This change in nomenclature reflects a move toward emphasizing civic engagement, rather than merely intervention and support in student emergencies. A dean of campus life position was created and filled, acquiring some of the responsibilities formerly belonging to the dean of student affairs. This allows the latter, who is also the associate director of the Center for Civic Engagement (CFCE), to redefine her time. [Appendix 1.C-3, Part 2 – CFCE]. Athletics at Bard is no longer under the supervision of DOSA: the vice president for administration currently oversees it.

Staffing at DOSA has increased, and has become more professionalized, in terms of the degrees of the staff and their in-house training. Resident Director positions have expanded into area coordinator positions. The Office of Residence Life, which is within DOSA and is under the supervision of the new dean of campus life, has become the Office of Residence Life and Housing; there is also a director of housing; the former is responsible for supervision of the area coordinators, peer counselors, training of staff, and programmatic aspects of the department; the latter is responsible for building concerns and occupancy management. These positions allow for each to more fully attend to their respective responsibilities.

A needs assessment was conducted with student government regarding student discipline, which led to a new Peer Review Board (PRB), in addition to the Student Judiciary Board (SJB). The PRB and SJB hear different types of cases. The PRB hears cases that are often lower-level first offenses, in which there is no question about whether a policy has been violated and who was responsible for it. By contrast, the SJB hears cases that are more serious in terms of the type of violation, are more “investigatory,” and often involve students who have had multiple policy violations or were previously seen by the PRB. The cases heard by the PRB had previously been handled by an administrator, most often an area coordinator, but in an effort to provide more accountability by peers and to move the area coordinators out of the disciplinary role, the PRB was created. The PRB, in its second year, appears to be functioning well.



DOSA recognizes more and more the importance of assessment, and is planning a student wellness assessment in fall 2012. The last time a similar assessment took place at Bard was 2004. DOSA continues to pay close attention to student retention. The retention rate involves many factors. [Appendices 2.C.2 and 2.C.2-1]. The DOSA staff will work toward implementing more thorough exit interviews of students who transfer out, in order to determine the reasons students leave. In an effort to increase retention after the second year, the College has been working on reaching out, albeit with mixed success, to students who report feeling socially isolated.

Faculty involvement with student affairs beyond the classroom has been increasing. Their Student Affairs Committee and the Diversity Committee have been increasingly active. The members of the former serve on the Student Judiciary Board, and in moments of crisis assist, advise and bring information to the faculty. The Faculty Fellows Program [Section 2.C.2], which began in spring 2011, assigns a faculty member to a grouping of residence halls. Each is required to provide a minimum of one social or educational event a month. The Faculty Fellows act as role models and mentors to undergraduate residents, and encourage residents' use of faculty outside of the classroom as resources for information, referral, and informal advising. In its first semester the Faculty Fellows Program consisted of 16 fellows who had individual or shared responsibility for 13 areas on campus. Thirty-nine events, ranging from cheese tastings, breakfasts with speakers, charity poker tournaments and lectures on the lost and found art of conversation were held, with assistance from Peer Counselor and Area Coordinator staff. We will assess the impact of the program as it develops.

In spring 2010, the president convened a committee of faculty and administrators (including the dean of studies, the dean of student affairs, and the vice president and dean for international affairs and civic engagement) in order to discuss and develop a free speech policy for the College. The policy was finalized in spring 2011. [Appendix 2.C.5-1].

The Community Standards of Behavior (CSOB), which is the mission statement that informs student and campus life policies, was revised, to ensure its compatibility with the new free speech policy, and more generally to address larger issues of student behavior. The revised statement no longer uses the title CSOB: instead, it is presented in the Student Handbook as an introduction to the chapter that outlines policy. The revised version of the CSOB is viewed as the overall vision of what the community at Bard looks like, and not something to which students can be held directly accountable: students are held accountable to specific policies. [Appendix 2.C.5-2].

In revising the CSOB, the idea of including an honor code was discussed and rejected, since in the process of revising the CSOB it was determined that it is most useful to the community as an aspirational statement only, and not one that includes policy prescriptions or proscriptions. The revised CSOB provides a way to frame the discussion of academic dishonesty and response to it within these aspirations for the community.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 6.1**

Communication about the grievance procedures overseen by the SJB is crucial; perceptions—often inaccurate—of the process need to become better informed. We recommend, for instance, that materials designed to supplement the Student Handbook—such as informal handouts distributed to students outlining the SJB's function and processes—be dated and placed on stationery from the dean of student's office.

The grievance procedures have been substantially revised due to the institution of the Peer Review Board. The Student Constitution is currently being re-written to make it user-friendlier, and to consolidate and clarify information regarding student conduct, including grievance procedures. Our commitment to sustainability has led to a reduction in the use of printed materials on campus, so we are more actively disseminating information about the current grievance procedures via the web, and residence hall programs.

**Action Point 6.2**

Create separate waiting rooms and exits for health and counseling clients.

This action point has been implemented.

### **Action Point 6.3**

Assess the need for additional counselors, including the addition of a counselor with a Ph.D. in counseling, to accommodate both undergraduate and graduate needs for additional counseling services.

Bard has two Ph.D. counselors, and the FTE at counseling has increased from 3.5 to 4, which compares favorably to other colleges. A nutritionist helps with eating disorders, and the College supports a part-time wellness coordinator. Services for off-campus counseling, including a psychiatrist, have increased. Students can apply for help online, and are contacted within 24 hours. Depression screenings are held regularly in the campus center. Also offered is "Let's Talk," which are drop-in sessions held in various locations across campus.

### **Action Point 6.6**

This link could be much more prominently displayed on the Academic Resources Center site and linked to several other areas of the Bard site so that it is easy to find and use.

The purpose of the above action point is to highlight the need for the College to make a clear statement about plagiarism and academic honesty. The College has done so, and this statement can be found at the websites of both DOSA and the Learning Commons.

### **Action Point 9.1**

Through print materials and web-sites, make clearer for all members of the community the mission and structure of Student Services and the relationship and points of contact between Student Services and Academic Affairs.

The College is continually updating its websites, which over time have become the main vehicle for delivering information. The Student Handbook is online. Due to a collaborative effort, all websites related to DOSA have been upgraded, including the fellowships website that connects DSO to DOSA and dean of the college websites. Residential Life has posted a mission statement. The Dean of Studies Office, and the Center for Civic Engagement have detailed websites as well.

### **Action Point 9.2**

Create a regular orientation and training mechanism for new student services staff, to take place before the start of each academic year, and regular in-service/training opportunities for staff members throughout the year.

Training for Residential and Student Life staff has increased, and includes the following: an annual three-day retreat for all on-call/back-up on-call staff (DOSA, Residential Life, Student Activities); a month-long training in July, plus trainings on various topics throughout the year, which include suicide prevention, motivational interviewing, BASICS/CHOICES, civic engagement, programming models; and participation in annual national workshops (including health services staff).

The Hudson Valley Residential Life Consortium was formed in fall 2011. The Consortium includes residence life professionals from Vassar College, Marist College, SUNY New Paltz, The Culinary Institute of America, Mount St. Mary College and Bard. Each institution hosts a professional development session each year. A listserv has been developed and efforts are in progress to share professional training and other resources.

### **Action Point 9.3**

Create mechanisms for student services staff to meet with faculty, especially new faculty, at the beginning of each academic year or semester, and regular opportunities for student services staff and faculty to interact throughout the year.

DOSA staff meets with new faculty members during new faculty orientation, and host annual receptions in September. Residential Life staff have reinvigorated programs and events in the residence halls to which faculty are invited. The new programming model for peer counselors (student resident dorm advisers) requires outreach to faculty. The Faculty Fellows program entails a meeting every semester of the fellows with DOSA staff.

At the organizational level, there is a faculty Student Affairs Committee, and DOSA is represented on the Fellowships Committee. Funding has been allotted for diversity-related programming, a collaborative effort that includes faculty, student clubs, and staff.

**Action Point 9.4**

Update and maintain Student Services web pages, ensuring correct contact information and schedules of programs. Include hyper-links to underscore connections among programs and services, and include links, as appropriate, to and from academic program web pages.

As recommended, the DOSA website has been substantially improved. [[inside.bard.edu/doso/resources/](http://inside.bard.edu/doso/resources/)].

**Action Point 9.5**

Increase staffing and financial support for student support services, including increased salaries for staff members, to enhance recruitment and retention, and increased funding for student support service budgets and physical resources.

In contrast to other administrative departments, Student Affairs was spared staffing and budget cuts made in response to the 2008 financial crisis. The Multicultural Affairs budget has doubled, including the hiring of a new director with a Ph.D. and teaching responsibilities. Residential Life staff has received salary increases. There are two new positions in athletics, and more full-time coaches. The counseling staff has two new psychologists and three new social workers. Staff positions in Student Activities include space management and transportation. Two new dean positions, for sophomores and for campus life, have been created. The director of Bard Response to Rape and Associated Violence Education is currently full-time, with a 1/4-time assignment in the Counseling Center.

## **6. Office of Program Development**

Institutional support for faculty research at Bard has undergone steady improvement. In the past the Office of Program Development (often referred to as the Grants Office) focused primarily on institutional support. The College now provides more support for faculty research.

In fall 2010 the dean of the college initiated the hiring of a program development associate dedicated to helping undergraduate faculty obtain outside funding; this position was converted to full-time in fall 2011. A second person in the Office of Program Development works with graduate and external programs to obtain grants, and a third person has been hired to monitor grants, to make sure financial matters and reporting are done properly.

