



**MONTCLAIR STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

**SELF-STUDY REPORT  
PREPARED FOR THE  
MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
FEBRUARY 2017**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Montclair State University has focused its decennial Self-Study report for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) on the impact of growth and major transformations on realizing key institutional goals as identified in the centennial Strategic Plan in 2011, “Connecting to Tomorrow.” An Executive Leadership Team and a Steering Committee (CUE) were responsible for the preparation of the Self-Study report. They worked closely with seven working groups (one group for each of the seven Standards) and a Compliance Committee, who undertook extensive research from spring 2015 to fall 2016. Several drafts of the report were reviewed by all members of these groups throughout the process. Montclair State faculty, students, and administration also reviewed draft versions of the report between October 2016 and December 2016. The final Self-Study report includes this narrative document and the accompanying Documentation Roadmap (DR) that includes all the evidence. This Summary provides an overview of key findings and opportunities for improvement that have emerged from the process.

### **Key Findings**

Extensive inquiry and documentation demonstrates that Montclair State University meets the terms of Middle States’ seven standards and fifteen Requirements of Affiliation. In other words, Montclair State University adheres to an evidence-based process in its efforts to assess its effectiveness and drive its ongoing transformation as an educational institution.

*Standard I: Mission and Goals.* The Mission Statement of Montclair State University provides a clear description of its purpose within the context of higher education, the diverse students it serves, and desired outcomes it aims to achieve. The University’s five overarching goals, as outlined in its Strategic Plan, are linked to the Mission Statement and delineate a well-defined plan and a detailed set of measurable objectives to guide the institution as it fulfills its mission. The continual assessment of the University’s progress towards these goals provides ample evidence of an institutional bedrock of vision, creativity, and adaptability. These foundational characteristics continue to enable the University to meet its immediate and distant challenges and prepare for the next round of strategic planning through an exciting period of transformation and growth.

*Standard II: Ethics and Integrity.* Ethics and integrity are essential to the fabric of Montclair State University, are reflected in all daily institutional operations, and are guided by federal, state and university policies and procedures. The University has also committed all necessary resources to preserving the public trust and upholding the integrity of the design, conduct, and reporting of its research. Montclair State University is a growing institution of higher education, admitting and graduating an increasingly diverse population of students. The University aims to provide access to opportunities that will lead students to be lifelong learners able to reach their personal and professional goals, through an ongoing commitment to enhancing and maintaining a respectful, inclusive campus culture.

*Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience.* Montclair State University provides students with rich and diverse interlocking learning experiences that include a revitalized General Education Program that reflects stronger coherence, rigorous and innovative academic programs that are relevant and integral to the generation of the flat global world, and a range of other high impact co-curricular activities that offer significant opportunities for students to enrich their learning experience.

*Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience.* The University provides comprehensive, coherent and effective support systems to foster student success. The student experience is enhanced in a manner that is congruent with its mission. Students are supported from admission through graduation by initiatives that are integrated and deployed in strategic manners to meet a student’s needs, to facilitate retention and degree completion. The development and deployment of the services available to students are guided by the goals of the strategic plan to ensure that students are able to connect to a successful tomorrow,

connect with people and ideas, and connect to place in the local, regional, national and international arenas.

*Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment.* The institution continues to evolve its assessment systems, processes, and reporting tools to enable data-driven decision-making for continuous institutional improvement. As a result of this Self-Study, it is clear that assessment activities at Montclair State University continue to expand in both the academic and administrative divisions and serve as the foundation for decision-making and future growth.

*Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement.* Montclair State University's planning processes, resources and infrastructures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges. The University is committed to extending its scholarly, technical, intellectual, professional and cultural resources for the benefit of the communities it serves, internally and externally. From radically reducing its carbon footprint, to integrating new technology, to fostering public-private partnerships, Montclair State is preparing for a future of sustainability.

*Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration.* Montclair State University has robust governance, leadership and administrative structures and processes that allow it to support and advance its mission and goals. The success of these structures is evident in the remarkable ongoing growth and transformation of the institution. As a state-assisted institution, Montclair State University has maintained its autonomy focused on the primary mission of education, which in turn benefits the students and other constituencies it serves. These governance, leadership and administrative structures have been successful in building an institution that meets its mission and goals by providing students with opportunities to connect to a successful tomorrow and at the same time meeting the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow.

