Periodic Review Report

to the

Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Prepared by Montclair State University

June 2012

President/Chief Executive Officer Dr. Susan A. Cole

Commission Action Preceding This Report: Reaccreditation, 2007

Date of the Evaluation Team visit: March 2007
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APPENDICES
MSCHE Certification Statement:
Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and
Federal Title IV Requirements
Effective November 8, 2011

Montclair State University
(Name of Institution)

is seeking (Check one): ___ Initial Accreditation

 ___ Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Self Study

X Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Periodic Review

An institution seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation must affirm that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including the following relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008:

• Distance education (student identity verification)
• Transfer of credit
• Assignment of credit hours
• Title IV cohort default rate

This signed certification statement must be attached to the executive summary of the institution’s self-study or periodic review report.

The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets all established Requirements of Affiliation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation as detailed on this certification statement. If it is not possible to certify compliance with all requirements specified herein, the institution must attach specific details in a separate memorandum.

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

(Signature)

(Chief Executive Officer) (Date)

N/A

(Chair, Board of Trustees or Directors) (Date)
Montclair State University
Distance Education Statement

Verification of Student Identity/Ensure Student Privacy

As this Periodic Review Report pertains to distance education, Montclair State University will comply with the Higher Education Act of 2008 and will utilize every available resource to verify student identity and to ensure student privacy.

The institution has in place effective procedures through which it ensures that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The institution makes clear in writing that these processes protect student privacy and notifies students at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional costs associated with the verification procedures. At this time, Montclair State University uses a NetID system with secure logins and passwords to verify a student’s identity. This verification process protects student privacy. The University employs various measures to protect the security of its computing resources and users’ accounts. Users are encouraged to be vigilant and resolved in their efforts to establish appropriate access restrictions for their accounts, guarding their passwords, and changing them regularly.

One additional manner of security is inherent in the preferred and established pedagogy at Montclair State University which revolves around the interpersonal connections our students develop with individual faculty members. This connection with students on a regular basis is a critical part of the structural design of our online courses. Students are clearly involved in an interactive classroom model. Students, as an integral part of online coursework will be expected to participate in chat room discussions. The discussions are based on ongoing dialogue with the instructor as well as other student participants. The connection with students goes beyond chat room discussions, as it also involves instructor/student interaction when timely feedback is expected on a regular basis by both instructor and student. Safe Assign, a part of the Blackboard system, will also be implemented as a check for plagiarism.
Montclair State University
Transfer Student Definitions, Policies, and Procedures

Montclair State University considers a Transfer Student anyone who has been enrolled in a regionally accredited college or university after graduating from high school. Even if you withdrew from the institution and received no credit, you are still considered a Transfer Student.

Montclair State University participates in the New Transfer Agreement with the NJ Community colleges. Students earning an AA/AS/AFA degree from a NJ county/community college will have all of their Montclair State University General Education requirements waived (you will not need to complete University General Education courses). This agreement only applies to New Jersey county/community colleges. To see how courses transfer from NJ county/community colleges, please visit NJTransfer.org to review course equivalents.

If you earn your degree from an out-of-state community college, credit is evaluated on a course-by-course basis. In addition, if there has been a change in your plans, and you will not be receiving an AA/AS/AFA degree from a NJ County/Community College, please contact Undergraduate Admissions so it can update your records accordingly, (973) 655-4444.

Students transferring from a university/college operating on a quarter-hour system will receive 2/3 of a Montclair State University credit hour for each quarter hour earned elsewhere. For example, four quarter hours from a transfer institution equal 2.66 credit hours at Montclair State.

In addition, a student’s previous grade point average (GPA) from a previous institution does NOT transfer to Montclair State University; only credits are transferred.

Finally, if you are applying for any of the programs in the College of the Arts (such as Fine Arts, Music, Theatre, Dance, Communication Studies, or Broadcasting), you are required to complete an interview, audition, or portfolio review in order to be considered for admission into these programs. However, if you are applying for Fashion Studies or Art History, no interview, audition, or portfolio review is required.

Individuals interested in applying to Montclair State University should view the University’s website at Undergraduate Admissions and send all materials to:

Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Montclair State University
1 Normal Avenue
Montclair, NJ 07043
Montclair State University
Federal Student Loan Default Rate Data
Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 redefined Federal Student Loan Default Rate (CDR) thresholds for higher education institutions participating in Federal Title IV programs. The threshold determines which schools will be required to take additional steps to reduce the institution’s default rate. The Act increased the threshold from 25% to 30% in anticipation of the move from a 2 Year CDR to a 3 Year CDR.

Montclair State University’s 2 Year CDR has been well below the threshold for many years going back to the 1990’s. The most recent official 2 Year CDR for the university (2009) was 3.7%. The 2010 draft 2 Year CDR is 2.9%. CDR information is publicized by the US Department of Education. Montclair State University’s most recent official 2 Year CDR can be accessed through this link: http://www.nslds.ed.gov/nsls_SA/defaultmanagement/search_cohort.cfm
SECTION ONE:

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE INSTITUTION

Montclair State University has evolved over the past 104 years from its origin as a 187 student two-year normal school for training teachers to a comprehensive university of 18,498 undergraduate and graduate students, currently authorized to offer seven doctoral degrees. While doing so, it became

*the first of the state normal schools to initiate four-year degree programs

*the first of the state colleges to offer Master’s degrees

*the first of the state colleges to be awarded University status

*the first institution in the state college and University sector to offer multiple doctoral programs

*the first institution in the state college and university sector to expand enrollment to address the state’s need for additional capacity in higher education

*the first institution in the state college and university sector to house a public television station

As it evolved from normal school to college to university, so too did Montclair State’s structure, now embodied in the College of Education and Human Services, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of the Arts, the College of Science and Mathematics, the School of Business and The Graduate School.

To reach its present status Montclair has capitalized on its location in a gateway state, serving a widely diverse population. As additional evidence of bold leadership its students have affordable access to some 300 major, minor, concentration, certificate, and certification programs. Beyond this rich menu of academic excellence, the University’s cultural offerings range from the intellectual and artistic to the athletic and recreational in a setting of social inclusion and opportunity.

In its Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, Montclair State asserts the University’s sense of responsibility and its ever-expanding role in serving local, regional, national and global communities. The Mission Statement commits the University to offer programs “characterized by academic rigor and currency in the development of knowledge and its applications.” The Strategic Plan, adopted in 2011, directs the University to capitalize on “a deep reserve of vision, creativity and adaptability that will be necessary to meet the challenges that await the University over the course of the next ten years.”
MISSION STATEMENT AND STRATEGIC PLAN

In the Strategic Plan, endorsed by the University Senate and approved by the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2011, Montclair State committed itself to five overarching goals, four of which share the theme of connecting. All five of these goals are supported by concrete objectives.

- Connecting Students with a Successful Tomorrow through undergraduate and graduate academic programs of academic and intellectual rigor that conform to the highest disciplinary standards of breadth and depth, including communication and reasoning skills, accompanied by an array of co-curricular opportunities that develop leadership skills, civic responsibility, self-confidence, and aspiration to achieve professional and personal goals and values.

- Connecting People and Ideas through intellectual and scholarly activity in a climate of open and free inquiry with connections to the larger world, supported by technological skills to make those connections functional.

- Connecting to Place by serving as a source of professional and scholarly expertise to both public and private institutions at all levels, by enriching the community with a wide range of cultural activities, and by encouraging civic engagement through community service and experiential learning and internship opportunities.

- Connecting Globally by extending the concept of community to encompass the globe through faculty exchanges, student study abroad programs, and residential international students, thereby developing and sharpening international perspectives. To intensify global connections, technology will provide virtual interchanges and exchanges. Partnerships with universities in strategic locations around the world have and will continue to be implemented to connect globally.

- The fifth goal lists significant “Challenges and Opportunities on the Way to Tomorrow.”

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES

Upon approval by the University Board of Trustees and Senate in October 2011, implementation of the Strategic Plan has become the responsibility of all divisional structures of the University. These include the Office of the President and the Divisions of Academic Affairs, Human Resources, Information Technology, Student Development and Campus Life, University Advancement, Budget and Planning, Facilities, and Finance and Treasury.

ENROLLMENT PLANNING

Together, all divisions contribute to enrollment planning. Montclair has historically claimed 1.9% of the New Jersey high school graduate market, but although recent data suggests a trend toward 2.1%. As the projected number of New Jersey high school graduates continues to decrease, a strategic emphasis on out-of-state recruitment and marketing has been a central component of the University’s three-year undergraduate recruitment plan.
In addition, The Graduate School’s enrollment is slated to increase as the result of a current review of all Master’s, Doctoral, certification and certificate programs, aimed at invigoration of most programs where there has been significant demand and termination of others with low enrollment. However, as the national picture remains challenging given the sluggish U.S. economic recovery, it is difficult to project a dramatic increase in graduate enrollment. Nevertheless, an on-going re-imaging of The Graduate School’s message and strong recruitment activities are underway to counter these trends. See also Section Four for enrollment data and projections.

Overall, current figures show undergraduate enrollment at 14,590 undergraduate students and graduate enrollment at 3,908 students.

RESOURCES

During the 104 years of Montclair State’s existence, state funding has gradually declined from approximately 70% of operating costs to approximately 30% of these costs. Over the past five years, State appropriations during the five-year period have declined from $46.1 million to $40.1 million. Despite the decline in state appropriations, the University’s current healthy financial position reflects continued strong student demand and sound financial management. Over the past five years, combined operating and net non-operating revenues have increased from $251.4 million to $316.3 million and total operating expenses increased from $228.1 million to $294.4 million. The major increases in expenses have been allocated to instruction, academic support, student aid, residence life, and auxiliary services.

MONTCLAIR STATE’S APPROACH TO PREPARING THE PERIODIC REVIEW REPORT (PRR)

In 2008, the Provost convened the Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness (TAUE), later renamed the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE). Its members, broadly representative of the University community, have been a vital resource in preparing this PRR. In addition, requests for specific information were directed to relevant personnel across the University. In the academic realm, Deans, Associate Deans and program directors have provided documents and data. In the administrative realm, essential information and data have come from the Divisions of Information Technology, Budget and Planning, Finance and Treasury, University Facilities, University Advancement, and Human Resources. The Division of Student Development and Campus Life has described its policies and activities, accompanied by supporting data.

All information has been collected in the Office of the Provost, whose staff has been responsible for integrating, translating and rendering it into a Periodic Review Report. The PRR then went to the Executive Board of the University Senate, the CUE committee and the General Education Committee, all broadly representative bodies, whose comments were carefully considered by the Provost before final approval and transmission to the President.

MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Since the decennial evaluation in 2007, there are several areas of significant change at Montclair State University. The first of these changes is in direct response to recommendations of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education – improved assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Following the positive Middle States response to its Progress Letter in 2009, the
University, as stated above, established the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE), and designated it as a formal standing committee of the University. This committee has itself been generating the evidence necessary to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of every administrative unit and every academic unit of the University in conformity with Middle States criteria. The University established a comprehensive, integrated and institution-wide assessment planning process that documents students’ learning outcomes and informs University planning. The second change is the further involvement of technology in pedagogy, leading to the expansion of hybrid and distance education at Montclair State. This ongoing integration of technology and pedagogy will maintain Montclair State’s leadership in the application of technology to learning, while keeping pace with the changing needs of students in a complex society.

The third, dramatic, change is the completion of several new facilities, both residential and academic. The university completed construction of the largest new housing complex in the state in fall 2011, adding significantly to the residential capacity of the campus. Fully renovated Schmitt Hall, which includes classrooms, language laboratories, the offices of three departments, and a Math Emporium, the first of its kind at any senior public university in New Jersey, where 2,000 students each semester will take five math courses in a self-paced digital environment, all opened in spring 2012. Another campus addition supporting the curriculum was the fall 2009 opening of a state-of-the-art training facility for speech pathology and audiology.

The new facilities of the John J. Cali School of Music, which opened in fall 2009, and the School of Communication and Media, effective July 2012, represent additional significant developments for the University, providing expanded pre-professional program opportunities and fully professional recording and broadcasting technology for Montclair State students. Preparation for the School of Communication and Media includes the development of two fully-professional HD TV studios. Concurrent with the creation of the new School of Communication and Media, Montclair State developed multi-year affiliation agreements with WNET and New Jersey Television (NJTV). NJTV’s nightly news show, NJ Today, is being produced and broadcast from the University’s DuMont Television Center. And just recently Montclair State signed another media partnership agreement with WNYC to be the home of NYPR’s New Jersey Public Radio News Bureau.

With regard to distance education, the University notified Middle States of a substantive change in its report submitted in June, 2011. Montclair State will launch two Master’s degree programs in fully on-line format in AY 2012-2013, scheduled to take effect in January of 2013. These programs are an MA in Child Advocacy and Policy, and an MA in Educational Leadership. Throughout this process Montclair State has fully complied with the terms of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, as well as relevant New Jersey state requirements.

Finally, Montclair State University has added Ph.D. programs in both Counselor Education and Teacher Education and Teacher Development, converted the Doctor of Environmental Management to the Ph.D. in Environmental Management, added an Au.D. clinical track to the Doctorate in Audiology, and gained final approval for a fourth Ph.D. in Family Studies which will launch in 2013. These programs, all carefully selected to address unmet demand and built on existing faculty strengths, expand very significantly Montclair State’s commitment to graduate education and professional preparation.
ABSTRACT OF THE PRR BY SECTION

Section One is the Executive Summary.