Three longtime staff members, including the director, retired in summer 2011. The department has since been reorganized. The program development associate moved into the Office of the Dean of the College as faculty grants officer. This person's responsibilities, which are to assist undergraduate faculty members in identifying funding opportunities and assisting with grant proposals, remains much the same, but the new title and closer alignment with the priorities of the dean of the college better reflect the nature of the position, as well as providing better outreach to faculty. [Appendix 2.C.6-1].

The Office of Program Development has been restructured as the Office of Institutional Support. This new office will be proactive in identifying sources of funding to support college-wide programs, multi-disciplinary

efforts, the needs of graduate faculty, and other institutional needs. By working closely with college administration, staff and faculty, the office ensures that proposals reflect the priorities of the College, comply with the requirements of funding agencies, and accurately reflect the excellence of the work for which they advocate funding.

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 10.5**

The Office of Program Development should schedule regular meetings with individual departments to assess both the collective and individual goals that might lead to more impressive funding results.

As described above, the level of support of faculty research has increased substantially. The faculty grants officer makes presentations at each of the division meetings, and schedules regular meetings with individual programs to assist with the formulation of individual and departmental goals and plans of action for the expansion of grant funding.

## **7. Human Resources**

At the time of Bard's 2007 self-study, the College's director of human resources (HR) was fairly new to Bard, having arrived in fall 2004. She was instrumental in upgrading, modernizing and professionalizing the department. HR is more visible on campus than before. Other changes since the decennial review include improved record keeping, the initiation of a whistleblower policy [Appendix 2.C.7-1], and the solidification of the various benefits plans.

The responsibilities of HR staff have grown in both quantity and complexity, due to the increase in the number of external Bard programs and affiliates for which HR provides varying degrees of support. At the time of the decennial accreditation, Bard had roughly 1000 employees at all campuses; as of fall 2011, there are roughly 1104 employees. [Appendix 2.C.7-2]. Moreover, the change in federal laws has increased the number of people needing HR support. HR must now address differences in laws from state to state in which Bard has affiliates: New Jersey, Massachusetts, California and Louisiana, as well as overseas.

Due to budgeting adjustments, HR lost a staff position in January 2009. Some planning in HR was then abandoned for lack of staff. To compensate, Bard's HR staff has learned to accomplish more with less, primarily by using information technology to increase efficiency. Job applications, administrative and academic, are almost 100% electronic, which saves significant staff time.

HR has faced several challenges in recent years. Employment matters have become more litigious in response to non-renewal of contracts, hence the HR director organized consultations with attorneys. In addition, the College's unemployment payments have been growing. Even if an employee commits fraud or some other misdeed, that person can reapply for unemployment. Consequently the director of HR was sometimes involved in challenging unemployment claims: she spent time in court, and dealt with attorneys more than before.

At the end of 2011, the director of human resources left Bard. She has since been replaced. Additional duties have been absorbed by the existing HR staff, as well as by the vice president for administration and the assistant vice president for administration. Support staff in the vice president for administration's office has increased by one FTE.

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 6.4**

Actions at the top of the list include: an annual performance evaluation process; revised salary administration and compensation structure; development of clear "progressive discipline" procedure;

supervisor training that emphasizes coaching and clarity of position descriptions and expectations; interview techniques and orientation workshops for search committee members.

The “annual performance evaluation process” has not been initiated. Such a process would require an investment of time from both the HR staff and the management staff, and given the increased pressures on the HR staff as described above, it would not be possible for the College to monitor an annual performance review process effectively. The process would require that the College move toward a “pay for performance” system, which would require standard job descriptions, salary tiers, and a change in budget approval processes for managers. These changes would not fit into the current practices on campus, and hence would require staff time and commitment: such an allocation of resources currently is not considered a high a priority.

The suggested “revised salary administration and compensation structure” remains a good idea, but it is not clear what such a revision would be in practice. Often the standard administrative in colleges is that salary raises be based upon assessments by supervisors. At Bard, however, it is felt that such assessments might likely be unfair, because some supervisors are “tougher” than others.

The need for the “development of clear ‘progressive discipline’ procedure” identified in Bard’s 2007 self-study was inaccurate. Such procedures were already in place in the Employee Handbook, but they had not been implemented in practice. The director of HR worked on implementing them.

The suggestion that HR incorporate more thorough “supervisor training that emphasizes coaching and clarity of position descriptions and expectations” is a good one, which we plan to revisit when HR is not facing challenges due to insufficient budget and staff.

The idea of providing “interview techniques and orientation workshops for search committee members” was a request made by various faculty members. In response, the director of HR met with faculty groups to discuss legal and procedural issues, though this was not done systematically. We have found that discussion with faculty is far more productive than simply distributing paper guidelines, therefore HR staff will continue to meet with faculty to discuss searches, as time permits.

#### **Action Point 6.5**

Consider appointing a College ombudsman trained in conflict resolution.

The College continues to consider appointing a college ombudsman. We are currently weighing this with other priorities and needs, in order to determine how to best allocate resources.

## **8. Technology**

Technology at Bard, as everywhere, is undergoing constant change, both in infrastructure and how that infrastructure is utilized. Since the decennial accreditation, Bard has continued to upgrade its technological infrastructure. Important personnel changes have taken place as well.

A new chief technology officer and associate dean of information services was hired in summer 2008, and a new Academic Technology Services manager arrived in summer 2009. The Academic Technology Services manager has significantly increased interaction with faculty, which eases faculty access to technology, and makes better use of technology in the service of pedagogy. The chief technology officer left Bard in fall 2011, and this position is being rethought so as to maintain excellent technological leadership on campus while avoiding duplication of tasks performed by Information Services.

The mission of the College in teaching critical thinking drives the use of technology at Bard. The college is considering how best to incorporate Informational Literacy (IL) in such a way that will help advance its mission. Though courses in methodology and statistics deal directly with IL issues, it may work better to teach IL via

courses in specific fields rather than via IL courses per se. That would be parallel to the idea, widely supported at Bard, of teaching writing in writing intensive courses in specific fields, not in writing courses per se. Attempts to introduce IL during the Language and Thinking Program and First-Year Seminar have had poor response. Instead, it appears better to introduce discipline-specific IL issues at the junior level as part of a broader introduction to methods in the discipline.

For some programs, it might be appropriate to formalize such introductions to methods for their majors (for example, in methods courses or seminars in the junior year). On the other hand, because all students at Bard do Senior Projects, some methods competence, including disciplinary-related IL issues, is transmitted from the Senior Project adviser to the advisee, something that does not occur at colleges that do not have Senior Projects or the equivalent. Thus, some IL learning is already happening at Bard, though it is presumably not consistent.

Currently, Bard is planning to digitize all new Senior Projects, which historically have been stored in hard copy in the college library. In spring, 2011, seniors were asked (though not required) to submit Senior Projects digitally. The request had a very positive response: 320 out of 360 seniors submitted their projects digitally. It's important to note that the 320 projects submitted electronically included projects in non-print media, such as studio art and dance. The College is using Digital Commons repository software for storage and retrieval of Senior Projects. Students and/or faculty may limit access to individual work.

Administrative computing has made changes in the past five years, particularly in academic matters such as grades, criteria sheets, and course evaluation forms. The administrative computing staff was moved within the information technology (IT) staff structure. The director of Administrative Computing has become part of the IT management team, meeting weekly with other IT managers. IT services have been made available to administrative computing.

The goal of IT at Bard, as everywhere, is to provide usable information to the Bard community in the most efficient way possible. With this in mind, Bard's IT department has piloted a new model of creating custom-designed data views for the Advancement Department to make departmental data easier to use and reports easier to generate. A chief component is the designation of a departmental data "steward." The College is contemplating hiring a Data Services Specialist, who would combine the skills of a programmer analyst and a trainer, to create a data community (a community of data stewards), rather than the current model of Banner and its "customers."

The College aims to further enhance remote teaching, especially between the Annandale-on-Hudson campus and Bard institutions located elsewhere (for example, Simon's Rock and the Bard High School Early Colleges). This would allow Bard's various institutions to better share resources. The college will need to enhance infrastructure, and train faculty and staff how to use remote technology [Appendix 2.C.8-1].

#### ***From Visiting Team:***

##### **Standard 2 and 3 Part B: Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal and Resources**

The Visiting Team recommends that Bard's Periodic Review Report give a full description and analysis of how these relatively new planning structures and the expanded role of administrative teams and constituent groups have contributed to planning and resource allocation decisions in the intervening five years. The Visiting Team also encourages the College to move forward on its plans to enhance its technology infrastructure and to establish a standing campus-wide committee on energy conservation and environmental practices.

*[The aspect of this recommendation relevant to the present section is the first part of the second sentence; see Section 2.C.12 for a discussion of the recommendation in the first sentence, and Section 2.C.13 for a discussion of the recommendation in the second part of the second sentence.]*

Since the decennial accreditation, the College has completed several critical upgrades to both the campus technology infrastructure and to the organization of campus technology leadership. More importantly, the College has moved forward in using these improvements to enhance pedagogy and research.

Bard has taken steps to increase available bandwidth; improve analysis and management of network traffic; relieve pressure on a single server room; increase enterprise file storage/sharing; and upgrade integrated central email and calendaring services. Technical improvements include a new core switch; a new internet router; a new firewall and packet shaper; integrated email and calendaring services; installation of 15tb of enterprise storage for large file storage and sharing; a new server room in RKC Science Center; increased bandwidth from 65mb to 300mb; server virtualization and automated backups, migration from AIX to Linux.

Technology is only useful if it is properly supported. With this in mind, Bard reorganized IT into five management groups: networks and systems; web services; user services; administrative computing; and academic technology. A leader for each group was designated, having been promoted from within current staff. The reorganization allowed administrative computing and academic computing, which had previously been separate, to integrate. Even though IT at Bard is small, the creation of these management groups has been instrumental in coordinating and expanding services to a demanding campus, in spite of the College's very limited resources.

Reorganizing the IT staff has led to greater data integration, improved form-creation and improved training and documentation. A particularly successful outcome was the complete integration of both online student course evaluation and faculty submission of student evaluations and grades as a full partnership between administrative computing, web services and the Office of the Registrar. Similarly, the College has expanded the use of technology by creating new relationships between the IT staff and the Offices of Admissions and Alumni/ae Relations.

The increased use of technology, while based in the Annandale-on-Hudson campus, also is assisting the various campuses and programs, and creating links between them. The Annandale-on-Hudson campus implemented the open source educational software Moodle in 2007; in 2012 this software will be expanded for use by the three BHSEC campuses. The College has also expanded its use of video conferencing for "shared" classrooms, linking the Annandale-on-Hudson campus with other campuses. For example, a course in New Media and Society has weekly participation by students in Annandale-on-Hudson and Al-Quds; an advanced Chinese class has students in Annandale-on-Hudson and Simon's Rock; a shared sub-cellular biology class convened simultaneously in Annandale-on-Hudson and BHSEC II; and a well-established weekly "virtual classroom" program linking Annandale-on-Hudson and Smolny College continues.

### ***From self-study:***

#### **Action Point 11.5**

Craft a budget that funds faculty projects/release time for learning to use and efficiently integrate technology into the curriculum, more curricular support staff to develop faculty projects, introduction of credit-bearing training courses, more space for communication, interaction and training of all involved (faculty, staff, and students), technical support for a variety of smaller entities across campus, and additional administrative staff. Faculty should also be encouraged to use existing resources, such as NITLE, more effectively than they do at present.

This action point was not well formulated, because it focuses on the technology, rather than academic needs articulated by faculty and staff. The current focus on IL rather than on technology, as articulated above, is more appropriate. A sufficient budget for technology is still needed, although securing additional funds is challenging. Bard currently participates in Educause, rather than NITLE. Educause serves a wider constituency than NITLE (the latter is for liberal arts colleges only), and is more cost effective as well. Bard still attends NITLE conferences when pertinent. Bard is also a member of the Northeast Regional Computing Program (an associate program of Educause), and the Research and Education Networking Information Sharing and Analysis Center (a

higher education cyber security consortium). Bard's library is a member of the two most active technology resource-sharing groups: ConnectNY (an 18-member consortium in New York state), and the Oberlin Group (a national organization of 80 liberal arts college libraries).

**Action Point 11.6**

Due to the explosion of information output and the proliferation of sources in the information age, it will become increasingly important to consider guidelines of IL across the curriculum, requiring students to master basic concepts and skills.

When this matter was brought before the Library, Bookstore, Computer Committee (LBCC), two members of the committee decided to initiate a "Informational Literacy Pilot Project" which would allow them to provide students at the time of Moderation or shortly thereafter with a set of general as well as program specific research tools (either via small orientation and/or class sessions), and to study possible effects on the quality of Senior Projects in various programs.

As discussed above, Bard will focus on IL within each disciplines rather than across curriculum. The Informational Literary Pilot Project (mentioned above) that had been anticipated in 2007 did not take place.

**9. Study Abroad**

Bard is engaged in study abroad in two ways: supervising international Bard-run programs, and providing assistance to Bard students who wish to study abroad (in Bard or non-Bard programs). These functions had been managed by one person, which became untenable as the College grew. In fall 2011 a new full-time study abroad adviser was hired. This staff member works with students who want to study abroad, leaving the dean for international affairs and civic engagement more available to focus on supervising Bard's growing number of international programs.

The College focuses on whether study abroad works as part of the academic program of each student who goes abroad. We have streamlined the application procedure. A student who wishes to participate in one of the roughly 40 approved study abroad programs must first meet with the study abroad adviser to discuss logistics (including financial), review options, and select a program. The student then submits an application, which is reviewed by the dean of studies to make sure the student's plans make sense academically. In exceptional cases where an applicant has a GPA below the required 3.0, is not yet moderated, or is seeking to spend more than a year away, the application is presented to the Faculty Executive Committee. The majority of Bard students who study abroad go on either a Bard run program or on a program that is on the approved list. [For information about Bard-sponsored study abroad programs, Bard intensive language programs abroad, and Bard-approved study abroad programs, see [bard.edu/globalstudy/.](http://bard.edu/globalstudy/)]

There has been a decline in the number of Bard students studying abroad, starting in the 2009/2010. [Appendix 2.C.9-1]. The cause of this may be the larger state of the economy. Bard is more concerned with the quality of international education its students receive, rather than how many choose to study abroad.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 11.11**

Gather feedback from students who have participated in approved study abroad programs. Make process more transparent, eliminate bureaucratic issues at the program level, and provide more conclusive data on what kind of programs Bard students tend to take advantage of, for how long, for how many credits from what kind of institutions, and in what form this work has been integrated into their studies here at Bard.

The new study abroad advisor worked closely with the dean of studies, to create a more user-friendly application process for students wishing to study abroad, and to better integrate a student's study abroad experience into his



or her overall academic program. The College is now in a good position to begin assessing the impact of study abroad on its students, and make use of such an assessment. Obtaining feedback from study abroad students is time consuming, so it may be some time before enough data is collected to yield meaningful results.

**Action Point 11.12**

Examine staffing of the Study Abroad office and see how it might be supplemented or improved.

As noted above, an new advisor dedicated solely to the study abroad program hired in fall 2011.

**Action Point 13.2**

We recommend creation of a full-time position for a study abroad coordinator within the Office of the Dean of International Studies.

Please see response to Action Point 11.12.

## **10. Returning to College Program**

Given the small number of students who participated in the The Continuing Studies Program (CSP), it was not tenable to continue supporting a separate set of admission standards, graduation requirements, and courses. The College remains committed to providing a liberal arts education to students beyond traditional college age, and has redesigned CSP as the Returning to College Program (RCP). This program is for students who are at least 25 years of age and who have completed successfully at least one year of college (28 credits). RCP does not accommodate those who are seeking to earn a second bachelor's degree.

Our premise in creating RCP was that returning students benefit most from participating in the regular undergraduate curriculum, together with their younger colleagues. Inclusion of returning students benefits undergraduates as well, since a wider diversity of ages and perspectives is brought into the classroom. Hence, in contrast to CSP, RCP relies upon the College's regular undergraduate course offerings. Application for admission to RCP and the Bard Bridge Program (for local school district students) is done through the College's Admissions Office. [[bard.edu/admission/rcp/](http://bard.edu/admission/rcp/)]

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 11.13**

CSP is distinct from the Inter-generational Seminars and the Lifetime Learning Institute, two other Bard initiatives that serve adult populations. It is distinct also from the Red Hook-Bard Bridge program and similar initiatives that also serve non-traditionally aged populations (pre-college aged students). The College should investigate points of overlap among these programs and consider the ways in which these programs can be integrated and the resources that support them can be shared.

The transition from CSP to RCP has enhanced educational opportunities for students beyond traditional college age who seek a bachelor's degree at Bard. The other programs listed in this Action Point each serve a distinct, and small, audience, none of which is degree-seeking; as such, the goal is to integrate RCP with the regular undergraduate program, not with the other small programs listed in the Action Point.

## **11. Graduate and External Programs**

Bard is currently structured according to the model of an undergraduate core with satellite institutes, some granting advanced degrees, others not. [Appendices 1.B-1, 1.C-1, 1.C-2]. Bard's model allows the College to offer a broad range of subjects not traditionally found at a small liberal arts college, and to afford Bard undergraduates opportunities that a student at a small liberal arts college would otherwise not have. For

example: Bard's Graduate Center (BGC) faculty have taught courses for undergraduates on the Annandale campus; an undergraduate Art History course was taught jointly by Bard undergraduate faculty and BGC doctoral candidates; the Center for Curatorial Studies (CCS), located on the same campus as the undergraduate college, accepts juniors and seniors in Art History seminars with the permission of their undergraduate advisers, and has exchanged faculty with the undergraduate Art History and Studio Arts Programs; and students from the Annandale campus have taken courses at Simon's Rock.

*From self-study:*

**Action Point 11.14**

Graduate programs should continue to think about outreach initiatives to Bard's undergraduates, opening spaces in their courses where appropriate and planning joint events with programs at the college with whom they have a natural affinity. Faculty in the college, likewise, should make efforts to work closely with colleagues on the graduate faculties to develop innovative programming (as in the case of BCEP and the Environmental and Urban Studies program) designed to bring undergraduate and graduate students together around topics, lectures, and special events of interest to both. As suggested in Standard 13, a liaison committee should be formed to foster such exchanges.

The opportunities available to Bard's undergraduates due to the existence of the satellite institutions and programs are not yet fully realized. Part of the challenge is geographical: it is hoped that modern technology will help bridge that gap. The College intends to explore ways of bringing together faculty from the undergraduate college and the various satellite institutions and programs together, with the aim of exploring potential mutual benefits.