Section Two presents the status report describing Montclair’s response to the recommendations of the Middle States visiting team in 2007.

Section Three incorporates the Strategic Plan adopted by the University in October 2011, thus enabling links to all Sections of the PRR. It also delineates the challenges of state funding, how Montclair has responded to the Middle States requirement of development of plans for assessment of institutional effectiveness and assessment of student learning, initiatives in technology and online programs, and efforts to encourage innovation and efficiency.

Section Four provides in specific detail enrollment and finance actions and planning for the fiscal years that have elapsed since 2007, including tabular and graphic depictions that facilitate ease of understanding.

Section Five devotes attention to Standard 7: Institutional Assessment, divided into the University’s assessments of the academic and administrative divisions. Additional evidence of Montclair’s institutional effectiveness, in the form of high praise from significant external authorities, will be found in this part of Section Five.

Section Five also focuses on Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning. It addresses Student Learning Outcomes, School and College Learning Outcomes, detailed assessment of the General Education Program, and additional areas of outcomes assessment. Montclair’s collection and use of assessment data illustrates how the University connects assessment with institutional planning and resource allocation so as to enhance the university’s effectiveness.

Section Six elucidates how the University links strategic planning to budgeting, and how this process connects to the goals in the Strategic Plan.

It will be noted in Sections Three through Six of this Report that Montclair State is well on the way to suffusing a culture of evidence in support of assessment throughout all divisions and units of the University.

Links to appendices provide documentation in support of the narrative in each Section.
SECTION TWO:
Institutional Response to the Middle States Recommendations

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS SINCE 2009

In its March 2007 Report to Montclair State University, an evaluation team representing the MSCHE recommended, “the Commission reaffirm [MSU’s] accreditation and request a progress letter due by April 15, 2009. The progress letter should describe the results of ongoing campus efforts to pull together its multiple assessment activities into a comprehensive, integrated, and institution-wide written institutional assessment planning process that documents student learning outcomes and informs planning.” (p. 23)

On April 14, 2009, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs submitted a Progress Letter to the Commission summarizing the University’s efforts to comply. It describes progress made in three related areas:

- Implementation of the Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness [subsequently renamed the Committee on University Effectiveness] (Standard 7)
- Development of uniform, university-wide policies for assessment of student learning in the university’s academic programs (Standard 14)
- Assessment of student learning in the General Education Curriculum (Standards 7 and 14)

In addition to addressing these three key areas, this section also addresses the Commission’s August 31, 2011 response to Montclair State University’s June 29, 2011 Substantive Change request to formally offer distance education programs. In its response to the University, the Commission requested that Montclair State “document the implementation of the online programs, including support services, student success, and financial impact on the institution (Standard 13).”

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (STANDARD 14)

In order to respond to the requirement of comprehensive and systematic institutional assessment plans, the University has created, revised, and followed a number of assessment activities. Together they constitute a vigorous campus-wide assessment process, coordinated in the Office of the Provost. This process requires assessment plans for all degree programs, organized electronically and housed as a comprehensive database, so the University can evaluate and improve its total range of programs and services.

ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (STANDARD 7)

Montclair State University continuously monitors the effectiveness of all of the institution’s programs and services by assessing Division and unit performance within the context of the University’s strategic planning process. Every unit of the University measures itself against key performance indicators (KPI’s) derived either from the newly adopted University strategic plan, or from existing divisional and unit goals and objectives. Goal attainment is measured using a variety of methods, including analysis of available data from enterprise systems or unit databases; analysis of survey data
from nationally-normed, or locally developed, instruments; analysis of findings contained in internal and external audits and business process reviews; and analysis of qualitative data using such means as interviews and focus groups. This process has been shaped and monitored by the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE), with all assessment-related information stored in one place within the TracDat® software application. The information gathered is used to either support the current effectiveness of the University’s programs and services, or to pinpoint the need for further improvement of said programs and services.

**INDICATIONS OF PROGRESS IN THE THREE RELATED AREAS**

- **Implementation of the Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness**
  [subsequently renamed the Committee on University Effectiveness] (Standard 7)

  Since the Team Visit in 2007 and the Progress Letter of 2009, the work of the Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness (TAUE) produced significant assessment activity on campus including: the development of templates, examples, and tutorials to support program directors and faculty in the creation of program-specific assessment plans; the administration of the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress test (MAPP) for assessment of General Education; the dissemination of the MAPP results, and facilitation of campus-wide discussions on assessment. As a result of the policies designed by TAUE, with strong support from the Provost’s office, assessment of student learning has become centralized and incorporated into regular university program assessments.

  In fall 2010, the task force known as TAUE was replaced by a standing committee, the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE). The creation of this formal standing committee with representation from all facets of the university’s constituency further solidifies Montclair State University’s commitment to the development and implementation of routine and systematic assessment in all administrative and academic units of the university; further, it reflects the institution’s continuous commitment to the improvement of all institutional programs and services.

  Montclair State University President, Susan A. Cole, reinforced the importance of CUE’s assessment work in her fall 2011 address to the university community:

  *...the University is required to provide evidence of a comprehensive, integrated, institution-wide assessment process that documents student learning outcomes and informs planning. As a consequence, all our schools and colleges have been working over the past two years to develop and document evidence of programmatic assessment of student learning. This process includes degree program assessment plans, identification of assessment points in each program, collection of data, analysis of data, and the use of data for program improvement, which is the goal of the entire process... This committee [CUE] will, with your support, generate the evidence necessary to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of every administrative and service unit of the University in conformity with Middle States criteria.*

Between 2007 and 2011, the assessment of institutional effectiveness was linked to existing divisional and unit strategic plans. Assessment data were gathered using multiple methods, and provided the information needed to improve business practices and services to the University community. Examples
from University Divisions that demonstrate how data were used to improve administrative services and efficiency, thereby making efficient use of limited University resources, can be found in Section Five.

Upon approval of the University’s new Strategic Plan, Connecting to Tomorrow: Vision, Creativity, Adaptability in October 2011, each division and unit of the University has been asked to follow uniform guidelines for assessing institutional effectiveness linked to the Strategic Plan. Assessment is consistent across all administrative divisions, and all assessment goals, objectives, methods, and results are stored in one place, along with information on actions that may have been taken as a result of the analysis of these data. Common guidelines for institutional assessment, and the existence of a centralized repository of assessment plans and findings, makes it easier for CUE to monitor University-wide assessment activities, and vastly simplifies reporting related to assessment of both student learning and institutional effectiveness. As a consequence, processes related to institutional assessment have become far more transparent.

The division of Student Development and Campus Life (SDCL) was the first administrative division1 to initiate uniform, division-wide assessment. Based upon SDCL’s experiences, CUE developed a set of guidelines for other administrative divisions to follow. An extensive description of the procedures used by SDCL and the guidelines developed by CUE will be described in greater detail in Section Five. These activities, coupled with the administrative oversight provided by CUE thus far, undergird the Provost’s description of a culture of assessment and its reach into all segments of the University.

- Development of uniform, university-wide policies for assessment of student learning in the university’s academic programs (Standard 14)

To further the work of CUE in the Academic units, the Provost’s Office has spearheaded several faculty-centric assessment initiatives including the development of a Blackboard Community, the Assessment Circle, which serves as a repository of assessment information for faculty use. Other assessment activities include participation in Chairs’ Workshops, Departmental meetings, College/School meetings related to assessment, and the sponsorship of a series of hands-on workshops for the various academic departments within Academic Affairs. The first of these workshops, Assessment Plan Entry Days, is structured to guide individuals through the assessment database. Next, Data Entry Days provide individualized assistance for faculty working with their assessment data. Additionally, Rubric Workshops are offered and open to all faculty and staff. In addition to these workshops, faculty are also encouraged to request “Assessment House Calls” – personalized, one-on-one work sessions with an assessment coordinator from Academic Affairs who provides assistance tailored to an individual faculty member’s needs. Additionally, in May 2012, the university will officially launch an assessment website to provide information on training sessions, best assessment practices, and highlight exemplary assessment work being performed by faculty and staff. Beyond the campus, the university is also involved in assessment activities with its sister institutions, serving as an active member of the New Jersey Assessment Consortium, and hosting the group’s fall semester meeting in October of 2011.

1Administrative divisions of the University include: a) Budget & Resource Planning, b) Finance & Treasury, c) Human Resources, d) Information Technology, e) Student Development & Campus Life, f) University Advancement, and g) University Facilities.
• Assessment of student learning in the General Education Curriculum (Standards 7 and 14)

Montclair State University’s General Education program, “General Education 2002,” was initially developed in 1998 and ratified by a vote of the faculty. It specified eleven goals for student learning in any course included in the General Education curriculum. Subsequently, and specifically to facilitate the process of assessment, the General Education Committee consolidated the original eleven goals into four learning goals, organized in two stages for purposes of implementation: Stage One: 1) Communication and 2) Critical Thinking; Stage Two: 3) National and Global Issues and 4) Integration and Application. Because the committee already had data on the two goals of Communication and Critical Thinking, it felt these goals should be addressed first, to be followed by the two goals of National and Global Issues and Integration and Application.

The Communication learning goal (oral and written) is being assessed by means of three platforms: the First Year Writing Program (FYWP), the Graduation Writing Requirement (GWR) and the course Fundamentals of Speech, SPCM101 (now CMST101). The First Year Writing Program (FYWP) teaches college writing to all incoming first year students as well as transfer students who have not completed the two-semester requirement. The Graduation Writing Requirement (GWR) is another form of writing assessment in each major. The oral communication component is assessed annually within the Fundamentals of Speech course.

As the University has been a member of the Voluntary System of Accountability2 (VSA) since 2007, the choice of assessment instruments to measure critical thinking, analytic reasoning, and written communication within the General Education program was limited to three specific assessment instruments: the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) test, the iSkills test, or the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). The learning goal of Critical Thinking was initially assessed in 2009 using the MAPP test; however, many faculty were dissatisfied with the multiple choice nature of the test, and requested a reevaluation of its use. Further Committee discussions led to the consideration of the other VSA-approved assessment tests including iSkills and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). The CLA was ultimately selected for the assessment of critical thinking, as faculty felt it provided a more comprehensive picture of critical thinking skills and was more accurately reflective of the cognitive tasks the Committee hoped students would achieve. In addition, the General Education Committee found CLA to be task-based, more widely used, and therefore useful for comparative purposes as assessment activities progressed. A comprehensive discussion of the assessment schedule, data, and analysis related to the assessment of the General Education program will be found in Section Five.

In addition, in response to the issue of course proliferation, the General Education Committee has worked informally, and successfully, to slow the flow of additional courses without imposing a formal moratorium on new courses. This has allowed a few deserving courses to join the Gen Ed curriculum without expanding greatly the number of courses overall. Because the flow of new courses had been greatly reduced, the committee did not feel the need to overhaul the course approval process as proposed in the 2009 Progress Letter, and instead devoted its resources to the efforts described above.

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2 The VSA, a joint venture between the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) is an attempt to provide “greater accountability by public institutions through accessible, transparent, and comparable information.”
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Another significant change in the General Education program occurred in February of 2012, when the University Senate and a faculty plebiscite supported the Provost’s proposal to suspend the team-taught Interdisciplinary Core requirement (Section B), thus tightening the GenEd requirement. A consequence of the assessment of time to degree, course scheduling and advising data, this change reduces the total of required GenEd credits by six, but does not reduce the total of 120 credits required for graduation. To encourage students to explore new discipline and subject options, advisors have been alerted to use these six credits (now free electives) for that purpose. Those students affected by this change were held harmless, and were audited for graduation beginning May 2012 without the need for this requirement. The University Senate and the Provost will convene further discussions regarding Montclair State University’s continued commitment to interdisciplinarity within the GenEd program beginning in fall 2012.

RESPONSE TO AUGUST 2011 SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE REQUEST TO MSCHE

One additional request made by the Commission to the University, came as a result of the institution’s June 29, 2011 Substantive Change document, in which formal Commission approval was sought for the institution to offer distance education. In its August 31, 2011 response, the Commission granted approval for fully online programs to be offered, while requesting this Periodic Review “document the implementation of the online programs, including support services, student success, and financial impact on the institution (Standard 13).”

Mindful of the concerns and recommendations expressed by MSCHE, Montclair State conducted an extensive internal review of the proposal and its impact on the institution during fall 2011. Following a careful analysis of the available options for creation and management of online programs through the use of external consultants or contractors, the University determined to pursue a more measured approach in-house, and without reliance on consultants or external vendors to provide recruitment services, instruction, or leads. This refined approach will provide students in the institution’s online programs with a uniform, consistent, accessible user interface design, necessary support services, and quality instruction built from within and accountable only to the institution.