One example of positive cooperation between a graduate program and the undergraduate college is the 3-2 program combining the undergraduate college and the Bard Center for Environmental Policy (BCEP). In this 3-2 program, Bard undergraduates proceed directly from three years of undergraduate study at Bard to one of the two-year master's degree programs offered by BCEP. Undergraduates apply for 3-2 programs in their junior year. Completion of the undergraduate distribution requirements, successful Moderation into a program of study, and approval from their undergraduate advisor is required to enroll in the BCEP graduate program. Accepted students spend two years completing the master's degree at BCEP. The master's thesis in BCEP serves as the student's Senior Project, with an undergraduate advisor serving as the second reader. Graduates receive a B.A. and an M.S. from Bard in five years.

Bard envisages the creation of new 3-2 programs, as outlined in Bard's Strategic Plan [Appendix 2.A.1-2], in which students similarly complete three years of undergraduate studies followed by two years in graduate studies, with a single combined senior/masters project, leading to a B.A. and the appropriate masters degree in five years. The idea for such programs is in response to the current financial climate, in which parents are seeking a more pragmatic return for the money they invest in higher education, and in which some pundits are calling for savings by decreasing the time needed for a bachelors degree from four years to three. Given the current state of American secondary education, Bard does not view the idea of shortening the time students spend in college as educationally sound. The College is committed to responding to significant trends in American society. Bard's 3-2 program model would allow students to stay in college for five years rather than three; strengthen liberal arts education by combining an undergraduate education in the liberal arts with more practical graduate education; and attract students by offering a faster route to a graduate degree.

The proposed new 3-2 programs would draw upon Bard's existing graduate and undergraduate programs, and would increase exchange between the undergraduate college and Bard's international programs. Topics for the new 3-2 programs are still under development, but will draw on Bard's existing strengths to offer masters degrees in fields that provide promising career opportunities, and are feasible in terms of Bard's resources. Such proposed 3-2 programs would require, in individual instances, new degree registration and/or external funding. These programs are being developed under the oversight of the dean of graduate studies and the dean of the college, with consultation among the appropriate program directors, faculty committees and administrative staff.

Bard's Levy Institute is currently applying to New York State Education Department for registration of an M.S. degree in economic theory and policy; undergraduates in associated majors (economics, political studies, sociology) will be able to earn a B.A. and M.S. through this 3-2 program. The vice president and dean for international affairs and civic engagement, along with other faculty members in political studies, are planning a 3-2 program that will lead to a B.A. and an M.I.A (masters in international affairs) degree. It is envisioned that this program will draw on undergraduate faculty members in political studies, economics, human rights, and other majors, and faculty in the Bard Globalization and International Affairs program.

It was decided that forming a liaison committee as suggested in the Action Point would have too broad a scope, and therefore not be effective. It would be better to have institutional cooperation on specific projects, such as 3-2 programs, instead of a single college-wide liaison committee. Specific points of cooperation would require specific oversight committees consisting of the relevant faculty and administrators. That said, the dean of the college, the dean for international affairs and civic engagement and the dean of graduate studies meet regularly, essentially acting, among other things, as an informal liaison committee at the administrative level.

#### **Action Point 13.1**

A liaison committee of Bard faculty and administrators should be formed and meet regularly to address the interface, as well as strengthen relations between the undergraduate college and its external programs. This committee would look for practical ways to capitalize on Bard's creative initiative, maximizing undergraduate access to these rich and energetic programs.

This Action Point is addressed above.

#### **Action Point 13.3**

We recommend that the dean of the college and the dean of graduate studies explore how faculty members holding coordinated or joint appointments in the undergraduate college and in a graduate program should be reviewed and promoted, particularly where the programs employ different faculty contracts—for example, where the graduate program does not make tenure-track appointments. We also recommend that they review present policies regarding the benefits eligibility of faculty members who teach in both the undergraduate college and in a graduate program.

The relevant deans at Bard meet regularly, and deal with this topic on a case-by-case basis. The diverse nature of the graduate programs and their faculty structures makes it difficult to have a single policy that would work in all cases.

#### ***From the letter from MSCHE dated 18 November 2011:***

##### **Action by MSCHE on 17 November 2011**

To request that the Periodic Review Report, due June 1, 2012, document the integration with and impact on the institution of its branch campuses and additional locations (Standard 13).

Bard College is simultaneously a traditional liberal arts college and a progressive, entrepreneurial institution with a variety of graduate and affiliated programs. The institution is made up of many parts, and the impacts of the interactions would be different for each part. In general, it is hoped that the new partnership programs are benefit all participants—Bard faculty and students, the faculty and students of the partner institutions and those faculty and students whom Bard recruits from other colleges and universities to attend or work at our partner institutions, generally for a semester or a year.

The overall benefit gained by the High School Early Colleges, foreign universities, non-degree granting programs in the U.S. and other affiliates is clear, since Bard is a well-established institution with a national reputation of excellence. Mutuality and equality have been at the base of Bard's partnerships, especially the international ones that are overseen by the Institute for International Liberal Education. Whereas the ideal of

mutuality holds in all cases, the specific practical benefits to Bard and the affiliated institutions, and the balance of which campus receives “more benefits,” vary from case to case.

The question Middle States put forth in the 2007 review is one that is asked of the College often: how does the undergraduate college on the Annandale campus benefit from these affiliations?

The benefits to Bard’s undergraduates on the main Annandale campus are readily apparent with regard to international partnerships: well-certified opportunities for students to go abroad to study in a liberal arts program that is fully integrated into the foreign academic and cultural milieu. These students have the best of both worlds, in that they can enjoy the benefits of a liberal arts education (curricula and courses with a multidisciplinary orientation, student-centered teaching with emphasis on class participation and writing, along with full participation in an academic setting whose intellectual contents and culture are fully contextualized in the surrounding society. They work with faculty members who are from the country in which the programs are located, and study alongside peers from those countries as well.

Students from partner institutions typically spend a period of study at Bard, greatly enriching course discussions and Bard’s campus culture. Bard anticipates at least 40 students from partner institutions will spend a semester or full academic year at the Annandale campus in 2012-2013. Bard students also benefit from exposure to a ‘virtual campus’: joint video courses that link faculty and students at partner institutions with those in Annandale.

An exciting new international student conference, which will bring together students from several of Bard’s partner programs, is planned for fall 2012. Bard students have already participated in student conferences in Kyrgyzstan and Russia, and the network-wide student conference will permit students from the entire Bard network to meet together.

Faculty members from the undergraduate college have the opportunity to visit and teach at partner programs, and get to know foreign colleagues through repeated, reciprocal visits. In 2011-2012, three Bard undergraduate faculty members taught for either one or two semesters in Palestine, and one faculty member taught in Kyrgyzstan; a half dozen attended retreat seminars in Russia and Kyrgyzstan. Bard faculty members in Annandale-on-Hudson hosted visitors from partner institutions in Russia, Palestine, Kyrgyzstan, South Africa and Germany. Bard faculty members sit on the Academic Council of Smolny Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences in St. Petersburg, Russia—the first foreigners to take on this role at the university. Academic governance bodies include members from Bard and the partner programs. Since these collaborations are ongoing, the links that are formed are not transient, and joint work provides unusual opportunities to gain insight into the workings of foreign academic systems and cultures.

The opportunity to co-manage aspects of an international partnership and to work together with colleagues abroad has become a regular part of life for Bard administrators at many levels, from the president and vice presidents to the dean of the college, the registrar, and the admissions and financial aid staff. Awareness of international concerns and perspectives has become an ongoing and important part of Bard’s campus culture. Practical collaboration stamps Bard as a self-consciously global actor. Along with Bard’s well-established reputation for civic activism, this international connection enhances the College’s distinctive profile, and attracts students interested in global affairs and civic engagement.

Bard’s domestic partnerships and new campuses enable the College to further its mission, while providing a chance to influence the direction of American secondary education. For example, BCEP, which is located in Annandale, allows some qualified undergraduates to attend its graduate courses. The most immediate benefit that the Bard High School Early Colleges (BHSECs) provides to the undergraduate college is as a source of potential students (students at the BHSECs complete two years of college-level work prior to graduation, and transfer to a four-year college, rather than applying as first-year students).

The Faculty Fellowship and Exchange Program, which commenced in fall 2011, brings BHSEC faculty to Bard's undergraduate college for teaching and scholarly or artistic work. [Appendix 1.C-3, part 4]. The benefit for the BHSEC faculty involved is evident. Bard's main campus benefits as well by the presence of these successful visiting faculty members, and by the opportunity for Bard's undergraduate faculty to gain a better understanding of secondary schools by working closely with faculty members who teach at a high school/early college.

The Bard Prison Initiative (BPI), though run independently of the undergraduate college, has recruited Bard undergraduate faculty to teach in local prisons. Faculty who have done so uniformly report it as an extraordinarily positive teaching experience and opportunity.

Bard's forward-thinking expansion into satellite locations have instilled in the faculty of the somewhat isolated Annandale-on-Hudson campus, a larger perspective regarding the social location of their educational enterprise. This global network of affiliations has allowed Bard's undergraduate campus to maintain the benefits of a small, close-knit, rural campus without sinking into ivory-tower isolationism.

## **12. Planning and Resource Allocation**

The insight of the decennial accreditation Visiting Team is evident in their perceptive description of both Bard's genuine successes and its distinctive way of functioning:

“Bard has experienced a meteoric, and quite possibly unprecedented, rise in its fortunes since the appointment of its President, Leon Botstein, in 1975. From a small non-selective college on the brink of bankruptcy, it has become a highly regarded and selective liberal arts college whose identity is well fixed in its own and the public's mind. ... To accomplish this transformation required risk-taking, both financial and programmatic, as well as entrepreneurship – indeed opportunism – on the parts of President Botstein and Executive Vice President Dimitri B. Papadimitriou. Without such an attitude on their parts, it is doubtful whether Bard would be the vital place it is today.”