To execute its revised online strategic initiative, the University created the Office of Extended Learning and Special Academic Programs in April 2012. This office is presently formalizing and reviewing a project plan, detailed marketing and recruitment plan, and budget for the online initiative. With respect to recruitment and marketing, the University is developing a comprehensive strategy that will utilize multiple media to attract qualified applicants to these programs. These applicants will have the same potential for success as our existing graduate applicants and be able to handle the rigors of an online graduate program. Given the balancing act that adult students face—particularly those online—considerable thought has gone into structuring the online program offerings to ensure that students enroll in courses at a manageable pace. Students will take one course per session or two courses per semester. Online students will enjoy the same student resources as their on-ground counterparts. This includes access to financial aid, library, career services, and information technology resources.
As a result of this extensive review, the University is preparing to launch two (2) online programs for Spring 2013, the M.A. in Child Advocacy and Policy and the M.A. in Educational Leadership, rather than four online programs as originally planned. In preparation for the launch of these programs, the institution is securing the necessary state authorization/exemptions. Based on a thorough review of occupational and educational supply and demand data, Montclair State has initially secured authorization or exemption from the states of Georgia, Texas, and Utah, and is moving forward to secure authorization in other states as appropriate based on market demand and other institutional considerations. The decision to move forward with only two programs, rather than four programs as initially proposed, was made after extensive market research into the supply of Master’s level graduates in these academic areas, the occupational demand and the University’s comparative advantage to providing online graduate education to these populations.

Lastly, the refined plan significantly reduces the expenses associated with mounting of the initial online programs and allows the institution to capture its initial startup costs by the end of fiscal year 2015.
Many of the challenges that Montclair State will confront in the next decade are summarized in Goal Five of the new Strategic Plan, Meeting the Challenges and Opportunities on the Way to Tomorrow, and this section will expand on statements found there, albeit in different order and with different emphasis.

**THE CHALLENGE OF STATE FUNDING** (STANDARDS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13)

Like many public institutions, Montclair State faces the ongoing decline in levels of state support. In December of 2010 Governor Christie issued the highly significant *Report of the Governor’s Task Force on Higher Education*, commonly referred to as The Kean Report. It concludes unequivocally, “Erosion of operating support [for the state’s colleges] over the past 20 years has weakened the foundation of New Jersey’s economy and has caused a crisis. It must be addressed.” On March 13, 2012, President Susan A. Cole addressed a budget hearing of the NJ Senate on our campus: “As the Kean Report made clear,” she noted, “both operating and capital funding for these institutions has been seriously inadequate, and the current circumstances have no basis in reason or policy and work against the best interests of the State of New Jersey, its economy and its people. This problem can be fixed.” The Kean Report showed that NJ ranked 47th, third from the bottom, nationally in state appropriations per full-time equivalent (FTE) in higher education between 2004 and 2009. Between 2005-06 and 2007-08 New Jersey was the only state in the nation to register a decline, .3%, in higher education appropriations.

Hence the challenge of MSU’s new Strategic Plan: “Vision, Creativity, Adaptability.” In spite of this flight from support by the state, MSU has not slowed its growth, its facilities development or its pursuit of academic excellence. In just the last five years the University has built the largest new housing complex in the region, a 2000-bed student residence, The Heights, thanks to recent legislation allowing public-private partnerships; built an additional 309-bed residence; completed the 53,000-square-foot John J. Cali School of Music; housed the University’s programs of languages and linguistics in a fully-renovated facility with state-of-the-art laboratory technology; built a 1,556-car parking garage; opened the finest clinical training facilities for speech pathology and audiology programs in the region; expanded the campus by an 18-acre land purchase; is in the final lease negotiations for a new home of the School of Business; built two professional HD-equipped TV studios; has completed designs for a new Center for Environmental and Life Sciences; and begun the build-out of a completely new combined heating and cooling power plant and distribution system, under another public-private partnership. Montclair State did this while maintaining an average annual tuition increase of 5.5% (in the middle range of state tuition increases) and a Moody’s credit rating of A1, one of only three senior publics in New Jersey to maintain that rating.

In addition to continued attention to the capital needs of its instructional, research, and residential programs, the University continued its long-standing commitment to the promotion and continuing reinvigoration of the faculty. In the years since the MSCHE reaccreditation, hiring of tenure-track faculty has continued unabated: 28 in 2007, 39 in 2008, 26 in 2009, 37 in 2010, 21 in 2011 and 30 searches completed or underway for fall 2012. Also, national searches in the past year have led to appointment of new deans to the College of the Arts and the College of Education and Human Services, a new Director of
the John J. Cali School of Music; a current search is underway for the Director of the School of Communication and Media that will open on July 1.

Since there are limitations to the opportunities for enrollment growth, and given that affordability is a core institutional value, thereby ruling out large increases in tuition, the University is increasingly compelled to seek external funding from a wide range of alternative sources to bridge the gap between “good” and “excellent.” In its new Strategic Plan, the University is increasing its focus on federal and state agencies, the corporate sector, private foundations and other non-profits, alumni, and friends of the University in the search for the resources needed to achieve and sustain its excellence. Additionally, the University has become more entrepreneurial in establishing joint ventures, transferring knowledge, and providing professional services that will yield income.

THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND UNIVERSITY-WIDE ASSESSMENT (STANDARDS 7, 14, AND 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

With the successful completion of the 2002 University Strategic Plan in 2008, the University’s centennial year, the new Provost, who joined MSU in July 2008, focused on the development of a new plan. The first priority, however, was preparation of the response to the 2007 MSCHE Team Report request for a Progress Letter within 24 months, which “should describe the results of ongoing campus efforts to pull together its multiple assessment activities into a comprehensive, integrated, and institution-wide written institutional assessment planning process that documents student learning outcomes and informs planning” (p. 23). This Progress Letter was submitted in April 2009 and accepted in June. The process summarized in this letter by which the plan and its attendant data-generating instruments were created is described in Sections Two and Five in this Report. That process focused initially on learning outcomes associated with the General Education curriculum and laid out the plan for creation of the learning outcomes assessment in all majors and graduate degree programs, the plan which has been followed to date and the progress of which is also described in this document.

In the spring semester of 2009, the Provost created a Strategic Planning Steering Committee, made up of representatives of every Division of the University, and issued a Unit Strategic Planning Template which described the parameters and format by which each divisional unit would create its own unit strategic plan. The Template consisted of eight sections including a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. It requested that for each Goal listed by the unit that goal be supported by an articulated set of objectives, strategies, success measures and interdependencies:

Goal 1: List your Goal 1 that supports the institutional goal and priority listed. Objective 1: What are the intended outcomes of each goal? Describe each objective you will pursue to achieve Goal 1. Objectives should be specific and measurable. Strategies: Provide a bulleted list of the specific strategies/actions/initiatives you will undertake to accomplish each objective. Include realistic target dates for completion, stated in fiscal year terms, and specify individual(s) responsible for monitoring implementation of each strategy.

Success Measure: How will you know when you’ve achieved the outcome? Define how you will measure success in achieving each objective.
Interdependencies: Briefly describe any interdependencies in terms of library, technology, space, marketing and any other functional areas that will be affected by implementation of this strategy.

By the end of the spring semester, all units had produced plans conforming in greater or lesser degrees to these expectations. The fall 2009 and spring 2010 semesters were occupied with revising and refining the existing plans to clarify objectives and success measures and to extract from the various plans a set of institution-wide goals or themes which would define the overall plan. The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) combined the many SWOT analyses into one set which summarized the institution’s collective sense of its salient strengths, obvious weaknesses, priority opportunities and pressing threats. The summarized SWOT analysis provided focus for many of the issues and conceptions that emerged in discussion, guiding the selection and reshaping of goals and objectives extracted from the varied unit plans into strategic goals and objectives that responded to these broader SWOT definitions. The process included circulation of various sections of the plan among the Steering Committee, the University Senate, the Deans’ Council, and the President’s Executive Council; general University commentary was solicited through postings to a Blackboard site.

During fall 2010 and spring 2011, three evolving drafts of the complete plan were circulated to the constituencies of the campus. As this was happening, of course, the five-year cycles of the Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC) visits and their departmental evaluations continued to take place, and the build-out of a full learning outcomes assessment culture and its data-gathering mechanisms—described elsewhere—imbedded in every degree program were rolling forward. Finally, in October of 2011 the Board of Trustees approved the full Strategic Plan, a ten-year plan but one which is heavily slanted to the next five years and leaves open many details of planning after 2016. It is a realistic, workable and challenging plan which provides one hundred-thirty-two (132) specific and measurable objectives within five broad thematic goals. These goals and objectives form the basis of our institutional assessment plan and processes. The Strategic Plan also clearly shows a cross-referencing of those objectives with MSCHE standards.

The Challenge of Affordability and Student Debt (Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9)

As articulated in the Strategic Plan, “Assuring that a Montclair State education is accessible to students with minimal regard to financial circumstances is a core value of the University. Affordability is, however, strongly influenced by a complex equation, the terms of which include state operating and capital support and state and federal financial aid programs.” The corollary of the withdrawal of state support described above is the increasing dependence of students and their families on credit to pay for higher education, even at the accessible rates which MSU strives to maintain. The November 2011 nationwide Project on Student Debt Report showed that the Class of 2010 faced the highest unemployment levels for new college graduates in recent history, 9.1 percent, and graduated with average student loan debt of $25,250. In New Jersey, 66% of students carry an average debt load of $23,792 by the time they graduate, just slightly below the national average. The Montclair State University average is $18,805, well below the state and national averages. Nevertheless, in a climate of growing concern about the ability of graduates to repay their loans, Montclair State has consistently maintained, and will continue to maintain, its tuition pricing at the mid-range of senior public institutions in New Jersey, and as the $18,805 figure demonstrates, the University strives in every way to minimize the loan debt of its graduates.
THE OPPORTUNITIES OF INNOVATION AND EFFICIENCY (STANDARDS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13)

COST CONTROL AND EFFICIENCY

Over the past ten years, the University’s ability to fund many of the objectives identified in the previous strategic plan has been made possible by significant enrollment growth and rigorous management of resources and adherence to institutional priorities. With anticipation of slower enrollment growth, and in order to maintain the goals of accessible pricing and minimal loan indebtedness, Montclair State is constantly seeking those efficiencies of operation which will keep costs down without sacrificing excellence of instruction and will maximize the return on student tuition investment. The measures are extensive and include expanding classroom occupancy throughout the full week, imposing rigorous budget review and monitoring protocols on all units, carefully monitoring faculty non-instructional on-load assignments, conducting annual accountability reviews of all administrative staff, imposing competitive bidding protocols for all purchasing and construction contracts and holding vendors and contractors to strict delivery standards. The Graduate School has created a program taxonomy and protocol based on enrollment trends, which facilitates annual graduate program review with deans and program coordinators. The intellectual and structural coherence of undergraduate majors and degree programs, achievable within 120 credits, is increasingly a focus of the Five-Year External Review Committees (FERC) and a subject of all assessment protocols within majors.

INNOVATION

Montclair State is committed in its new Plan to creating and maintaining an environment that supports and encourages faculty experimentation, nurturing a culture of creativity and innovation, and evaluating the protocols and processes currently embedded in the University that inhibit innovation. In the past year the Provost and University Counsel, working with the Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics, have created a fledgling office of technology transfer which is currently pursuing four separate faculty patents and license agreements. The office of Extended Learning and Special Academic Programs has been created to implement fully online programs and to pursue any innovative and mission-appropriate revenue options which may fall outside discipline-identified programs within academic departments.

THE CHALLENGE OF STUDENT ADVISING (STANDARDS 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10, 13)

The 2007 and 2010 Noel-Levitz reports of MSU student surveys confirmed the University’s awareness of ongoing concerns with the quality and effectiveness of student advising, a concern which is often linked to time-to-degree and graduation rates and is an extension of the attention to efficiency outlined above. In 2007 Noel-Levitz reported that MSU students rated Academic Advising 6.50 in Importance on a 7-point scale but only 4.76 in Satisfaction, a gap of 1.74 compared to a gap of 1.10 at all surveyed 4-year public institutions. In 2010 Noel-Levitz reported MSU students again rated Advising at 6.51 for Importance and an improved 4.95 in Satisfaction, a gap of 1.56 and an improvement of .18 over 2007. Clearly the University’s advising services had improved but there was still a difference of .49 between the Satisfaction score of MSU students and all peers who reported a gap of 1.07 between Importance and Satisfaction.
In 2010 the Provost, with support of the Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life who is responsible for freshmen, sophomore and all non-major advisement, commissioned a campus-wide evaluation of academic advising. Under the direction of two faculty from the Sociology Department, PROJECT ADVISE designed and administered a research study that found approximately 60% of students were satisfied with the main formal academic advising resources, with an even higher rate of approval of various informal routes of advising, such as unassigned faculty members, department administrative assistants and other students. However, a sizable minority of students were dissatisfied with the University's formal advising resources, notably transfer and undeclared students. The study went on to make a number of suggestions for improvement, which were disseminated to the Senate, the Deans and department chairs. As a result, the Division of Student Development and Campus Life and the Provost have undertaken a number of steps to improve advisement: Student Development reorganized its services to create the Center for Advising and Student Transitions (CAST), thereby addressing the desire for students to retain the same advisor for their first two years at the University; a formal peer mentoring program was created to leverage the natural tendency of students to seek advice from one another; a University Retention Committee with Subcommittees of a) Academic Advising b) Academic Support and Special Populations and c) Retention Assessment, has begun working on a holistic implementation of precisely focused advising strategies; the Provost’s Chairs’ Workshop has dedicated its two latest sessions to understanding the import of PROJECT ADVISE and the chairs’ leadership responsibilities for addressing concerns within the advising of department majors; Residence Life has expanded the advising functions of its learning communities; and an Academic Service Team has been created to monitor the improvement process.

THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY OF TECHNOLOGY (STANDARDS 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14)

The largest technological challenge and opportunity the University faces over the foreseeable future is not the acquisition of new technology, which it has pursued aggressively, but the harnessing of its vastly increased processing power to serve its instructional, scholarly and administrative needs. The University is committed to being nimble in evaluating and adopting, where appropriate and cost effective, new technologies that will advance its objectives and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its processes. Currently the University has undertaken the introduction of an entirely new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system titled OneMontclair. This project will replace the University’s aging SCT+ system, and require the mobilization of many professional staff from nearly every unit across the University to work with the installation of new software modules and data conversion. The University has taken this opportunity to reevaluate the suite of products slated for implementation and to approach the product implementation strategy with a focus on redesigning the University’s key business processes, its institutional effectiveness in all facets of business operations, and to align the OneMontclair program with the core goals and objectives articulated in the University’s new strategic plan.
SECTION FOUR:  
Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections

Enrollment Trends

Total headcount enrollment at Montclair State University has increased for 13 consecutive years, and the University projects that growth will continue for at least the next five years. Since 1998, the first year of Dr. Susan Cole’s Presidency, total enrollment has grown 45%, from 12,756 in fall 1998 to 18,498 in fall 2011. The University’s new Strategic Plan establishes an enrollment goal of 20,000 to be achieved by fall 2016.

Table 1
Enrollment Trends and Projections
Fall 2007 - Fall 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Projected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>13,017 13,725 14,139 14,383 14,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>3,719 3,750 4,032 4,019 3,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16,736 17,475 18,171 18,402 18,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change</td>
<td>-- 4.4% 4.0% 1.3% 0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Undergraduate Enrollment Trends and Projections

Undergraduate headcount enrollment rose 50% between fall 1998 (9,742) and fall 2011 (14,590). In the past five years, undergraduate enrollment has risen 12%, from 13,017 in fall 2007 to 14,590 this past fall (see Table 1). The University is projecting another 3% increase in undergraduate enrollment through fall 2016.

Environmental scan data and recruitment assumptions indicate Montclair State University historically claims a 1.9% share of the New Jersey high school graduate market, though this past year suggests a higher trend (2.1%). As the projected number of New Jersey high school graduates declines over the next few years, a strategic emphasis on out-of-state recruitment and marketing has been a central component of the University’s three-year recruitment plan (2011-2013) for undergraduate students.
Recruitment territories have been expanded to include Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Puerto Rico, eastern and southeastern Pennsylvania, Staten Island, the Lower Hudson Valley region and select other outer boroughs of New York City. In addition, in 2011 Montclair introduced a full-time regional recruiter dedicated solely to Pennsylvania recruitment. In 2012, this initiative will be followed with a dedicated recruiter for New York. The University is hopeful that this level of focus and attention will result in a significant increase in out-of-state enrollment that will serve to supplement the projected in-state loss. The University’s competitive programs in the performing arts are already recruiting nationally.

Over the last three years, several recruitment and enrollment initiatives were instituted to increase the quality and academic reputation of Montclair State University. These strategies include: Scholars Reception, Priority Deadlines for applications, Early Action acceptance, the institution of a Wait List and more Emphasis on Rigor in the admissions process. The success of these enrollment initiatives is evident in the increased Academic Profile/GPA of students who applied, were accepted, and committed to enrolling in the University over the last three years.

Montclair’s transfer student population continues to represent almost 50% of our overall undergraduate new student enrollment each year. Transfer projections remain constant through 2022, due to the decreased high school graduation population and more limited opportunities for out-of-state supplemental recruitment. To maintain current transfer enrollment levels, the University will rely upon increased recruitment and outreach to New Jersey community colleges, as well as the implementation of more robust, sustained communication plans to engage and convert existing transfer prospects and applicants.

State and federal Financial aid and non-governmental scholarship funds continue to play a more prominent role in support of the institution’s enrollment goals. There has been steady growth in scholarship funding. In AY 1997-1998, the University awarded $1.7 million from institutional and

Foundation sources. In AY 2011-2012, over $5 million will be made available to provide financial support to students.

Traditionally, a significant majority of institutional funds have been awarded on the basis of merit. Foundation funds are awarded based on restrictions specified by the donor, if any, and in prior years most typically included merit as the primary criteria in the selection process. Similarly, institutional funds have traditionally been awarded by the Undergraduate Admissions Office solely on the basis of academic merit. In recent years, however, funding priorities have begun to shift to a stronger emphasis on need.

The university engaged the services of Scannell and Kurz, Inc., an enrollment management consulting firm, to ensure the strategic spending of University dollars. The firm’s 2010 report analyzed enrollment data from prior years with a specific review of the financial support offered to prospective students. The outcome of that analysis was a financial aid packaging strategy for the entering freshmen class which focused institutional funding on categories of students where funding was projected to have the greatest impact. The results were positive, with the university securing its largest class size expending $500,000 less in institutional funding than in the prior year. The savings were then used to support needy students in all classes, thus resulting in a significant impact on retention.

The Financial Aid Office will continue to develop guidance in financial aid packaging strategies for the next entering class and funds will again be directed toward populations of students who are most likely to attend based on that support. In addition, funding has been set aside for need-based awards for entering freshmen and the Financial Aid Office will be equipped to respond to needy students requesting additional support.

**GRADUATE ENROLLMENT TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS**

Graduate enrollments have risen significantly since 1998, but growth has been less dramatic and sustained than it has been at the undergraduate level. Graduate headcount enrollment rose 30% between fall 1998 (3,014) and fall 2011 (3,908). In the past five years, graduate enrollment has risen 5%, from 3,719 in fall 2007 to 3,908 this past fall (see Table 1).

In the University’s new Strategic Plan, graduate enrollment is projected to increase 28% over the next five years. This optimistic target emerged, partly, from anticipated graduate enrollment increases tied to the development of new, post-baccalaureate online programs. However, as noted in Section Two, plans for online graduate programs have been scaled back, and it is likely that graduate enrollment projections will be similarly adjusted.

The condition of the U.S. economy is another factor that could affect the University’s ability to achieve a 28% increase in graduate enrollment. The national graduate enrollment picture, as reported by the Council of Graduate Schools, remains a challenging circumstance, based primarily upon the on-going sluggish U.S. economic recovery. Nationally, the Council of Graduate Schools reported in September 2011 that enrollment of new students at US graduate schools fell 1.1% from 2009 to 2010, compared to a 5.5% increase the previous year. This marks the first decrease in first-time graduate enrollment since fall 2003.
The Graduate School has, over the course of this past academic year, begun strategic planning efforts based on 1) data analysis; 2) curricular revision; and 3) the re-imaging of the institution’s graduate message. This planning effort is designed to support and promote an incremental increase in graduate enrollment across all Colleges and the School of Business.

Specifically and as a practical matter, the Graduate School has begun to use the technical materials available to more systematically direct enrollment and recruitment targets. For example, the School is in its first cycle of using an electronic student management system (Target X), which provides applicant data across multiple dimensions. Secondly, and in collaboration with various offices in the Division of University Advancement, the School is re-imaging communications to more accurately reflect institutional strengths and significance in the graduate market. Thirdly, the Graduate School is working with the academic departments on curricular revision and the development of post-baccalaureate on-line programs.

**FINANCIAL TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS**

**FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

Each fiscal year Montclair State University, like all the senior public institutions in New Jersey, submits its budget request to the State. Ultimately, an appropriation is adopted into law which bears no resemblance to the request, but is generally predictable. Appropriations are paid down to the University on a regular monthly basis during the fiscal year. All tuition and fee revenues are collected and held by the University. Auxiliary enterprise facilities are operated on a self-supporting basis. The University’s annual operating budget and tuition and fee rates are approved by the Board of Trustees after the State budget has been adopted.

The capital budget process, through which the university individually considers and approves the priorities, costs and financing of all capital projects, includes approval by the Board of Trustees of all contract awards exceeding $500,000. The State of New Jersey has not provided any significant funding for facilities since 1988, leaving the University to fund these costs through debt, tuition and fees, and other operating revenues.

The University has taken steps to sustain its quality and grow and enhance its programs in an environment of scarce state support by re-engineering and streamlining operations. With a continued commitment to provide the necessary resources to its primary mission of providing quality instruction, significant reallocation of administrative expenses has taken place, and will continue in order to ensure that resources are placed where they are needed. Certain functions deemed not critical to the mission have been eliminated and other functions are consolidated wherever appropriate.

An April 2, 2012 memorandum to the New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education details some of the key cost-saving strategies and efficiencies pursued at Montclair State University during 2011-2012 including:

- **Public-Private and Other Partnerships**

  Construction of a new 2,000 bed residence hall, the first public-private partnership
construction project developed under the New Jersey Economic Stimulus Act. The $211 million project was financed by tax-exempt bonds issued by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. This urgently needed project was built without cost to the state and without incurring further University debt.

A collaborative partnership with Public Media New Jersey ("PMNJ") that is producing value-added benefits and cost savings for both sides, creating a new revenue stream through rental of the DuMont Television Center to PMNJ for the "NJ Today" nightly news broadcast. PMNJ is garnering the benefits of a state-of-the-art facility at a below-market lease arrangement and the utilization of University student interns for NJTV's news division.

- **University Staffing**
  
The University conducts a rigorous review before filling any vacant position or creating any new position. According to IPEDS data, for the fall 2010 semester, the University's Student to Non-Faculty staff ratio was 18:1, versus 14:1 for the other New Jersey senior public institutions and for national benchmark institutions.

- **Construction Activities**
  
The University negotiated an agreement with the NJ Department of Community Affairs which enables the University to perform a very substantial portion of the required construction code compliance activities on campus with qualified University personnel.

- **Facility Operations**
  
The University makes a continuing effort to invest in facilities improvements that will yield long-term cost efficiencies and estimates that some thirteen initiatives this year will yield approximately $400,000 in cost avoidance.

- **Joint Contracts**
  
The University, along with two other state universities, jointly bid and awarded a contract for office supplies.

- **Information Technology Cost-Saving Initiatives and Efficiencies**
  
  Some examples of efficiencies from the past year include:

  - Equipment costs and lease terms were renegotiated and resulting in a $132,839 annual savings across the entire lease program.

  - A print management software application designed to help students be more conservative with their printing was implemented. The program is estimated to produce a printing cost savings of $12,000 during spring term of FY2012. The savings realized are expected to double ($24,000) over the course of FY2013.

  - Cloud-based services eliminated the need to replace VCR and DVD media players in our classroom AV systems.
As a member of the New Jersey Higher Education Network Consortium (NJEDge.Net), the University participates in a consortium-based bulk rate for VMware server licenses.

The University transferred its telephone circuit and usage contract from Verizon to Broadview networks, providing for annual circuit and usage charges savings of $33,600.

The University is now purchasing its Internet service through NJEDge.Net at a consortium-based discount rate of $10/mb for the 600Mb of bandwidth provisioned for the entire campus community.

The University provides data center co-location facility space to UMDNJ, Steven's Institute of Technology and NJEDge.Net; annual rental income is projected to be $128,770 in FY2013.

**Tuition and Fees**

Assuring that a Montclair State education is accessible to students with minimal regard to financial circumstance is a core value of the University. Affordability is, however, strongly influenced by a complex equation, the terms of which include state operating and capital support and state and federal financial aid programs. Working within these externally-imposed parameters, the University is committed to providing high quality programs, ensuring that the cost of a Montclair State degree is regarded as an astute investment in the future, and is delivering access to an education without regard to family income.

The University remains one of the most affordable of New Jersey’s public institutions. The University’s FY2012 annual full-time undergraduate in-state tuition and fee cost of $10,646 is the third lowest among New Jersey’s ten traditional senior public institutions, and is $1,467 (or 12.1%) less than the average tuition and fee rate. For graduate programs, the combined graduate tuition and fee cost at Montclair State remains 13% below the sector average.

**Financial Results**

The University’s current healthy financial position reflects continued strong student demand and sound financial management as can be seen in the University’s [audited financial statements](#) and [financial trend data](#). Student enrollment has increased by 15% over the past five years, from 16,076 undergraduate and graduate students in fall 2006 to 18,498 students in fall 2011 (Table 1.) Student demand is evidenced by strength in selectivity of 56% and a six-year matriculation rate of 61%, respectively for fall 2011. Solid student demand is also shown by an increase in freshman applications to almost 13,000 in fall 2011, 33% more than applied in fall 2006, and double the number of applications received a decade ago. The University is projecting modest enrollment growth over the next four years, which will allow for continued tuition revenue growth.
Audited financial statements from FY2007 to FY2011 show total operating revenues increased from $179.4 million to $250.8 million, primarily as a result of enrollment and tuition increases (Table 2). Non-operating and other revenue decreased slightly over this period, from $84.6 million to $81.2 million, due to reduced general appropriations and other non-operating revenue, offset by state-funded fringe benefits. Combined operating and net non-operating revenue increased from $251.4 million to $316.3 million. Over the five-year period, total operating expenses increased from $228.1 million to $294.4 million, the major increases coming in instruction, academic support, student aid, residence life, and auxiliary services.