The Visiting Team then raised the following question:

“One question that percolated throughout the team visit was whether Bard is now at a crossroads in its history; that is, whether Bard would be well advised to use the next ten years to secure for posterity the considerable strengths it has built within the undergraduate college and in the programs, institutes and centers that circle around the college.”

Bard is eager to “secure for posterity the considerable strengths it has built.” The capital campaign currently underway, has been successful so far in spite of the difficult financial climate. Our goal is to increase endowment from \$185 million to \$535 million.

Even with capital campaign success, Bard's endowment, and endowment per undergraduate, will still be significantly lower than that of many of the colleges with which we compete for students and faculty [Appendix 2.C.12-1]. It is important to note that, in calculating endowment per undergraduate, only that part of the endowment dedicated to the undergraduate college is used: many of Bard's peer institutions do not have Bard's large scope, over which its total endowment is spread.

The College is much stronger, both academically and financially, than it was in 1975. It has built up its endowment significantly under the guidance of its president. The physical plant has also been improved significantly over the past few decades, though much remains to be done. The alumni base of the College is small, and neither particularly wealthy nor loyal, in comparison with our peer institutions. While starting at a financial disadvantage in comparison to many of its peers, the College faces the challenges shared by all

institutions of higher education, namely, the economic climate and the potential decline in the size of the college-aged population.

These facts, coupled with Bard's increasing scope and ambitions beyond the traditional model of a liberal arts college, lead us to the view that we are not at a crossroads that necessitates revolutionary changes in the way we manage finances, planning and resource allocation, or in the leadership style of the College. Bard is taking steps to implement the types of changes regarding planning and resource allocation recommended by the Visiting Team, but these changes are in the form of small evolutionary steps rather than revolutionary leaps. The success of the past decades and the challenges the College is likely to face in the near future indicate the need to stay the course. The faculty, regardless of their agreement or disagreement with the president on any particular issue, certainly does not want drastic change.

The recommendation that Bard secure its strengths for posterity will require the continued ingenuity, flexibility, and rapid decision-making that has characterized the president's approach in bringing the College from the difficult situation of 1975 to its present success. Since 1975, the caliber of its students and faculty at Bard has vastly improved, and endowment has increased. Bard considers its peer institutions to be other highly selective liberal arts colleges, with vastly greater resources and stronger alumni bases than ours. With our move into the "big leagues," the College needs to continue its dynamic style of activity to remain competitive with its new peers; it must, similarly to the Red Queen, run as fast as it can to stay in place.

Because Bard's alumni base is neither large nor wealthy, the president's strategy for attracting donors has been based upon the "satellite" model. We have found that once satellites become connected to Bard, their donors fund the core aspects of the College as well. The satellite model has been so successful that a number of Bard's affiliated programs were initially proposed not by the College, but rather by donors who, knowing of Bard's distinctive structure and entrepreneurial spirit, approached the College with specific academic projects in mind. Projects that originated in this way include the Bard Graduate Center and the Center for Curatorial Studies, and Bard's relations with the American University of Central Asia, the European College of the Liberal Arts and the Longy School of Music of Bard College. Of course, the satellite programs are not designed solely to connect the College with donors, but all function to promote the essential belief in the liberal arts that is at the heart of Bard's mission. This strategy for building up the College's reputation and attracting donors, though perhaps unorthodox, and not necessarily replicable at other colleges, has been very successful for Bard.

Bard's strategy requires a constant supply of new ideas and initiatives, and a willingness to push for such ideas quickly when the time is right. The Visiting Team noted that "the administrative structure of the College is well defined, but it seemed to the Visiting Team that planning and decision-making are sometimes done in small groups of two or three with the President." The Visiting Team also wrote, "as Bard becomes larger and far more complex, the Visiting Team believes that the college could benefit from greater emphasis on team planning and decision-making." The rapid decision-making and implementation required by the president's strategy is often at odds with the slow, deliberative nature of faculty decision-making, and the attachment, at times exaggerated, of the faculty to college traditions, which leads to the faculty producing and responding to initiatives at a pace much slower than the College can tolerate. (It is not that Bard's faculty is lacking in initiative—the opposite is true—but the pace and tenor of faculty discussion is simply not always compatible with that of the administration.) The president is at times compelled to propel initiatives without as much consultation as the faculty might consider appropriate.

For example, in launching the new Citizen Science initiative, the president wanted it implemented rapidly, with the first session to be held in January 2011, in order to be pathbreaking. The faculty, upon hearing about the plan approximately a year prior to the proposed implementation, suggested delaying the implementation by at least a year, to give the faculty more time to consider the matter. The president did not yield, and, with the help of an excellent director he chose for the initiative (a new member of the Biology Program), Citizen Science was indeed launched in January 2011. It was without question an overall success and an important initiative for the College that gained significant outside recognition [Appendices 1.C-3, Part 3, and A-1].

It could be debated whether the lack of sufficient initiative and speed and a reluctance at times to make tough decisions on the part of Bard's faculty is the cause of the president's need to push through decisions with at times less than the expected consultation, or whether the president's activity has led to faculty passivity and defensiveness. Such a debate would serve little purpose. The more important matter is for faculty and administration to continue working together toward more cooperation and teamwork in the planning process, not with the intent to slow down the administration's curricular ambitions, but rather to bring the faculty into the discussion as much as possible, and to continue to promote a culture of teamwork and inclusion.

In practice, the situation regarding "the involvement of the community in assessing the priorities of Bard and in shaping institutional plans," as phrased by the Visiting Team, has improved, and is expected to continue to do so. The college administration insists, rightly, on continuing to have the final say in all decisions, and insists, again rightly, on being able to make rapid plans and decisions, at times without full community discussion. What has changed, and will continue to change, is not a transfer of decision-making to the faculty, but rather an increase in the dialogue between faculty and administration in regard to long-range planning and decision-making.

A number of factors have led to this evolutionary change. First, there has been a generational shift in the faculty, where the younger faculty are more active professionally than their senior colleagues, and do not have a history of confrontation with the president. Indeed, some younger faculty members have been attracted to Bard precisely because of the entrepreneurial spirit promoted by the president. This shift in the faculty, combined with the now lengthy experience of the president, has led to a better relationship between faculty and administration; the ideological feuds between faculty and administration that were once a regular feature of the College are largely in the past.

The increasing size and complexity of the College have necessitated more team-work in planning and decision-making. The president meets with the "cabinet" of vice-presidents, which consists of the executive vice president, the vice president and dean of the college, the vice president and dean of graduate studies, and the vice presidents for Development and Alumni/ae Affairs, Student Affairs, International Affairs and Civic Engagement, Administration, Academic Affairs, and Special Global Initiatives. The dean of the college and the dean of graduate studies meet at least once monthly to discuss the coordination of the undergraduate and graduate colleges/programs, conferring more often as needed. The dean for international affairs and civic engagement monitors all external programs. The executive vice president has appointed his executive assistant as a liaison to various committees, including the Information Resources Council and the Sustainability Council; additionally, the executive assistant to the executive vice president works with the dean of the college on academic budgets (in addition to the work of the latter with the vice president of Finance and the controller).

The new faculty governance structure has led to more appropriate venues for useful dialogue between faculty and administration. The Faculty Senate meets annually with the president, or more often if needed; the Planning and Appointments Committee meets at the start of every academic year with the executive vice president; and the "dean's council" (the chairs of the Executive Committee, the Curriculum Committee, the Planning and Appointments Committee and the Faculty Senate) meet regularly with the dean of the college.

Increased communication between faculty and administration in matters of planning and resource allocation is seen in many other ways. For example, the president regularly reports to the full faculty on financial matters; the dean of the college invited all program directors to provide input into the strategic plan; and there has been increased faculty input into the Informational Resources Council, which has a faculty co-chair and an administrator co-chair. These new avenues for communication very much address, at least with respect to the faculty, the concern of the Visiting Team, which suggested "that administrators invest time in educating faculty and student groups about the availability (and limitations) of resources and about the choices that Bard faces in the wise mobilization of these resources." This new cooperation has already produced results; for example, in December 2008, the divisional chairs worked with the dean of the college to decide which visiting faculty positions could be eliminated as the College sought to reduce the faculty salary expenses for the 2009-2010 academic year.

***From Visiting Team:***

**Standard 2 and 3 Part A: Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal and Resources**

The Visiting Team recommends that the President and the Vice Presidents continue to expand the involvement of the community in assessing the priorities of Bard and in shaping institutional plans. In particular, the Team suggests that administrative teams with interlocking and overlapping membership be afforded meaningful opportunities to deliberate on competing proposals for resources as a way to achieve a broader sense of investment in whatever decision is reached. Furthermore, the Team suggests that administrators invest time in educating faculty and student groups about the availability (and limitations) of resources and about the choices that Bard faces in the wise mobilization of these resources. With this greater community involvement comes the responsibility to assume greater ownership of decisions, greater commitment to a distributed planning process that can be time-consuming and time-constrained. Clear communication about expectations, timetables and long-term goals will be essential as these “cultural” changes are implemented.

As discussed above, there has been slow but steady changes of this type.

**Standard 2 and 3 Part B: Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal and Resources**

The Visiting Team recommends that Bard’s Periodic Review Report give a full description and analysis of how these relatively new planning structures and the expanded role of administrative teams and constituent groups have contributed to planning and resource allocation decisions in the intervening five years. The Visiting Team also encourages the College to move forward on its plans to enhance its technology infrastructure and to establish a standing campus-wide committee on energy conservation and environmental practices.