The State’s general operating budget appropriations for the University decreased from $46.1 million in FY2007 to $40.1 million in FY2011. This decrease was offset, in part, by a $9.2 million increase in fringe benefit support for University employees over this period. Total state appropriations as a percentage of the University’s total operating budget have decreased from 30% in FY2007 to 25% in FY2011, and from 46% a decade ago. The University has been using a strategy of cost reductions, reallocation of resources, alternate funding streams, and tuition increases to meet the challenges of reduced state appropriations.
## Table 2
Statements of Revenues and Expenses
Fiscal Years 2007 – 2011
($ in millions)

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<td><strong>Operating Revenues:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Student Revenues</td>
<td>130,952</td>
<td>146,524</td>
<td>159,130</td>
<td>157,765</td>
<td>168,524</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>48,441</td>
<td>54,055</td>
<td>60,211</td>
<td>77,646</td>
<td>82,247</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$179,393</td>
<td>$200,579</td>
<td>$219,341</td>
<td>$235,411</td>
<td>$250,771</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Operating Expenses:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>228,102</td>
<td>251,123</td>
<td>259,977</td>
<td>274,946</td>
<td>294,435</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Loss</strong></td>
<td>($48,709)</td>
<td>($50,544)</td>
<td>($40,636)</td>
<td>($39,535)</td>
<td>($43,664)</td>
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<td><strong>Non-Operating Revenues:</strong></td>
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<td>State of New Jersey Appropriations:</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Appropriation</td>
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<td>48,574</td>
<td>45,014</td>
<td>40,467</td>
<td>40,146</td>
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<td>Fringe Benefit Appropriation</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>8,659</td>
<td>3,043</td>
<td>4,654</td>
<td>2,632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Non-Operating Revenues</strong></td>
<td>$84,575</td>
<td>$87,806</td>
<td>$81,301</td>
<td>$83,292</td>
<td>$81,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Operating Expenses:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12,574)</td>
<td>(12,365)</td>
<td>(12,652)</td>
<td>(13,766)</td>
<td>(15,713)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Non-Operating and Other Revenues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act | $72,001 | $75,441 | $68,649 | $69,526 | $65,515

Over the prior five-year period, total assets have increased by 20%, from $613.5 million to $739 million (Table 3). The increase is primarily the result of construction activities and other capital spending. Over this period, net assets increased by 49%, from $215.7 million to $320.4 million. Increases in unrestricted net assets are the result of net tuition revenue and significant operating surpluses set aside to fund capital expenditures and other needs of the University. Revenue per student, net of scholarship...
allowance, is steadily increasing and in FY2011 was $9,157, up 13% since FY2007. Healthy operating margins averaged 9% from FY2007 to FY2011, and provided adequate debt service coverage during this period (ranging from 2.8% to 3.7%).

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDENSED STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS</th>
<th>Fiscal Years 2007 - 2011</th>
<th>($ millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current assets</td>
<td>174.7</td>
<td>189.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncurrent assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital assets, net</td>
<td>395.6</td>
<td>408.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets held under bond indenture agreements</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>$613.5</td>
<td>$644.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current liabilities</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncurrent liabilities</td>
<td>356.2</td>
<td>354.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$397.8</td>
<td>$403.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment in capital assets, net</td>
<td>119.3</td>
<td>125.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>102.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>$215.7</td>
<td>$240.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a review of the University’s outstanding debt in 2010, Moody’s affirmed the A1 rating with a Stable Outlook on Montclair State University’s Revenue Bonds issued through the New Jersey Educational Facilities Authority. The credit agency identified the University’s strong market position, as well as its positive operating performance.

Annual debt service represented 7.1% of FY2011 operations, down from 7.9% in FY2007 (Table 4). The University’s level of debt is consistent with other higher education institutions in New Jersey and reflects the lack of state funding of capital construction. In order to continue the critical investment in new facilities while limiting additional debt burden, the University has undertaken the construction of major projects under the New Jersey Stimulus Act, which permits public-private partnership and development and financing of projects. Via this public-private partnership initiative, the University recently completed the largest college residential project ever built in New Jersey, providing housing and
dining services for 2,000 students. Another major project, a new energy cogeneration plant, will also be constructed under a similar public-private partnership structure. To achieve its multi-year capital planning goals, which include facility replacement and renewal as well as new construction, the University will continue to explore other public-private arrangements, enhance fund raising efforts, and pursue other non-state sources of funds. In addition, a state capital initiative for higher education is at last under serious consideration.

Table 4
DEBT SERVICE
Fiscal Years 2007 - 2011
($ millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding Principal</td>
<td>$355.8</td>
<td>$355.1</td>
<td>$377.6</td>
<td>$372.5</td>
<td>$367.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt Service Coverage</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt Service to Operations (%)</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ENDOWMENT

The University’s fiscal health is also evident in the growth and stability of the Foundation’s endowment (Table 5). The Montclair State University Foundation, Inc., is a non-profit corporation that provides an independent control of funds in support of the purpose and mission of the University. The Foundation provides support for University fundraising and capital campaigns, sponsors more than 350 annual scholarships, and underwrites a variety of programs to reward excellent teaching and scholarship. The total endowment as of June 30, 2011 was $57.1 million, an increase of $6.6 million since FY2007.

Table 5
ENDOWMENT
Fiscal Years 2007 – 2011
($ millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$50.5</td>
<td>$48.1</td>
<td>$47.1</td>
<td>$50.7</td>
<td>$57.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The leadership of the University has demonstrated its ability to maintain strong operating performance in the face of external pressures, including weakening state support and political pressure on increasing tuition levels. The University is committed to long-term, balanced operating budgets, and conducts rolling annual five-year planning efforts to forecast revenues and expenditures.

The FY2012-FY2016 financial plan (Table 6) reflects modest increases in revenues and close control of expenditures. The FY2012 operating budget of $324.6 million is 2.5% or $8.8 million above the FY2011 budget of $315.8 million. The projected increases in tuition and fees (5% tuition increase for undergraduates and 3.5% for graduates) are estimates, which are adjusted each year after the State of New Jersey appropriation and other factors are known. Modest enrollment growth is projected (see Table 1) and is discussed in Enrollment Trends section. In the plan, general operating appropriations have been held flat, while modest increases are projected in state funding for state employee fringe benefits.

While the State is currently negotiating new contracts for University employees represented by unions, for planning purposes, the models include salary increases of 3.5%. The models include additional lease and operating expenses for planned new academic facilities, as well as higher debt service expenditures for a new science building. The higher debt service will result in lower planned transfers for capital projects for FY2013 and FY2014, with higher transfers planned for the latter years of the plan. The University’s new strategic plan includes many new initiatives, some of which may require new resources.
## Table 6
### OPERATING BUDGET PROJECTIONS
**FY 2012-2016**
($ in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenues:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Tuition and Fees</td>
<td>$172,606</td>
<td>$178,584</td>
<td>$188,624</td>
<td>$199,183</td>
<td>$210,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Appropriation</td>
<td>$79,669</td>
<td>$82,953</td>
<td>$86,501</td>
<td>$90,332</td>
<td>$94,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants &amp; Contracts</td>
<td>$536</td>
<td>$557</td>
<td>$580</td>
<td>$603</td>
<td>$627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Income</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sources</td>
<td>$3,706</td>
<td>$3,816</td>
<td>$3,931</td>
<td>$4,049</td>
<td>$4,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$258,016</td>
<td>$267,410</td>
<td>$281,136</td>
<td>$295,667</td>
<td>$311,302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sales &amp; Svs. of Educ. Dept.</strong></td>
<td>$7,118</td>
<td>$7,332</td>
<td>$7,551</td>
<td>$7,778</td>
<td>$8,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Revenues</strong></td>
<td>$324,636</td>
<td>$337,814</td>
<td>$355,543</td>
<td>$374,313</td>
<td>$394,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditures and Transfers:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational and General:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>$113,026</td>
<td>$118,995</td>
<td>$125,209</td>
<td>$132,693</td>
<td>$140,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>$944</td>
<td>$984</td>
<td>$1,026</td>
<td>$1,075</td>
<td>$1,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>$9,243</td>
<td>$9,620</td>
<td>$10,012</td>
<td>$10,485</td>
<td>$10,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support</td>
<td>$21,358</td>
<td>$22,245</td>
<td>$23,170</td>
<td>$24,274</td>
<td>$25,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>$17,399</td>
<td>$18,155</td>
<td>$18,944</td>
<td>$19,898</td>
<td>$20,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Support</td>
<td>$44,628</td>
<td>$46,964</td>
<td>$48,896</td>
<td>$51,602</td>
<td>$54,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation &amp; Mnt. of Plant</td>
<td>$29,451</td>
<td>$34,467</td>
<td>$41,292</td>
<td>$44,223</td>
<td>$47,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship &amp; Fellowship</td>
<td>$11,021</td>
<td>$11,358</td>
<td>$11,706</td>
<td>$12,078</td>
<td>$12,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Education &amp; General</strong></td>
<td>$247,072</td>
<td>$262,788</td>
<td>$280,253</td>
<td>$296,328</td>
<td>$312,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandatory Transfers For:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal and Interest</td>
<td>$13,832</td>
<td>$16,656</td>
<td>$18,552</td>
<td>$17,421</td>
<td>$17,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Mandatory Transfers</strong></td>
<td>$13,832</td>
<td>$16,656</td>
<td>$18,552</td>
<td>$17,421</td>
<td>$17,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auxiliary Enterprises:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditures</td>
<td>$42,768</td>
<td>$44,139</td>
<td>$45,553</td>
<td>$47,063</td>
<td>$48,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory Transfers For:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal &amp; Interest</td>
<td>$13,465</td>
<td>$11,229</td>
<td>$11,185</td>
<td>$12,268</td>
<td>$12,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Auxiliary Enterprises</strong></td>
<td>$56,233</td>
<td>$55,368</td>
<td>$56,738</td>
<td>$59,331</td>
<td>$60,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Exp &amp; Mandatory Transfers</strong></td>
<td>$317,137</td>
<td>$334,812</td>
<td>$355,543</td>
<td>$373,081</td>
<td>$391,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Transfers:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandatory Transfers</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>$3,002</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,232</td>
<td>$3,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Increase (Decrease) In Fund Balances</strong></td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION FIVE:
Institutional Assessment and Assessment of Student Learning

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT (STANDARD 7)

The following material details progress made in Institutional Assessment since MSCHE’s June 2, 2009 Response to Montclair State University’s April 14, 2009 Progress Letter. It demonstrates the ways in which Montclair State has sustained its commitment to assessment by both internal and external means, and how the goals, objectives and sub-objectives of the University’s new Strategic Plan, provide a comprehensive roadmap for assessment of institutional effectiveness from 2012-2016. The assessment of these objectives is university wide – engaging both Administrative and Academic Divisions, units, colleges/schools, departments and programs.

The institution's internal culture of assessment continues to build and thrive. Since 2009, the Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness has been renamed the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE), and it has now begun to document and monitor the process of Institutional Assessment in all divisions. In addition, external accrediting agencies for many years now have granted recognition to Montclair in a wide variety of fields, and continue to do so. The following discussion of past, present and future assessment activities will indicate more specifically the strategies employed in the assessment processes for Standard 7 (and Standard 14 addressed later in this section).

THE ACADEMIC DIVISIONS

In developing the Strategic Plan within the Academic Divisions each College/School (and its corresponding Academic Departments) participated in SWOT analyses which identified challenges and opportunities. Each College/School went on to develop goals and objectives addressing these issues and incorporated them into the development of College/School Strategic Plans. These plans include their own objectives, implementation strategies, and measures of success.

While engaged in the Strategic Planning process, the Division of Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the academic deans and faculty, created, revised and implemented a number of ongoing assessment activities in response to the need to develop a comprehensive and systematic institutional assessment plan. Specifically, academic departments and programs developed student learning outcomes assessment plans, which included data collection and analysis. This effort, coordinated in the Office of the Provost, constitutes a cohesive campus-wide student learning outcomes assessment process. This process is electronically organized in a comprehensive Academic Programs Assessment Database which houses the assessment plans and collected data for academic programs. These plans will be further discussed in the section of this document related to Standard 14. To assemble this database, in fall 2010 the Associate Provost organized and conducted Assessment Plan Entry Days and Data Collection Days, which led to the realization that assessment tools and rubric development were necessary to move the process along. In response to this need, Assessment Tool/ Rubric Workshops were created and first offered in spring 2011. This popular workshop series is ongoing, and continues to involve attendees from all areas of the University.
Another method of institutional assessment resides in the Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC) process. FERC, initiated in 2009, is an updated version of Montclair State University’s long standing Visiting Committee process, designed to assist the faculty and administration in their efforts to enhance the University's undergraduate and graduate academic programs. The FERC process begins with each academic department preparing a written self-study covering program objectives and strategic planning, including such matters as curriculum, advisement, co-curricular activities and special student opportunities. Each department's report includes a description of student testing and other forms of evaluation, most notably as an additional assessment of student learning, and a summary of the success of its graduates in employment or graduate school within the last five years.

Moreover, a department's self-study must include curriculum vitae for each faculty member, a description of its facilities, its library and technology resources, support services, its working arrangements with other departments, its accreditation status, and enrollment figures.

Department chairs, Deans and the Provost all participate in the selection of members of External Review Committee teams, usually comprised of at least three members. All material is submitted to the External Review Committee three weeks in advance of its visit, accompanied by a link to the University catalog, a sample of undergraduate and graduate student work, and a statement of accreditation standards from professional associations, if applicable.

Each committee's report is due to each department within 30 days of its visit, followed by each Chair submitting a response to the Dean in June, and the Dean's response to the Provost in July. The process concludes the following fall, when the Provost holds a conversation with the Chair and Dean before issuing his response for the purpose of applying the Review Committee's recommendations to strategic planning and program improvement. Since 2007, 26 such FERC department reviews have been conducted.

Within the Academic Division, Montclair State University’s Sprague Library also conducts a number of assessment activities. The library conducted the LibQUAL+ Survey in 2005 and again in 2008 with ten participating institutions from the VALE Academic Library Consortium of New Jersey. The main objective of the Montclair State University Library’s participation in this project in 2012 is to assess the impact of improvements to services and resources in the Library since the 2008 LibQUAL+ Survey.

Another large-scale assessment project in which the Library has participated is the Circulation Analysis Project of the VALE Cooperative Collection Management Committee. The goal is to see what percentage of the titles is used each year and, over time, to help determine subject areas of high and low circulation. After careful analysis of the results of this project, the Collection Resource Management Team found that books ordered on Approval Plan circulated more frequently (72%) in this time period than the norm (approximately 60%). As a result, Sprague Library has moved to a large-scale approval plan purchasing model across all subjects and will evaluate the results of this new purchasing model at the end of this fiscal year.

Additionally, Montclair State is also subject to significant external institutional assessments in the form of comprehensive and varied accrediting agencies that have given approval to the University via their respective accrediting processes.
To summarize, then, with respect to Standard 7, there are a variety of entities, processes and external agencies which constitute Montclair's range of assessment programs that connect specifically to learning, instruction and curricular matters in the Division of Academic Affairs. Their impact on student learning will be described in the part of this Section devoted to Standard 14, below.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS**

A survey of the University’s ongoing efforts to implement what the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) describes as a culture of evidence reveals many additional methods of documenting compliance with Standard 7 in both the academic and administrative divisions of the University:

- The Office of Budget and Planning tracks a wide range of institutional characteristics with a carefully selected group of peer and aspirational institutions
- Human Resources and Information Technology rely on available enterprise and operational data to adjust services and business operations
- Information Technology uses student surveys, assessment of Instructional Design Services, and workshops for faculty in new technologies and in online/hybrid course development to assess quality of services for the purposes of instruction, research, and administration
- University Advancement uses consultants to conduct external evaluations of its fundraising and general advancement efforts
- University Facilities conducts user satisfaction surveys for all of its many units
- Student Development and Campus Life uses student satisfaction surveys, and applies standards of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and Middle States standards
- CUE, the Committee on University Effectiveness, created and applies an Institutional Assessment template

While engaged in Strategic Plan development, Administrative Divisions were simultaneously gathering data from a variety of sources to assess the effectiveness of their operations. Divisions used the collected information to both validate their services and operations, and make changes to business processes and services, when needed. The following paragraphs describe some examples of institutional assessment activities by the Divisions that occurred from 2009 through 2011.

The **Divisions of Budget & Planning** (discussed in Section Six) and **Finance & Treasury** assessed their performance using several client satisfaction surveys, benchmark comparisons with peers, external audits, and compliance with standards set by Federal and State government entities.

The **Divisions of Human Resources** (HR) and **Information Technology** relied heavily on available data and a large number of operational reports to monitor workforce compliance and other aspects of human resource management and development, and to implement adjustments to services and business operations.
The **Division of Information Technology** relied on client satisfaction surveys, and continuous monitoring of networks and servers to measure volume of activity, system efficiency, and service quality. In addition, Information Technology contributed to institutional effectiveness by assessing its **Instructional Design Services** provided to faculty, resulting in the development of a three-part program that included: a) an online course content development model, b) a Quality Matters-embedded course template, and c) an online faculty development program that had a technological and a pedagogical track. The assessment also prompted the creation of **The Technology Training and Integration Group** within Information Technology which developed programs to assist faculty in using Blackboard and emerging technologies, and in designing and teaching online/hybrid courses.

The **Division of University Advancement** commissioned reviews of several of its units by external evaluators during 2009-2011. These independent reviews prompted changes in both business processes and services provided. During the same time period, **University Facilities** assessed the effectiveness of several of its operations using client satisfaction surveys that addressed housekeeping, mail services, and shuttle bus ridership data, and they conducted periodic focus groups with the Student Government Association and other student groups.

The **Division of Student Development and Campus Life (SDCL)** relies upon multiple methods to assess performance, including client satisfaction surveys and other methods of obtaining client feedback, staff discussions and evaluations of services to clients, measures of volume of activity, guidelines provided by professional associations (e.g., Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education), etc. The data collected are used to both validate services and prompt changes in business processes and services provided.

Beginning in October 2011 with the approval of the new University Strategic Plan, SDCL is taking the lead in remapping its Divisional and unit goals to align with the new University Strategic Plan objectives covering the period 2012-2016. With completion of the realignment, planning units are developing new goals and measurable objectives, along with assessment plans that include periodic reviews of goal achievement, and unit response to goals that are not met. In addition to mapping Divisional and unit goals to the new University Strategic Plan, SDCL is aligning its goals to both Middle States standards (as expressed in *Characteristics of Excellence*), and the standards of the **Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)**.

Building on the experience of SDCL, CUE developed guidelines for other Administrative Divisions to follow in designing their institutional assessment plans. The remaining six Administrative Divisions are: a) mapping Division and unit goals to the new University Strategic Plan, b) identifying unit responsibilities with respect to the achievement of Strategic Plan objectives, c) collecting assessment plans from units, d) reviewing and approving unit plans, and e) implementing unit plans, including assessment activities and follow-up activity (if required). To assist Divisions and units, CUE prepared and distributed an **Institutional Assessment Template** to guide managers and staff through the various steps in this process.

To further organize and standardize these disparate assessment efforts occurring across all Divisions, **TracDat**, a software application designed to collect and store information about assessment activities, has been implemented to serve as the repository for assessment plans, results, and follow-up actions. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) is developing uniform procedures for
assessing institutional effectiveness that all divisions can use to achieve the goals articulated in the Strategic Plan. SDCL planning units are already entering plans into the application, and the remaining Divisions will do so in the coming academic year. Ultimately, the CUE hopes to incorporate existing information on student learning assessment into TracDat® so that all assessment data are housed in one location.

The current timeline of activities is as follows:

Summer 2012

- SDCL units finish entering plans into TracDat®, and begin entering assessment results
- Other Administrative Divisions complete the remapping of unit goals to the new Strategic Plan

Fall 2012

- Planning Units in the remaining Administrative Divisions develop plans for entry into TracDat®

Spring 2013

- Planning Units in the remaining Administrative Divisions begin entering assessment results into TracDat®

**OTHER ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES**

Institutional Assessment is routinely practiced by Divisions and planning units across the campus. Some of these activities are described above. At a university-wide level, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) attempts to foster a culture of evidence at the University by supporting the evaluation of programs and services with valid and reliable information, and by ensuring that planning and decision-making are knowledge-based and data-driven. To achieve this, OIR prepares and disseminates:

- reports and statistical analyses (both descriptive and inferential) of applications, admissions, enrollment, degrees, grades, retention and graduation, instruction, employees, alumni, etc.;
- survey research involving admitted students, currently enrolled students, graduating students, non-returning students, alumni, faculty, and staff;
- environmental scans to provide contextual information for strategic planning purposes; and
- compliance reports for state and federal agencies, accrediting agencies, non-profit associations, and other organizations.

Survey research is an especially important component of institutional planning and assessment at Montclair State University. Much of this research relies on locally designed and administered surveys that address institution-specific needs. For example, alumni surveys, both short- and long-term, are locally developed, with the latter assessing the degree to which mission-related goals addressing citizenship and community engagement are achieved by alumni who are five, 10, and 15 years from graduation.
The University also routinely participates in a wide range of national surveys that allow for benchmarking and institutional comparisons. Surveys are administered according to a carefully planned calendar designed to both maximize their utility and shepherd University resources. Among the most important, and useful, of these surveys are:

- NSSE: National Survey of Student Engagement
- FSSE: Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
- SSI: Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Index
- IPS: Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey
- CSS: College Senior Survey
- CIRP: The Freshman Survey
- HERI: Higher Education Research Institute
- ASQ: Admitted Student Questionnaire
- SNAAP: Strategic National Arts Alumni Project
- EBI: Educational Benchmarking, Inc.
- NCES: National Center for Education Statistics
- CSRDE: Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange
- COACHE: The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education

Montclair State University also carefully monitors student progress and success through a series of reports that focus on cohort retention, cohort graduation, time-to-degree analyses, and “student flow” modeling. The University has performed quite well when comparisons are drawn to national, benchmark data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). This conclusion is also supported by data available through the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE).

The success of minority students, in particular, has been a source of pride for Montclair State. The Education Trust recently singled out Montclair State University for national recognition as a “strong leader” in minority student graduation, ranking fifth in the nation with a 13.4% improvement in the minority graduation rate between 2002 and 2007 – an improvement nearly double the average increase of all institutions. The University has also been recognized by Hispanic Outlook for the success achieved by its Hispanic student population, ranking 51st in the nation out of the top 100 schools awarding Bachelor’s degrees to Hispanic students and 1st among New Jersey institutions.

**ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING (STANDARD 14)**

As in the Section on Institutional Assessment, this section again addresses progress made in Institutional Assessment since Montclair State’s April 2009 Progress Letter to MSCHE, notably the development of uniform, University-wide policies for assessment of student learning in the University's academic programs. This section includes a timetable for the process of assessment, a description of assessment of student learning in the General Education curriculum, a description of the Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC) process as it relates to departmental assessments of student learning.

There exists a natural overlap between Standards 7 and 14, most obvious in the AY 2009-2010 University-wide programmatic assessment plans initiated under the direction of the Associate Provost for
Academic Programs and Assessment in collaboration with College/School Associate Deans for Assessment and the Faculty Assessment Liaisons. As a result, assessment of student learning has made measurable progress. It has become centralized, with uniform guidelines incorporated into regular University assessments. Materials such as templates, examples and tutorials have been distributed to program directors and faculty to assist in meeting these requirements, so that assessment has become routine, systematic and uniform, producing data on student learning that is subsequently used for further improvement.

To reach this goal of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, the Provost initiated the following sequence of events:

**AY 2009-2010:** Departments directed in an initial Provost’s memo (August 2009) to develop student learning outcomes assessment plans for every degree program, utilizing the Assessment Template found in Blackboard in the Assessment Circle; assessment made key component of the Chairs’ Workshops during the year; assessment plans included and utilized in department FERC cycles; FERC team members instructed to inquire about assessment of student learning and ways it will inform curriculum planning in the future; faculty introduced to the Academic Programs Assessment Database in spring 2010, with Data Entry Days held to assist faculty in entering their plans and using their data

**AY 2010-2011:** Building on the work of AY 2009-2010, development of routine and systematic assessment of student learning across curricula continues with the addition of assessment "House Calls" and workshops offered by the Provost's office

**AY 2011-2012:** Beginning preparation of Periodic Review Report; approval of graduate level program plans and continuing data collection for all Bachelor's and Master’s programs; focus on doctoral programs with regard to assessment plan development, implementation and plans to use data for improvement

**THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

As noted earlier in this section, the University’s Strategic Plan is an overall map of institutional effectiveness. A framework for the University’s continued emphasis on student learning outcomes is embedded within several of the plan’s sub-objectives (see Goal 1 Objectives B, C, D, E and F) A sample of these sub-objectives, and a corresponding timeline for review and implementation follows:

AY 2012:

- “All courses within a program sequence will exhibit advancing rigor as the course level increases, and individual course prerequisites will be consistent with this expectation and rigorously enforced.”

- “All academic departments will be regularly engaged in: evaluating opportunities to implement new curricula; reviewing, revising and realigning existing curricula, and eliminating obsolete or unsuccessful programs.”

These objectives are being accomplished through the curriculum approval process. This process includes program review with clear expectations for sequencing of courses in all programs and for strong rationale and evaluation of program opportunities.
Also in AY 2012:

- “Complete the development of assessment plans that include learning goals, multiple measures of goal attainment and an assessment schedule for each undergraduate and graduate major and degree program”

This has been accomplished through the timeline of activities presented above. The data are housed in the Academic Programs Assessment Database.

AY 2013:

- “The majority of courses in any program will contain formal elements that require the continued development of student writing, communication skills, and analytic and quantitative capabilities at an appropriate level; the requirement of a specified writing-intensive course in every major will be resuscitated and observed.”

The Academic Subcommittee of CUE has recently begun a review and assessment of the writing-intensive course in each major. This assessment plan is discussed in the General Education portion of this section.

AY 2014:

- “Building on the still relevant vision of General Education's role in the curriculum and its four competency goals--communication, critical thinking, national and global issues, integration and application--the University will transform its implementation to focus on the demonstrated achievement of those competencies.

- “The first year that same-cohort comparative data is available from the CLA, apply the data to revisions of General Education curricula.”

The assessment plan for the General Education program will continue on its schedule, with the inclusion of the data from a second administration of the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). This will serve to further improve the implementation of the General Education Curricula at Montclair State University.

AY 2015-2016:

- “Each college/school will count among its programs at least one or two, and overall the University will have at least 7 programs that have sustained or achieved national ranking or substantial national recognition. These will include Accounting, Environmental Management, Music, Communication and Media Studies, Teacher Education, and Audiology.”

- “Each program, undergraduate and graduate, will be able to articulate its distinctive strengths and why it is highly competitive within the region.”