*[The aspect of this recommendation relevant to the present section is the first sentence; see Section 2.C.8 for a discussion of the recommendation in the first part of the second sentence, and Section 2.C.13 for a discussion of the recommendation in the second part of the second sentence.]*

As described above, there have been incremental improvements in communication between faculty and administration about planning issues. New planning structures have led to better mutual understanding on the part of the various constituents at the College. It is too soon to assess the effect of these new structures on long-term planning and resource allocation.

**Standard 2 and 3 Part C: Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal and Resources**

The Visiting Team recommends that the College develop a formal 5-year financial plan and budget, which aligns with current operating budget revenues and expenses, and reflects multi-year projections for each. This process should include faculty and administrative collaborative work so that the budget plan reflects Bard’s mission and goals, resource acquisition strategies, priority-based expenditure allocation and annual assessment of performance toward the plan and goals.

The College has a 5-year financial plan [Appendix 4-1]. The process developing the budget is part of the larger topic of planning and resource allocation at the College, discussed above. The role of the faculty in budgetary planning is discussed in Section 2.B.6.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 5.1**

In particular, there may be more need for formalized communication within the administration, especially with respect to long-term planning.



A variety of new meetings within the administration have taken place in the period since the decennial accreditation.

### **13. Sustainability**

In January 2008, Bard's president signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. This pledge, drafted by twelve university presidents, was created as a campus-based response to the unratified Kyoto Protocol. In recognizing the importance to the global climate of an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions below 1990 levels by 2050, the Commitment calls upon universities to "exercise leadership in their communities and throughout society by modeling ways to minimize global warming emissions." Signatories pledge to undertake the local initiation of a "comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality." Within a year of signing, Bard completed an inventory of GHG emissions through a contract with Johnson Controls using 2007 as the base year, and has set 2035 as the target date for achieving climate neutrality. [[presidentsclimatecommitment.org/about/commitment/](http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/about/commitment/)].

Bard formed a Sustainability Council in spring 2010. The Council includes the dean of the college, the director of the Bard Center for Environmental Policy, the coordinator of Sustainability, the Energy Efficiency coordinator, the dean of Campus Life, the executive assistant to the executive vice president, a member of the faculty and a student. In spring 2011 the Council oversaw an assessment at Bard using the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS). The College achieved a STARS silver assessment rating [[stars.aashe.org/institutions/bard-college-ny/report/2011-06-14/](http://stars.aashe.org/institutions/bard-college-ny/report/2011-06-14/)].

Before the establishment of the Sustainability Council, a troubling separation existed between the academic scholarly engagement with sustainability, and the administrative implementation on campus. The dean of the college organized an environmental task force to review undergraduate curriculum and promote extracurricular activity for students; while separately Bard's coordinator of sustainability addressed sustainability issues on campus at the practical level. This separation is in contrast to best practices in the academic world, which use campuses as laboratories for going green, wherein the administrative staff that deals with environmental issues connects more directly with the academic side of the College.

The Sustainability Council worked toward strengthening the connection between the academic and the practical, aiming to include larger segments of campus in this approach [Appendix 2.C.13-1]. In addition, the Council has developed a baseline survey of sustainability-focused and related courses on campus, and is also producing an inventory of sustainability-focused and related research. Graduate students at the Bard Center for Environmental Policy (BCEP) are involved in campus-as-laboratory research on a regular basis.

An expanded program in Environmental and Urban Studies (EUS) was approved in spring 2010. This undergraduate program, while based in academic study, encourages students to connect their academic training with real world experience via participation in relevant internships, community service projects, and study abroad programs during the junior year and/or the summers [[eus.bard.edu/](http://eus.bard.edu/)]. A search is currently underway for an EUS program director, whose duties will include teaching, planning and coordinating the EUS curriculum, organizing and supervising student internships for the EUS practicum requirement, outreach to community organizations and fund raising. This position will be central to advancing the integration of sustainability into the undergraduate curriculum.

The position of EUS director is supported initially by a three-year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. A committee of the dean of the college, the director of BCEP and three faculty members, administers this grant. In addition, over a dozen students and faculty research projects have been funded by the grant.

***From Visiting Team:***

**Standard 2 and 3 Part B: Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal and Resources**

The Visiting Team recommends that Bard's Periodic Review Report give a full description and analysis of how these relatively new planning structures and the expanded role of administrative teams and constituent groups have contributed to planning and resource allocation decisions in the intervening five years. The Visiting Team also encourages the College to move forward on its plans to enhance its technology infrastructure and to establish a standing campus-wide committee on energy conservation and environmental practices.

*[The aspect of this recommendation relevant to the present section is the second part of the second sentence; see Section 2.C.12 for a discussion of the recommendation in the first sentence, and Section 2.C.8 for a discussion of the recommendation in the first part of the second sentence.]*

The newly formed Sustainability Council fulfills this recommendation.

***From self-study:***

**Action Point 2/3.2**

There should be a standing campus-wide committee that has as its mission the dissemination of energy conservation policies, and to recommend action to improve the environmental practices of the institution.

Again, the newly formed Sustainability Council fulfills this action point.

## Section 3

### Narrative Identifying Major Challenges and/or Opportunities

Bard College has undergone a number of major reorientations in its 150-year history. It began by aiming to produce well-educated men to be trained for priesthood in the Episcopal Church. Later, it became a progressive college owned by Columbia University. Later still, it became an independent coeducational college with a strong tradition in the arts. During the past 35 years, under the leadership of the current president, the College has not only grown in size (roughly threefold in the number of undergraduates), but it has significantly broadened its scope and ambitions, while maintaining the core focus on quality undergraduate education. The College has five dimensions, each of which supports the others: the undergraduate program, graduate education, the arts, international education, and the reform of secondary education. As can be seen from the list of new programs, both on campus and at affiliated institutions, set up in the five years since the decennial accreditation (listed briefly in Section 1.C and described in more detail in Appendices 1.C-1 and 1.C-2), it is plausible to claim that no other college of similarly small size and endowment has such breadth of activity or such an impact on education in the larger world.

Bard has achieved this growth in size and impact over the past few decades at a time of financial uncertainty, which includes an ongoing set of financial, organizational and pedagogical challenges.

The financial challenges facing Bard (relating to Standards 2, 3, 4 and 5) are substantial and unrelenting. In spite of the very impressive fundraising of recent years, and the resulting growth to the endowment and physical plant, the College does not have the level of endowment (and, more particularly, endowment per student) found at many of its peer institutions. And yet, Bard has many more ambitious new programs than most (or all) of these peer institutions, resulting in the necessity for intensive fundraising every year. Moreover, Bard's alumni base is much smaller and less wealthy than for many of its peer institutions. Among the oldest alumni are Episcopal priests, among the slightly less old alumni are artists and writers, and even among the most recent alumni are found relatively few doctors, lawyers and financiers. The College is proud of its small and idealistic group of alumni, but the College cannot, as do some other institutions, rely upon its alumni as a major source of fundraising. Bard has engaged in a more creative, unorthodox and flexible approach to fundraising. Though the College's finances are vastly better than when the president assumed leadership in 1975—the College at the time had an endowment of less than \$1 million and faced the prospect of closure—the improvement in finances during the past 35 years has been matched with a remarkable increase in scope and ambition. Financial pressures continue today.

Although Bard's endowment has always been small in relation to its size and ambition, the endowment has not interfered with recruiting the best students with need and faculty with competitive compensation packages. The effect of the small endowment has been felt in other areas of the College, in particular the administrative staff (relating to Standards 5 and 9), and the facilities and infrastructure (relating to Standards 2 and 3).

The College has always had a small administrative staff in relation to its size, a fact long observed by members of the college community and verified by an assessment conducted by the director of Institutional Research; see Appendix 3-1 for a comparison of the ratio of students to non-faculty staff at Bard and some peer institutions. The small size of the staff is felt at all levels: minimal numbers of faculty administrative assistants; a small Office of Human Resources; an increasing but still relatively small student services staff; and a fairly small number of administrators at the decanal and vice-presidential levels relative to the size and complexity of the institution. It may never be possible to have a sufficiently large administrative staff at the College, and the challenge is to assess where the College's limited resources for such staff should be targeted.

The facilities and infrastructure at Bard have improved in the past few decades, but challenges remain: a number of older historic buildings need substantial renovation; the library needs expansion (in terms of the physical space and also the collection); permanent dormitory space is needed despite stabilization of the student

population; the physics facilities need renovation; classrooms and faculty office space needs enhancement. Recent and projected fundraising efforts, which are part of the 150th Anniversary Campaign for Bard, will help achieve some of these infrastructure goals, but, as with other aspects of the College, the rapid growth of the institution, both in Annandale-on-Hudson and elsewhere, has meant that the College continues to have facilities and infrastructure below our aspirations. See Appendix 1.C-4 for a discussion of recent and ongoing building projects at the Bard.

With respect to the College's core mission of undergraduate education, ongoing challenges include: student recruitment and financial aid (Standard 8); student retention (Standard 8); and ongoing reform of the college curriculum (Standards 11, 12 and 14). As the college-aged population in the United States is expected to decline from its current demographic high point, the competition among the top liberal arts colleges for well-prepared students will increase. The availability of adequate financial aid for well-prepared but financially insecure students will be crucial to succeed in such a competition, and Bard's low endowment causes the College to be disadvantaged compared to some of its peer institutions. When the financial crisis was first felt in 2008, the College was concerned about the possibility of a decline in applications, which did not materialize. It is hypothesized that in the public perception of colleges, some colleges are considered sufficiently prestigious or otherwise advantageous that the consumer approach to them is inelastic, that is, change in cost does not substantially lead to a change in demand; other colleges are not so considered, and for those the consumer approach is elastic, and decreases when the cost rises or funds to pay the cost are less available. In recent years, it appears that Bard has entered the former category and has continued to attract students. Nonetheless, even though the College has done well with student applications in the current context, future uncertainty regarding both demographics and the economy cautions against complacency.

Student retention has improved from the first- to second-year, as discussed in Section 2.C.2, with expanded advising structures and academic support, curricular innovations in the first year, increased co-curricular oversight, and developing assessment efforts. We have analyzed our second- to third-year retention statistics, which are below those of our peer cohort, but find no single determinative factor. The expectations of Moderation and Senior Project, signature features that reflect core intellectual values, may have some bearing as may the particular character of an independent and curious student body.

Bard's undergraduate curriculum reflects two sometimes-competing traditions, namely, the liberal arts tradition and the progressive tradition. The former has bequeathed to Bard its core general education programs such as First-Year Seminar and Citizen Science, as well as the distribution requirements; the latter tradition has given Bard the personalized attention found in Moderation and Senior Project, the use of tutorials and independent study, and an overall emphasis on independent and creative thought. The balance of these two traditions is dynamic rather than static. In contrast to some of our peers, where the curricula are while excellent sometimes quite fixed, at Bard there is a sense of ongoing revision of the curriculum, a revision that incorporates new understandings and responds to the changing world. Some core aspects of Bard's curriculum, such as Moderation and Senior Project, likely will remain in some form; other features of the curriculum (and even some aspects of Moderation and Senior Project) are under scrutiny. The goal is to balance the need to respond to new ideas (for example, a program in Human Rights was introduced, and a concentration in Experimental Humanities is under consideration) with maintenance of the strengths of Bard's existing educational approach.

A recent emphasis of the College is its ever-increasing role in the reform of secondary education (Standard 13), as seen in the three Bard High School Early Colleges, together with the Paramount Academy and the Bard New Orleans Initiative. These initiatives so far have been genuine successes. Establishing and maintaining these institutions and replicating them elsewhere provide organizational and financial challenge. The College has chosen to favor ideals over complacency.

## Section 4

### Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections

The relevant information for this section of the PRR may be found in the appendices. Financial information and projections are in Appendix 4-1. Audited financial statements covering the three previous years are in Appendices P-6, P-7 and P-8. Financial information submitted to IPEDS for the three previous years is in Appendix P-9. Current enrollment and that of the three previous years is in Appendix 4-2. It is assumed that enrollment at the College will hold at current levels, and no separate enrollment projections are included.

The financial projections are based upon the following assumptions.

First, we assume that there will be minimal inflation with low rates of growth in operating income and expenditures above current levels. The economic outlook suggests that costs will most likely remain relatively flat, while allowing for realistic cost of living and contractually obliged raises.

Second, we assume that enrollment holds at current levels. The demographic outlook suggests that maintaining current enrollment to ensure the present faculty/student ratio and comparable quality and diversity of students over the next five years is a prudent and sufficiently ambitious objective.

Third, we assume that modest annual increases in tuition income will continue, spurred by selective increases in costs specific to higher education, particularly in science and technology and the need to maintain a large financial aid portfolio, funded to a large extent from unearned income. No assumption is made of any increase in public support from federal or state sources. Given the recent financial crisis and need to increase aid packages accordingly, we assume that the discount rate will fall from its current rate of 39 percent to 35 percent in 2017. These assumptions are better aligned with historical averages. The same is true of endowment income, where expectations of weak returns due to the global economic malaise improve over time.

Fourth, the figures in Appendix 4-1 deal only with operating expenses. No provision is made in these calculations for the construction of any new facilities that might be built as a consequence of the successful realization of the capital projects approved by the Board of Trustees within the capital campaign. This exclusion is justified by the assumption that no new facilities can be constructed without adequate restricted gifts above the capital campaign targets. Such restricted gifts must also provide for the annual maintenance of each new facility. It is therefore expected that new facilities will be constructed with funds adequate to avoid unplanned additions to the annual operating fundraising requirements.

Fifth, in 2010–2011 the dependency upon gifts and grants at the Annandale-on-Hudson campus was 13 percent. The operating plan predicts that the dependency upon annual philanthropy will decline to 8 percent by 2017. These projected declines reveal a strategy of stability with only modest gains in efficiency and endowment return in future periods.

## Section 5

### **Organized and Sustained Processes to Assess Institutional Effectiveness and Student Learning**

Understanding the importance and use of assessment in educational and institutional matters has been growing at Bard, among faculty and administration. Progress has been made in creating a uniform use of assessment across the institution.

Some major steps in the use of educational assessment at Bard are the formation of the Assessment Council, consisting of faculty and administrators; participation in the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education; and our participation in a consortium funded by the Teagle Foundation for the project “Assessing the Senior Thesis to Improve Teaching and Learning.” [Section 2.C.3].

Director of College Writing Phil Pardi works with our academic programs to develop both the teaching and assessment of writing. He is expanding College initiatives beyond writing in training faculty in the development of learning outcomes practices. For example, he attended a workshop, “Designing Courses for Significant Learning,” led by Dee Fink, and is offering a workshop on course design this June to faculty, sponsored by CFCD. This three-day workshop “will focus on the essential steps of developing a successful course, from the initial insight and planning phase through the design of both the syllabus and the assignments. Beginning with goals specific to the course and discipline, we will work to create a semester of work that maximizes student learning without overburdening the professor. Participants will have time to work on their own courses—either a new class or one in need of reinventing—as we consider some of the best practices available to us as educators. We will consider such topics as structuring the syllabus, teaching critical thinking, making the best use of student writing and exams, integrating class activities and work done outside of class, developing an approach to grading, and ascertaining what students have really learned.”

Assessment of student learning happens not only at the college-wide level, but also at the level of programs and concentrations. One example is seen in the changes proposed by the Psychology Program in fall 2011 in implementing a rubric for Senior Project grading that delineates expectations of effort and progress throughout the year and of the final product. The rubric is included in the Handbook given to all majors and reviewed by advisors with students at the onset of Senior Project. [Appendix 5-1]. In the past, Senior Projects in the Psychology Program were graded by the board, and students informed of their grade at the end of the board meeting; the program has moved to a system whereby boards assign a suggested grade, but final grades are assigned in a program meeting held after boards are completed. This is intended to ensure equity in grading across projects, and to prevent one early project from causing all subsequent projects to serve as an anchor on which all subsequent projects are graded.

The Psychology Program has also modified their expectations for the content of some of their Senior Projects. Senior Projects currently fall into two broad categories: empirical projects (involving analysis of data), and theory projects. The first type entails students collecting primary data from a research laboratory, but might also involve analyzing existing datasets for answers to novel hypotheses of the student’s own devising. The second type has entailed identifying an understudied topic in psychology, synthesizing existing research on the topic, and supporting a developed argument based on empirical data. The Psychology Program has clarified that one of the major pedagogical aims of Senior Projects is to instill mastery of empirical thinking and research in psychological science. To that end, the program now expects that theoretical projects propose testable hypotheses, as well as a well-developed plan for testing these hypotheses with all possible measures and a detailed data analytic plan (in essence, this version of project will take the form of a grant proposal). As a result, all seniors in the Psychology Program will undergo training in thinking critically about psychology as an empirical enterprise; in particular, theoretical projects preserve the possibility of investigating topics for which the actual research is not feasible given our resources.

Other programs have formulated clearly the educational outcomes that they seek to impart to their students; such clarification is the first step in assessment of student learning. Most significantly, the Division of Languages and Literature undertook a systemic review of the curriculum and structure of the major. This review centered on specific criteria for a successful Moderation into the program, including questions of the skills being assessed at Moderation, criteria for promotion to the Upper College, expectations for the portfolio of writing submitted to the project board, and different methods of reporting results of the board's deliberations. These criteria do not form a significant departure from prior approaches; the goal of these discussions was to clarify, articulate, and as necessary modify, such criteria. The distribution of courses and requirements within the major were also reviewed, including topics such as the appropriate numbers of different types of required courses (for example, genre, single author, period-specific, theoretical and thematic), and ensuring that post-Moderation students are prepared for writing the Senior Project. [Appendix 1.D-1]. Another recent example of a program formulating clear educational outcomes can be seen in the Handbook for Senior Projects in Political Studies that drafted just prior to the completion of this report. [Appendix 5-2].

Ongoing assessment of educational outcomes has been very important in the newly created Bard Educational Opportunity Programs (BEOP) [Section 2.C.1], which serves low-income (and often academically under-prepared) students. The assessment was created by BEOP to attempt to learn about the helpfulness of the academic and social experiences that the BEOP Summer and Language & Thinking Programs provide to the incoming class of BEOP Scholars. It is given to students as an online survey before BEOP Summer begins, on the last day of BEOP Summer, and again on the last day of Language & Thinking. Information received is both quantitative and qualitative. The questions asked will be modified for the next class of BEOP Scholars. The assessment has indicated that, overall, the BEOP Summer and Language & Thinking Programs have helped increase the confidence of participating students, but also that some modifications of the program are needed, for example enhancing the dissemination of "best practices" for students as determined by research and current BEOP Scholars (time management, close reading, getting involved on campus, utilizing resources on campus, engaging with professors and peers, etc.).

As the importance of assessment at Bard has increased, we expect that assessment will play an important role in newly constituted programs. For example, in the new Citizen Science program, which is a two and a half week January workshop required of all first year students, inaugurated in January 2011, serious assessment protocols were built into the program. [Appendices 1.C-3, Part 3 and A-1].