These objectives will utilize program assessment data, market research and regional benchmark institution data to determine the regional and national standing of academic programs at Montclair State University.
COLLEGE/SCHOOL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

In support of the efforts described above, the University attaches great significance to student learning outcomes assessment activities conducted by faculty in all of the colleges and in the School of Business. A summary of the major highlights/accomplishments of each school/college is listed below. These activities are facilitated and supported by the Deans’ offices through the appropriate Associate and Assistant Deans. More in-depth information on each area may be found by clicking on the links to each school/college.

College of the Arts

The College of the Arts (CART) was established in 2006. The College is accredited by all four national arts accrediting bodies, NASAD, NASD, NASM, and NAST. Also, Education programs in Music, (Visual) Art, and Dance will participate in NCATE reviews in 2014. All degree programs in CART also participate in the University’s student learning outcomes assessment process. Imbedded assessments are identified in courses throughout the Art and Design, Communication and Media, Music and Theatre and Dance programs. Music Theory, Fashion Studies, Theatre, and Communication are examples of this process.

In this process, each assignment/activity identified in a course is assessed with a rubric used by instructors of all sections of those courses. The measures include exams, research projects, portfolios, presentations and others. Assessment results are shared with assessment committees, chairs, faculty and adjuncts. Major/relevant findings may be shared as appropriate with a number of key stakeholders including our students, other College Units and administration and the broad MSU community. The findings are ultimately used for course and program improvement and development.

College of Education and Human Services

The teacher preparation departments in the College of Education and Human Services are all fully accredited by the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). They also conduct assessment activities in all courses in all programs preparing teachers: Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Educational Leadership, and Reading.

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

In the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, with 13 departments, 11 area and interdisciplinary programs, four graduate certificate programs, ten Master's programs and a doctorate in audiology, the College conducts assessment through course evaluation, individual five-year faculty reports, five-year department reviews, and accreditation reports through their respective professional organizations.

College of Science and Mathematics

The College of Science and Mathematics utilizes a variety of assessment tools and activities, in some cases required by either one of the accrediting agencies or professional associations discussed earlier in this Section. Within the Computer Science Department, the Professional Computing concentration within the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science meets the standards of the
Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry meets the standards of the American Chemical Society (ACS). These departments, as well as the Department of Earth and Environmental Studies, all have rich menus of comprehensive assessment activities.

**School of Business**

The School of Business conducts goal-setting activities and assessment on two levels. At the overall Program level, undergraduate and graduate (MBA) learning is evaluated in light of goals and objectives that are formulated by appointed curriculum committees and approved by faculty members. Within the undergraduate division, assessment planning and appraisal is now also conducted by major or concentration area. Each concentration area identifies learning goals that are mapped to courses or curricular “events.” The School of Business has been accredited by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International since 1999, and its status was reaffirmed in its 2009 five-year maintenance review.

**ASSESSMENT OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Assessment of the General Education Program at Montclair State has become progressively more focused since it was first adopted in 1998. Three considerations motivated the General Education committee: to achieve effective assessment, to prepare for the 2009 MSCHE Progress Letter, and to align the GenEd Program with the Strategic Plan adopted in 2011. Its original eleven goals were reviewed and then consolidated in four areas of assessment, organized in two stages for purposes of implementation. Because the committee already had data in the two goals of Communication and Critical Thinking, it felt confident that these goals should be assessed first, to be followed by the two goals of National and Global Issues, and Integration and Application.

**Assessment of Stage One Learning Goals: 1.) Communication and 2.) Critical Thinking**

**Communication**

- Students will communicate ideas effectively to convey information or support an argument, using appropriate technologies
- Students will communicate ideas effectively by making persuasive claims and supporting them with evidence, organized effectively using standard written English

The committee decided that to achieve effective assessment of its first goal, Communication, and to serve as a springboard into other forms of assessment, it would use three platforms to do so: the First Year Writing Program, the Graduation Writing Requirement, and the course Fundamentals of Speech. Although the GenEd committee had been using data from the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) as an assessment device in accordance with Montclair State’s participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), the committee decided in AY 2010-2011 to change to Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) for two reasons: faculty felt it provided a more comprehensive picture of critical thinking skills and was more accurately reflective of the cognitive tasks the Committee hoped students would achieve. In addition, CLA enables self-correction, it is more directly connected to the Strategic Plan, and it is bench-marked with the institutions identified in the Strategic Plan.
The First Year Writing Program

The First Year Writing Program (FYWP) teaches college writing to all incoming first year students as well as transfer students who have not completed the two-semester requirement. This instruction comes through the core courses: ENWR 100 Introduction to Writing, ENWR 105 College Writing I: Intellectual Prose, and ENWR 106 College Writing II: Writing and Literary Study. All instructors are trained, supervised and supported by the Director of First Year Writing, with support from the English Department and two assistant directors.

Varied assessments of the program – independent evaluation of student papers, faculty observation reports, student evaluations, student surveys and faculty surveys – indicate a high level of success in teaching academic writing to University students. Furthermore, the FYWP has been acclaimed by the National Council of Teachers of English. Its 7,000 member Conference on College Composition and Communication awarded Montclair State its Certificate of Excellence in March 2011.

In addition to this external recognition, student evaluations are overwhelmingly favorable, with students highly rating their own development as writers and their professors’ knowledge and abilities. Faculty observation reports and paper evaluation reviews are also strong, indicating that faculty in the program are teaching and responding to student writing in accordance with best practice in the field.

An example of the effectiveness of just one component of the FYWP can be presented here: between September and December of 2009, 93% of all students in ENWR 105 improved their writing in the course as reflected by an increase in the grade received in the course. Only 7% showed either no change or earned a lower grade.

The Graduation Writing Requirement

The Graduation Writing Requirement (GWR) is an additional form of assessment that addresses the area of Communication: Writing/Literature. As the University catalog states, “each department must evaluate the writing ability of its majors by means of a required course (or choice of courses) with substantial writing assignments . . . .” Guidelines for courses that meet this requirement are located at Guidelines for Courses that Aim to Meet the Graduation Writing Requirement.

To date, these courses have not been assessed beyond their initial approval. Determining whether students have fulfilled the requirements is the responsibility of each department and major; the requirement is not currently tracked as part of the Registrar’s audit of students seeking to graduate.

However, a subcommittee of the Committee on University Effectiveness developed a five-phase assessment plan for the GWR in the spring of 2012 as part of the University’s ongoing institutional assessment efforts. Midway through the cycle, if sufficient data become available, the subcommittee will make recommendations for curricular reform and for revisions of the assessment plan.

Fundamentals of Speech

Utilizing the course Fundamentals of Speech, the Speech Department completed an assessment cycle in AY 2010-2011. During this period, more than 1,200 students participated in an online survey that yielded a 60% response rate. Data in the report, entitled The Communication Requirement Assessment...
Cycle 2010-2011, shows, in all areas – Competence, Confidence, Improvement of Public Speaking Skills, Public Speaking Anxiety and the Value of Public Speaking – marked improvement from the beginning of the course to its end. In Fundamentals – Essential Skill Set and Critical Thinking – students also showed marked improvement over the lifespan of the course.

Critical Thinking

In the area of Critical Thinking, the GenEd committee established five goals:

- Use mathematical principles to analyze data and solve problems
- Use the scientific method to make observations, gather and interpret data, and draw conclusions
- Retrieve, synthesize and evaluate information through technological and traditional means
- Analyze and organize facts and ideas, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments, generate and defend opinions
- Develop problem solving skills across all disciplines

To assess Critical Thinking, the GenEd committee also switched its assessment device from the MAPP test to CLA, since it provides a more comprehensive picture of critical thinking skills and because the test reflects more accurately the cognitive tasks that the committee expected students to achieve. In addition, the CLA enables multiple connections to the Strategic Plan.

The CLA assesses analytic reasoning and evaluation, writing effectiveness, writing mechanics and problem solving. It relies on constructed-response tasks rather than multiple choice items. Students are asked to complete one Performance Task, or a combination of one Make-an-Argument prompt and one Critique-an-Argument prompt.

Montclair State administered the CLA to 100 randomly-selected freshmen in the fall of 2010 and 100 randomly-selected seniors in the spring of 2011. Both groups were generally representative of the entire population. In unadjusted performance, results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshman Mean Scores</th>
<th>Senior Mean Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Score: 1073</td>
<td>Total Score: 1177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Task: 1033</td>
<td>Performance Task 1198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytic Writing: 1113</td>
<td>Analytic Writing: 1155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-an-Argument: 1110</td>
<td>Make-an-Argument: 1135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique-an-Argument: 1110</td>
<td>Critique-an-Argument: 1174</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Value-Added Scores and Estimates, results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value-Added Scores</th>
<th>Expected Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Score: 0.71</td>
<td>Total Score: Near Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Task: 1.26</td>
<td>Performance Task: Above Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytic Writing: -0.11</td>
<td>Analytic Writing: Near Expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The General Education Committee concluded that Montclair State students excel at context-based thinking that applies to real world contexts, and they are demonstrably better in this area than students at other institutions. Montclair State University students scored well above expectations on all parts of the CLA’s Performance Task.

In its analysis of the results, the GenEd committee stated that Montclair State students are at expectations for the Critique-an-Argument task and near expectations for Make-an-Argument, which tends to be more abstract and less structured. However, the committee also believed that students have the potential to perform well above expectations in these tasks, given their 1.26 score on Performance Task in the Value Added section. Specifically, while many students seem to have mastered the ability to solve a problem and master a context-based task, they do not exhibit the same level of mastery in tasks that require them to construct an argument out of a context that they themselves are required to construct. Thus the CLA test suggests that Montclair State students need both the confidence to generate an opinion and practice in defending that opinion. Overall, while the CLA report indicates Montclair State students performed well above expectations in the Performance Task component, it is also clear they performed similarly to students in other CLA institutions with regard to Analytic Writing, Make-an-Argument, and Critique-an-argument sections.

In looking ahead, the GenEd committee recommended a series of steps for the implementation of strategies to address the issues raised by the CLA report. These include:

- Involving faculty in workshops on writing an argument;
- Using undergraduate students as peer mentors for the writing process through the Center for Writing Excellence;
- Using the Graduation Writing Requirement as a means of instruction (see discussion earlier in this section), and,
- Using advisement as a point of individual intervention

**Stage Two Learning Goals: 3.) National and Global Issues and 4.) Integration and Application**

To assess its two other goals, National and Global Issues and Integration and Application, the GenEd committee will soon begin an assessment process predicated, to a degree, on its assessment of the first two goals. The Stage Two Learning Goals are:

**National and Global Issues**

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3 As indicated in Section Two of this report, the GenEd program has eliminated Section B (the Interdisciplinary Core) of the Gen Ed program. Montclair State remains committed to National and Global Issues. Therefore, while GenEd discussions and decisions ensue in AY 2012, assessment of National and Global Issues will continue with courses in Section K of the GenEd Program.
Our students will demonstrate awareness of and appreciation for diverse cultures, both within the U.S. and transnationally, including the dynamic nature, consequences, and global and national dimensions of such issues as gender, race, diversity, equity, class and ethnicity.

Our students will understand the democratic underpinnings of our society and their relationships to other cultures.

Our students will understand world and national issues and their impact on our society.

Our students will develop and apply multicultural and transnational awareness to problem solving and ethical deliberations.

**Integration and Application**

- Our students will develop the ability to apply, synthesize and integrate academic knowledge with experiences and previous knowledge in contexts (personal, professional and social) that extend beyond the classroom.
- Our students will understand and apply multi-, inter- and intra-disciplinary subjects and information to ethical, personal, national and international decision-making.

**Assessment Plan Schedule for Stage Two Learning Goals**

To assess these goals, the GenEd committee’s design for the assessment of National and Global Issues will follow this timetable:

- **Spring 2012:** Develop a criteria checklist of learning goals.
- **Fall 2012:** Collect a syllabus from each GenEd course so as to create a generic syllabus, or create a document that can be used to score each on a scale of 1-5.
- **Spring 2013:** Analysis of student data, leading to reports to departments and schools/college.
- **Fall 2014:** Additional data collection.
- **Spring 2015:** Further analysis and recommendations, and establishing a regular cycle.

For the goal of Integration and Application, the design for future assessment will follow this timetable:

- **Fall 2012:** Develop a criteria checklist for learning goals.
- **Spring 2013:** Collect a syllabus from each GenEd course so as to create a generic syllabus, or create a document that can be used to score each on a scale of 1-5.
- **Fall 2013:** Analysis of student data, leading to reports to departments and schools/college.
- **Spring 2014:** Additional data collection.
- **Fall 2015:** Additional analysis and establishing a regular cycle.

**Additional Areas of Student Outcomes Assessment**

At the departmental level, the FERC process (discussed earlier in this section) also pertains with respect to Standard 14. As departments come up for their scheduled five-year reviews, each department must include its plans to assess student learning, including instruments, data for all learning goals, and a modification plan including a schedule for proposed activities in their self-study report. Once the plan and data are entered into the Academic Programs Assessment Database, the information will be inserted into the Review Committee Self-Study. The following are examples of department self-studies from the
current AY 11-12 FERC review cycle: Biology and Molecular Biology, Spanish/Italian, and Health and Nutrition Sciences.

**CONCLUSION**

Assessment at Montclair State University continues to grow and flourish in both the Academic and Administrative Divisions. As is evidenced by this Report, the institution is building a strong culture of assessment and evidence to ensure planning and decision making are knowledge-based and data-driven. The Strategic Plan makes clear that Montclair State University is committed to the processes and protocols of assessment and the activities reported in this section demonstrate that the institution has already embraced those processes and protocols as critical to the ongoing success of the University.
SECTION SIX:
Linked Institutional Planning and Resource Allocation

INTRODUCTION

Montclair State University engages in a rigorous planning and budgeting process, demonstrated by the successful completion of the demanding goals and objectives in its last Strategic Plan, Montclair State University at the Centennial, 1908-2008, and in the progress made toward the recently approved new Strategic Plan: Connecting to Tomorrow: Vision, Creativity, Adaptability.

Careful strategic investment has allowed for increased educational opportunities for students from New Jersey and beyond. Over the past decade the University has made substantial and strategic academic and campus life enhancements, including:

- A 68 percent increase in classrooms, laboratories and specialized academic facilities
- A 118 percent increase in new housing for students
- New facilities for the performing arts
- A new student recreation center
- A renovated athletics center
- Extensive improvements to campus technology and infrastructure.

In addition, grant funding for research has grown significantly, causing the high quality of the University's programs to be increasingly recognized at the national level.

Processes put in place during this period enabled the University to ensure that adequate resources were available to achieve the plan's goals. As discussed in the Enrollment and Finance section (Section Four), annual updates to the five-year financial plan based on a continuous review of institutional priorities have allowed the University to budget the resources needed. In this era of scarce resources, departments were required to adhere to the following principles:

- Develop budgets with a long-term view and protect core academic programs
- Continue to recruit highly qualified faculty in response to enrollment growth
- Propose elimination of non-essential or poorly-attended programs
- Eliminate non-essential vacant positions
- Streamline workflows, reorganize personnel and reduce the use of overtime
- Propose new initiatives that will generate new revenues
- Improve net income from existing revenue centers and special programs.

These principles, in conjunction with an adherence to multi-year financial planning goals, helped lead to significant operating surpluses and provided the funding mechanisms to support the Strategic Plan goals.

A new Strategic Plan was endorsed by the University Senate and approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2011. The plan, Connecting to Tomorrow: Vision, Creativity, Adaptability, is the
result of two years of collaboration by every unit and division in the University community. Stakeholders assessed past growth, current challenges and future opportunities at the unit or division level, providing key data that served as the basis of the overall plan. The University faces many challenges over the course of the next ten years in achieving the goals articulated in the new plan, but remains confident that, given its past successes in turning challenges into opportunities, it will demonstrate similar capability in the future.

**LINKS BETWEEN PLANNING AND BUDGETING**

Montclair State University consistently links its budget plans to strategic goals in a number of ways. The first is an underlying discipline to reallocate funding each year as priorities change. Another is a review of policies and procedures to ensure appropriate and strategic use of funds. The University has recently honed certain practices, including:

- Course fees are reviewed annually to ensure that they are used for appropriate purposes and that fees collected do not exceed, or fall short of, expenses
- Revenue centers are monitored more closely to resolve deficits and strategically reallocate operating surpluses
- New program proposals are required to include a multi-year budget plan, including revenues and expenses
- The position review process has been enhanced to review carefully all vacant positions before they are filled, and to limit the number of new positions to those that are most in line with the Strategic Plan.

As suggested by the 2007 Middle States evaluation team, the University has made other improvements in the planning and budgeting process. The five-year and other long range plans use drivers to project instructional expenses in relation to enrollments. The University has also developed various student-to-faculty and student-to-staff ratios to help project salary and benefits costs, as well as measure the University's staffing levels against other New Jersey institutions.

Through prudent and strategic allocation of the capital plan, the University currently spends an average of $11 million per year to renovate facilities, and thus meets the 1.5% replacement value guideline of good national practice.

The Strategic Plan section, *Meeting the Challenges and Opportunities on the Way to Tomorrow*, is directly linked to budgeting. It identifies the following external financial challenges ahead:

- Uncertain financial support from the State and all external sources
- Higher societal expectations for return on investment in education
- Changing high school demographics and changing demand for graduate education
- Rapid technological change and its impact on instruction, scholarship and administration.
The plan proposes to respond to these challenges by prioritizing revenue opportunities, administrative efficiencies and student retention, all key aspects of strategic budgeting. Strategies identified to achieve these objectives include:

- Increasing the amount and diversifying the sources of non-state support
- Reducing expenses by containing costs and improving efficiencies
- Maintaining the affordability of the University
- Producing new revenue from alternative course delivery
- Planning new facilities and renovating existing facilities
- Fostering a service-oriented campus culture.

**Annual Budget Process**

Each year, with the State appropriation estimate in hand, the Budget Office prepares a high-level budget model to project major revenue and expense increases and/or decreases expected in the coming year, driven by various factors, including Strategic Plan goals. The model includes an allocation of funding that will be available in response to new or supplemental funding requests, tied to strategic goals.

This model is revised several times throughout the spring as the various factors go from rough estimates to more accurate forecasts. An early version of this model results in a target budget for each division when it makes its base budget request for the coming year. The University's senior staff and department directors are consulted throughout the target setting process to ensure that the Budget Office is aware of critical requirements for the upcoming fiscal year.

The annual budget process requires that each division establish a base budget that meets its assigned budget target. The target may allow for a flat budget, base budget increases, or budget reductions. The process requires that divisions make every effort to reallocate funding to the division’s highest priorities.

In addition to submitting a base budget within an assigned target, each division also makes supplemental requests for needs that it cannot meet through reallocation of the base budget. These requests are reviewed by the Executive Director of Budget and Planning in June. After the New Jersey State legislature approves the fiscal year budget, the University's Board of Trustees approves the annual operating budget. The annual budget process also requests each division to submit a separate request for capital funding. These are reviewed by the Vice President for University Facilities, the Executive Director of Budget and Planning and the relevant vice-presidents with the President. The President makes final approval decisions based on the University's five-year capital plan and priorities.

The Office of Budget and Planning is working on business process improvements that will further link budgeting to strategic planning. The Budget Office has implemented a new online form for departments to enter their supplemental requests. This form requires the requestor to identify which goals from the current Strategic Plan will be supported if the request is approved.
Under the Office of the Provost, the University has purchased TracDat® software, which provides a repository of data for the assessment of student learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness. These data will enable the University to evaluate regularly which goals and measurable targets have been met, which have not, and what corrective actions may be needed. These results will inform the annual budget development process.
APPENDICES

Montclair State University Website
Montclair State University Catalog
MSCHE Institutional Profile for Montclair State University - 2011-2012
IPEDS Finance Survey 2010 (FY09)
IPEDS Finance Survey 2011 (FY10)
IPEDS Finance Survey 2012 (FY11)
Montclair State University Capital Master Plan

FRONT MATTER

Montclair State University Net ID System
Regional Accreditation Information
NJ Transfer Information
Montclair State University Transfer Student Information
MSU Federal Student Loan Default Data

SECTION ONE (Executive Summary)

Montclair State University Strategic Plan
Montclair State University Divisional Structures (Organizational Charts)
Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness (TAUE)
Committee on University Effectiveness Membership (CUE) (5 files)

10.21.10 CUE Kickoff Meeting Memo
CUE Members List
4.8.11 Cue Meeting – PowerPoint Presentation
Spring 2012 CUE Meeting Invitation
4.9.12 Cue Meeting – PowerPoint Presentation

Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008
SECTION TWO

2007 MSCHE Team Report to MSU

2009 Progress Letter to MSCHE

August 2011 MSCHE Response to Montclair State’s Substantive Change Request

Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness (TAUE)

Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE) (5 files)

10.21.10 CUE Kickoff Meeting Memo
CUE Members List
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4.9.12 Cue Meeting – PowerPoint Presentation

President Susan A. Cole’s September 2011 Address to the University Community

Montclair State University Strategic Plan

The Assessment Circle

Assessment Plan Entry Days, Data Entry Days, and Rubric Workshops

Montclair State University Assessment Website

General Education Program – Eleven Goals for Student Learning (1998)

General Education Curriculum

General Education Committee Members

General Education Program – Four Learning Goals (Consolidated 2009)

2009 Progress Letter to MSCHE

Provost’s Memo Regarding Suspension of Team-taught GenEd Interdisciplinary Core

August 2011 MSCHE Response to Montclair State’s Substantive Change Request

Online Program Initiative Projected Budget

SECTION THREE

Montclair State University Strategic Plan

Report of the Governor’s Task Force on Higher Education
President Cole’s Budget Testimony to New Jersey Senate

2007 MSCHE Team Report to MSU

2009 Progress Letter to MSCHE

Unit Strategic Planning Template and Cover Letter

Strategic Planning Committee Summarized SWOT Analysis

Institutional Assessment Plans

Cross-referencing of Strategic Plan Objectives with MSCHE Standards

Project on Student Debt Report

2007 and 2010 Noel-Levitz Student Survey Reports (2 files)
  Noel-Levitz Scale Report 2007-2010
  Advising Questions from Noel-Levitz 2010

PROJECT ADVISE

SECTION FOUR

Total Headcount Enrollment

Undergraduate Headcount Enrollment

Environmental Scan Data

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Link re: New Jersey High School Graduates

Transfer Student Population Figures

Financial Aid Data

Scannell & Kurz Undergraduate Enrollment/Financial Aid Strategy Tool for Montclair State University

Graduate Headcount Enrollment

Montclair State University Strategic Plan

Council of Graduate Schools Enrollment Trend Data

Montclair State University Audited Financial Statements

Montclair State University Financial Trend Data
SECTION FIVE

June 2009 MSCHE Response to MSU Progress Letter

2009 Progress Letter to MSCHE

Montclair State University Strategic Plan

Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE) (5 files)

- 10.21.10 CUE Kickoff Meeting Memo
- CUE Members List
- 4.8.11 Cue Meeting – PowerPoint Presentation
- Spring 2012 CUE Meeting Invitation
- 4.9.12 Cue Meeting – PowerPoint Presentation

Individual College/School Strategic Plans and SWOT Information (6 files)

- College of the Arts (CART) Strategic Plan
- CART Strategic Plan – Executive Summary
- Cali School of Music Strategic Plan
- College of Education (CEHS) Strategic Plan
- College of Science and Mathematics (CSAM) Strategic Plan
- School of Business (SBUS) Strategic Plan

Academic Programs Assessment Database

Assessment Plan Entry Days, Data Collection Days, and Assessment Tool/Rubric Workshops

Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC) Information (5 files)

- Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC) Program Overview
- FERC Tasks Timeline
- Department Self-Study Guide
- Charge to FERC Team Members
- Sample FERC Team Invitation Letter

LibQUAL+ Survey Data

List of Other Accrediting Agencies

Finance & Treasury Assessment (4 files)

- Finance and Treasury Division Assessment Methods
- Bursar’s Office Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Finance Auditor’s Statements
- Financial Trend Data

Human Resources Assessments/Operational Reports
Division of Information Technology Assessment Activities

Instructional Design Services

Technology Training and Integration (TTI) Group Assessment Activities

University Advancement Assessment Information (6 files)

- Division of Advancement Assessment Information
- Alumni Relations Assessment Information
- Advancement Giving – Goals and Actuals
- Five-year Giving by Constituency 2007-2011
- Five-year Giving by Purpose 2007-2011
- Advancement Graham-Pelton Recommendations

University Facilities Assessment Activities

Student Development and Campus Life (SDCL) Assessment Information (3 files)

- Student Development and Campus Life Assessment Plan (entered in CUE Institutional Effectiveness Template)
- Center for Advising and Student Transitions (CAST) Assessment Information
- Council for the Advancement of Standards in Education (CAS) Incentive Program

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Standards

Assessment Template Guidelines for Administrative Divisions

Institutional Assessment Template

Montclair State University Alumni Surveys

National Surveys

Survey Calendar

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Graduation Rate Benchmark Data

Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE)

Education Trust Data

Montclair State University Recognized in Hispanic Outlook Magazine

College/School Associate Deans and Assessment Liaisons

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Phased Implementation Memos (6 files)

- AY 09-10 - Phase I Assessment Plan Memo (September 2009)
- AY 09-10 - Phase II Assessment Plan Memo (August 2010)
AY 10-11 - Phase III Assessment Plan Memo (February 2011)
AY 11-12 - Phase IV Assessment Plan Memo (September 2011)
AY 11-12 - Doctoral Programs Assessment Plan Memo (September 2011)
AY 11-12 - Phase V Assessment Plan Memo (March 2012)

Provost’s Memo on Assessment (August 2009)

The Assessment Circle

Assessment Presentations to Chairs Workshops (2files)

  Phase I Assessment Presentation – September 2009 Chairs’ Workshop
  Phase II Assessment Presentation – October 2010 Chairs’ Workshop

University Strategic Plan Goals

Academic Programs Assessment Database

College/School Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Highlights: College of the Arts, College of Education and Human Services, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Science and Mathematics, and the School of Business

2009 Progress Letter to MSCHE

General Education Program – Eleven Goals for Student Learning (1998)

Assessment of First Year Writing Program (FYWP)

Guidelines for Courses that Aim to Meet the Graduation Writing Requirement

Assessment of Graduation Writing Requirement (GWR)

The Communication Requirement Assessment Cycle 2010-2011

CLA Report (2 files)

  Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) Report for Montclair State University
  CLA Data and Analysis PowerPoint Presentation

Center for Writing Excellence

Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC) Self Study Examples for the Departments of: Biology & Microbiology, Health and Nutrition Sciences, Spanish/Italian

SECTION SIX

Montclair State University Strategic Plan

Budget and Planning Supplemental Request Form