Assessment at Bard unites the different campuses in the College's network. As a part of Bard's efforts to assess the development of its partner institutions, a project sponsored by the Center for Civic Engagement and the Institute for Writing and Thinking will gather a group of faculty members from Bard, the Al-Quds/Bard Honors College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the American University of Central Asia, and Smolny College, who will meet in Annandale-on-Hudson in summer 2012 to conduct an assessment of student development over the first two years, of study. Using metrics developed for the Teagle-sponsored study in which the College participated [Section 2.C.3], this group of faculty members will compare papers written at the beginning and end of First-Year Seminar and, where applicable, Second-Year Seminar, to measure improvement of writing and analytic ability. The project will be extended to Senior Projects over the next two years.

The use of assessment has been increasing in the institutional realm as well. For example, in response to the substantial increase in the undergraduate population starting in 2005, the College conducted an assessment of the new or additional student services needed in response. The assessment showed that the increase in the student population had led to a need for more staff available to handle the greater number of "on-call" situations; a larger number of peer counselors (student resident dormitory advisers); more deans in the Dean of Student Affairs Office to lower the student/dean ratio; additional professional staff to supervise the increased number of student clubs; and a clearer division of responsibilities in the dean of student affairs staff. This assessment led to the following changes: a new position of assistant director of Student Activities (to help manage increase in number of clubs); a new position of assistant dean of students/director of the sophomore year experience (to help improve sophomore retention); additional Area Coordinators; additional positions in athletics; and the inclusion of Space Management and Transportation in the Student Activities Office.

Similarly, a specific assessment was conducted on the adequacy of the size of the student counseling staff by contacting approximately 15 peer colleges regarding their staffing levels. In addition, a review was conducted of the number of requests for appointments vs. scheduled appointments at the counseling center. The results led to the following changes: the addition of a new full-time counselor; the addition of the director of Bard Response to Rape and Associated Violence Education as a 1/4-time counselor; the promotion of a counselor to the new position of assistant director of Counseling to provide greater structure and to increase programming; an increase in the available psychiatry hours; the addition of masters' degree interns.

Changing situations, such as the 2008 national financial crisis, require revised assessments. Two programs that conducted assessments of their services in response were the Financial Aid Office (FAO) and Career Development Office (CDO).

Answering whether, and how, Bard should modify its financial aid approach in response to the financial situation is not simple, and requires continual reassessment. The question are: (a) to what extent the College would need to increase the percentage of students receiving financial aid, and (b) to what extent the College can increase the amount of financial aid per student? In response to Question (a), it was observed that in the years following the onset of the financial crisis, FAO received requests for aid from a much larger percentage of its entering students than before, the correspondingly gave financial aid to an increasing percentage of students [Tables 5-3 (1) and Table 5-3 (2) in Appendix 5-3]. In response to Question (b), FAO saw evidence of greater need individually [Table 5-3 (3) in Appendix 5-3].

The result has been a shifting of funding priorities from merit-based aid to need-based financial aid. Now even merit scholarships offered by the College (for example, the Distinguished Scientist Scholars Program, and the Excellence and Equal Cost Program) have a need component; similarly, the Presidential scholarships (merit only) were eliminated, and the funding redirected to the POSSE scholars.

Prior to 2008, CDO had one full-time and a part-time assistant director/career (4 days a week) counselor; there was no clerical or administrative support and no front desk person to schedule student appointments. The need to review the functioning of CDO is due to the increase in the undergraduate population at Bard, to a diminished job market for new graduates, and to the anxiety of graduating seniors about post-graduation employment and the subsequent need to lengthen interview sessions to respond to that anxiety. This led to the following changes: increased staffing (despite a general hiring freeze); upgraded responsibilities and titles; improved websites, online communications, and use of social media; upgraded career counseling tools and the purchase of Focus 2 (an online resource for career and education decision making); and expanded employer development and management. [Appendix 5-4].

At the institutional level, as with the educational level, assessment has taken on a particularly prominent role in new endeavors as seen in the discussion of the formation of Bard High School Early College II in Queens, NY, Bard High School Early College III in Newark, NJ, the Paramount Bard Academy and the MAT Program in the Central Valley of California, the European College of Liberal Arts of Bard and the Bard New Orleans Initiative [Appendices 1.C-1 and 1.C-2]. The addition of new external and affiliated programs has entailed substantial assessment of both the educational and financial aspects of the proposed program prior to the College adopting the plan.

Although not an exhaustive list, these examples, attest to the growing understanding of the faculty and administration at Bard of the role of assessment in the educational endeavor. Conversely, developing assessment in a variety of contexts has brought into focus some of its limits in the liberal arts environment. It is important, to assess student success in a broad spectrum of ways, for example through Bard's distinctive Moderation process. The goal of a liberal arts education is something far more difficult to assess, namely, the education of students to be life-long learners, to bring well-developed critical faculties to their lives, and to be thoughtfully participating citizens in their society. The College will continue to develop assessment methodologies related to the content of the curriculum, the quality of its teaching, and the sufficiency of campus academic facilities, but



assessments such as these do not fully measure the ultimate success of the pedagogical aim of the College. In making large-scale decisions at Bard, the faculty and administration continue to believe in the value of the liberal arts, and college decision-making is ultimately tied to that ideal.

For example, Bard is in the minority of colleges and universities requiring a yearlong Senior Project (usually called a “senior thesis” elsewhere) of every student. The requirement places significant expectations on the faculty and academic support staff. And yet the College continues to adhere to the Senior Project requirement out of the fundamental belief that such projects provide an extremely valuable intellectual and creative experience for the majority of students. The College can, and does, assess student satisfaction with the Senior Project experience by the use of student evaluation forms. More significantly, the College has begun, with the help of the Teagle and Wabash efforts [Section 2.C.3], to engage in a more thorough assessment of the content of the Senior Project, to determine whether student work is at the intellectual or artistic level of accomplishment the faculty expect. Even so, we are challenged to measure the more ambitious goal of the Senior Project, which is to provide a foundation for continued intellectual growth throughout life via the experience of an intense focus upon a single topic over a year, and to promote life-long learning via the experience of such serious independent learning. Whether the College alumni realize these outcomes in the decades after graduation is not directly measurable; surveys of alumni, while potentially useful, can measure the self-perceptions of those surveyed, and such self-perceptions are not without bias. Nonetheless, Bard continues to believe in the importance of the Senior Project, and the College will continue to direct its resources to the Senior Project.

The Middle States review proposes a four-step planning-assessment cycle: defining clearly articulated institutional and unit-level goals; implementing strategies to achieve those goals; assessing achievement of those goals; and using the results of those assessments to improve programs and services and inform planning and resource allocation decisions. At Bard this model is viewed as beneficial at the small- and middle-scale level of decision-making. At the large-scale level, because of Bard’s intellectual and artistic traditions, because of the dedicated faculty, staff and administration, and because of the leadership of a president who genuinely believes in and embodies the liberal arts ideal, the College continues to base its major decisions upon its ideals as well as upon practical considerations.

## Section 6

### **Linked Institutional Planning and Budgeting Processes**

This section will be addressed via the mechanism stated in the Handbook for Periodic Review Reports: “Alternatively, institutions that have developed effective strategic or long-range master plans may satisfy this requirement of the PRR by making reference to such documents in the PRR and by including the planning documents as attachments. Because the materials which demonstrate these processes usually are extensive, brevity in this narrative section is encouraged.”

The most recent strategic planning at the College is reflected in two documents from summer 2010: the Strategic Plan for Bard College 2010–2016, presented by the president to the Board of Trustees [Appendix 2.A.1-2], and a five-year strategic plan submitted by the dean of the College, prepared in consultation with the chairs of the divisions and with the input of all the academic program and concentration directors [Appendix 2.A.1-3].

In regard to the linkages between institutional planning and the budgeting processes, Bard, as has been stated previously in this report, has more fluid planning and budgeting processes than may be customary, allowing the College to respond rapidly to the changing times and to unique fundraising opportunities.. Ultimately, all such activities, whether long-planned or unique opportunities, are subsumed under the headings described in The Strategic Plan for Bard College 2010–2016.

Parallel to the flexible nature of Bard’s activities, all the various administrative programs undergo regular and intensive reviews, from active budget discussions and monitoring during a given fiscal year to more in-depth review at three and five year periods on the financial and academic health of initiatives.

Because the chief financial officer is also the executive vice president, he and the president oversee the global financial picture of the College. Efforts have been made recently to increase the frequency of budgetary reporting from the major administrators to the faculty, via meetings with the main faculty committees (such as the Planning and Appointments Committee and the Faculty Senate), and reports to faculty meetings regarding new and ongoing institutional initiatives and the resulting implications for financial resources and fundraising efforts. [Section 2.B.6]. The dean of the College also confers and meets regularly with the executive vice president and the controller, bridging programmatic needs with the offices that oversee finite financial resources.

Furthermore, during the budget submission process for programs and institutional efforts, attention is spent on assessing the student interest in programs and their academic quality. Budgets often are adjusted to meet the growth or contraction of programs.

Finally, in response to the College’s growth, as well as the addition of new affiliated and external programs, in January 2012 Bard created a new position of vice president for finance. This newly hired person, who has extensive business and finance experience, will oversee the financial operations of the Annandale-on-Hudson campus, Simon's Rock, and the Longy School of Music of Bard College, and also will provide support to the European College of the Liberal Arts in Berlin and the Bard High School Early Colleges. This new position will allow for better budgetary planning across the various programs and campuses of the College.