### **Opportunities for Improvement**

In addition to key findings, the self-study process identified opportunities for improvement that can guide the University into refining its mission and developing the next strategic plan that preserves a strong commitment to providing all students with an outstanding educational experience. These opportunities are presented as recommendations within appropriate sections of the report and are accompanied by specific action plans:

1. Track and Connect with Alumni in a More Systematic Way to Assess the Value Added of a Montclair State University Education
2. Complete the Recertification Process for all Courses in the General Education Program
3. Enhance the Research Culture at the Undergraduate and Graduate Levels of Study
4. Track and Assess Initiatives in Academic Advising and the Interface with Admissions and Impact on Retention and Graduation
5. Coordinate Campus-Wide Student Surveys
6. Assess all Learning Goals in the General Education Program
7. Revise GenEd199: New Student Seminar Requirement
8. Streamline Assessment Activities and Reporting to Facilitate Strategic Planning and Institutional Improvement
9. Enhance Internal Communication Across the Institution

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Action Plan** – an agreed upon strategy among the faculty to address the results of an ongoing assessment plan.

**Assessment** - a process that asks important questions about student learning and program effectiveness; gathers meaningful information about these questions; uses the information for program and course improvement in the achievement of University program goals.

**Assessment Liaison** – a department representative, who manages, organizes and oversees the assessment process in the department.

### Faculty

Clinical Specialists – A full-time, non-tenure track position without academic rank with responsibility, within a specific discipline(s) for providing clinical/non-classroom instruction and advisement and supervision and coordination of internships, practica, and other applied and professional experiential learning.

Instructional Specialists - A full-time, non-tenure track position without academic rank with responsibility for offering course instruction to students within a specific discipline(s) and for providing curricular development and assistance and advising to students in such courses.

**GenEd** – General Education is the core of the educational experience at Montclair State University.

Institutional Goals – institutional- level action statements that implement, support, and are derived from the Mission and Strategic Plan.

**OneMontclair** – The purpose of the OneMontclair (OM) program is to replace administrative systems that have served as the primary business and information platforms for Budgeting and Planning, Finance, Human Resources, Student and Campus Services, University Advancement, and Institutional Research.

The OneMontclair Initiative includes:

*Banner*<sup>TM</sup> - Enterprise level solution to manage student information systems

*DegreeWorks*<sup>TM</sup> - Enterprise level solution to manage student audit system

*PeopleSoft*<sup>TM</sup> - An application accessible to those users in the organization who need to perform specific financial applications.

*Simplicity*<sup>TM</sup> - Comprehensive career management system

*Starfish*<sup>TM</sup> - An enterprise level application that integrates multiple data points related to student success and facilitates timely interventions by faculty, advisors and administration as appropriate

*WorkDay*<sup>TM</sup> - Enterprise-level software solutions for human resource

**Recommendation for Institutional Improvement** – An outcome of the self-study process used to identify areas that need to be addressed to ensure continuous quality institutional improvement.

## ACRONYMS

*Acronyms in italics are used at Montclair State University*

AA	<i>Academic Affairs</i>
AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
ACE	American Council on Education
AFT	American Federation of Teachers
ALO	Accreditation Liaison Officer
ASC	<i>Academic Success Center</i>
CAEL	Council for Adult and Experiential Learning
CAPS	<i>Counseling and Psychological Services</i>
CARE	<i>Crisis, Assessment, Response and Education</i>
CART	<i>College of the Arts</i>
CELS	<i>Center for Environmental and Life Sciences</i>
CEU	Continuing Education Unit
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation
CEHS	<i>College of Education and Human Services</i>
CHSS	<i>College of Humanities and Social Sciences</i>
CLEP	College Level Examination Program
CSAM	<i>College of Science and Mathematics</i>
CSI	<i>Center for Student Involvement</i>
CSOM	<i>John J Cali School of Music</i>
CUBA	College and University Business Administration
CUE	<i>Committee on University Effectiveness</i>
DR	<i>Documentation Roadmap</i>
DRC	<i>Disability Resource Center</i>
EAR	Export Administration Regulations
EECO	<i>Education, Environment and Community Outreach</i>
ELT	<i>Executive Leadership Team</i>
EO/AA	Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action
EOF	Equal Opportunity Fund
FASB	Financial Accounting Standards Board
FERC	<i>Five Year External Review Committee</i>
FSBUS	<i>Feliciano School of Business</i>
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
GED	General Education Development Testing Program
GPA	Grade Point Average
GRE	Graduate Record Examination
HERD	Higher Education Research and Development
HERI	Higher Education Research Institute
HIPs	<i>High Impact Practices</i>
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
IT	<i>Office of Information Technology</i>
ITAR	International Traffic in Arms Regulation
NACUBO	National Association of College and University Business Officers
NAFSA	National Association of Foreign Student Affairs

NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
NCHEMS	National Center for Higher Education Management Systems
NJCC	New Jersey Campus Compact
<i>NU</i>	<i>School of Nursing</i>
OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
<i>OIR</i>	<i>Office of Institutional Research</i>
<i>OM</i>	<i>OneMontclair</i>
<i>OCSI</i>	<i>Orange Community School Initiative</i>
<i>PCAAD</i>	<i>Presidents Commission on Affirmative Action and Diversity</i>
PSEG	Public Service Electric and Gas
<i>PSM</i>	<i>Professional Science Masters</i>
R3	Doctoral University- Moderate Research Activity (R3)
<i>RAUL</i>	<i>Research Academy for University Learning</i>
<i>RHMLC</i>	<i>Red Hawk Math Learning Center</i>
<i>SCOM</i>	<i>School of Communication and Media</i>
<i>SDCL</i>	<i>Student Development and Campus Life</i>
<i>TAUE</i>	<i>Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness</i>
<i>TGS</i>	<i>The Graduate School</i>
<i>TTI</i>	<i>Technology Training and Integration</i>
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
USDOE	U.S. Department of Education
<i>VRC</i>	<i>Volunteer Resource</i>

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## INTRODUCTION

### The Montclair State University Story

Montclair State University is built on a 108-year tradition of academic excellence and has distinguished itself as a leader in Higher Education. The University is characterized by an engaged and culturally diverse student body, innovative programs, expert faculty, and dedicated staff, which together support an institutional mission to prepare active, responsible, and engaged citizens of the world. One of the defining qualities of Montclair State University is that it has always been responsive to changing educational and societal needs and has demonstrated strategic agility. The University has transformed itself, being first of the State's normal schools to initiate four-year degree programs, the first of the state colleges to offer graduate degrees, and the first to be awarded university status. Montclair State has grown from an institution of about 12,000 students in 1999 to one of 21,000 students this academic year, from an institution that granted about 2,200 degrees a year in 1999 to one that grants over 4,500 degrees a year.

This transformation continues even as the environment in which Montclair State University, as well as every other institution of higher education, operates has become more challenging. In New Jersey, the funding base for public institutions has now dramatically shifted from state funds to student tuition with flat or declining general state appropriations over the past decade. Coupled with lean budgetary cycles, other notable changes impact the University: the increasingly diverse student body, the immense technological advances that transform how the institution promotes academic and scholarly excellence, and the expanding range of stakeholders the University engages. To address this changing environment, the University has been very diligent in planning and allocating its resources efficiently, and generating new resources and partnerships for strategic investment in support of academic excellence. Finally, the University has initiated a long-awaited project, OneMontclair, to replace all administrative systems that have served as the primary business and information platforms for Budgeting and Planning, Finance, Human Resources, Student and Campus Services, University Advancement, and Institutional Research..

Fall 2015 brought some noticeable changes to the Montclair State landscape, the Feliciano School of Business (FSBUS) and the Center for Environmental and Life Sciences (CELS) for example. Academic year 2016-2017, will also add a number of new resources to the University. Among the more significant will be the new facility for the School of Communication and Media and the inauguration of our new School of Nursing. A completely renovated Partridge Hall houses the School of Nursing, as well as The Graduate School.

The spring of 2016 brought several important recognitions of the growth and change of the institution. Montclair State University was recognized by the Carnegie Listing of Institutions of Higher Education as a Research 3 Doctoral University. It was also officially approved by the State of New Jersey to change its mission to a doctoral degree granting university. Among Montclair State's recent recognitions and rankings are the following:

Table 1 *Recent Recognitions of Montclair State University*

Source:	Recognition
<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i>	Top 200 National Universities
Federal Government	Hispanic Serving Institution
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching	Community Engaged Campus
<i>Princeton Review</i>	Among nation's greenest campuses Feliciano School of Business among Best Business Schools

<i>Money Magazine</i>	Among nation's colleges that add the most value
<i>Forbes Magazine</i>	America's Top Colleges
Campus Pride	Top 25 LGBTQ-Friendly Colleges and Universities
<i>Diverse: Issues in Higher Education</i>	Top Degree Producer of minority student degrees
<i>Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education Magazine</i>	Top 100 Colleges for Hispanics
<i>G.I. Jobs</i>	Military-Friendly university

As articulated in its most recent Strategic Plan, the University continues to direct its activities towards five goals:

1. Connecting students with a successful future;
2. Connecting people and ideas;
3. Connecting to place;
4. Connecting globally and;
5. Meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

The mission of the University provides a strong foundation that has guided marked growth in many key areas, including student enrollment and degrees earned, support services and engagement opportunities, range of academic programs, faculty and research endeavors, and facilities. The purposeful approach to the institutional cycles of transformation has resulted in:

1. A rich educational environment for students, shaped by both the University community and external organizational partners for expanding educational opportunities from the for-profit, non-profit, and governmental sectors. These collaborations have made the University a progressive center of culture and learning that extends far beyond the campus boundaries, and continues to shape and be shaped by the importance of public education in the state and nation. The University has made great strides in establishing sets of measurable objectives and has aligned its assessment practices to provide continuous feedback on the University's progress towards key goals.
2. The ongoing cycles of transformation also present the University with new opportunities to examine how its mission can best be realized through collaboration among academic and administrative units and careful planning and allocation of resources. The decennial Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Self-Study provides the University with a valuable avenue through which all aspects of the institution can be assessed in relation to its goals and objectives. To prepare for this Self-Study, the University has brought together constituents representing various institutional perspectives

### **Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study**

This Self-Study provides an opportunity to critically examine Montclair State University's performance and progress. Within the context of the seven new accreditation standards (articulated in the thirteenth edition of Standards for Accreditation of the MSCHE), the intended outcomes of the current Self-Study are to:

1. Be reaccredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
2. Understand how planned strategic change to support student success depends on well executed assessment that provides feedback to University stakeholders so that the continuous improvement of the institution can occur in an integrated manner.
  - a. Provide evidence that institutional priorities and strategic initiatives are adequately resourced and are effective in serving the growing student population.
  - b. Examine how the institution establishes, standardizes, and assesses student learning outcomes and considers alignment with student success models.

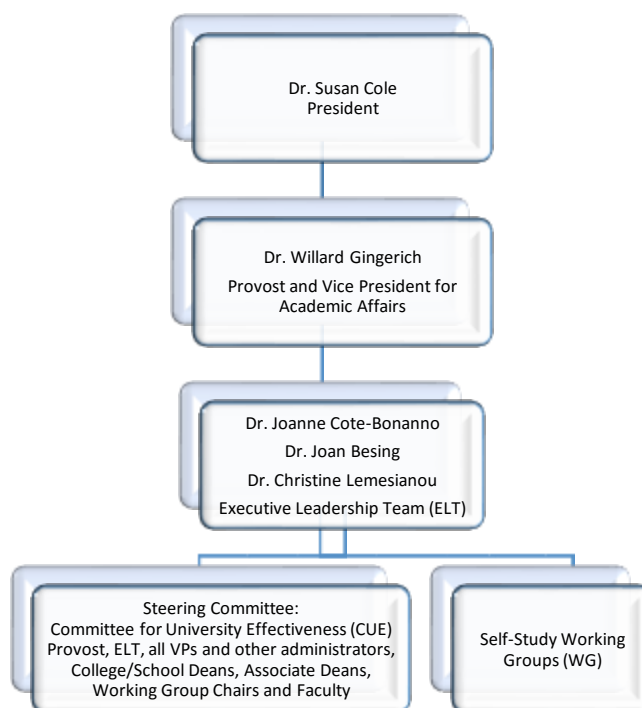
- c. Understand how assessment supports improvements in curricular development, student learning and the student experience, and institutional effectiveness and how results of this assessment are communicated to stakeholders.
  - d. Examine how the institution's recruitment, selection, tenure, and promotion policies and procedures contribute to a diverse, highly qualified faculty body that supports program growth, research endeavors, and quality teaching.
  - e. Demonstrate how renewal processes – that is, processes related to the improvement of existing and/or outdated resources (like University facilities, human resources, technology, development initiatives, other elements of the infrastructure, etc.) – are aligned with each other and existing institutional support mechanisms.
3. Establish a set of recommendations that can serve as the foundation for addressing existing challenges and inform the development of the University's next strategic plan.

### **Participation in the CIP**

As a participant in the Collaborative Implementation Project (CIP), Montclair State University has agreed to use the comprehensive model for the Self-Study. As noted above, the University has been undergoing cycles of transformation in all aspects of the institution. The goals of this self-study are to demonstrate and clearly document Montclair State University's compliance with the seven MSCHE accreditation standards and to examine the institution's progress in meeting its mission as articulated by the institutional goals and objectives. Use of the comprehensive self-study model is particularly appropriate as the institution leverages the work of the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE) and the existing ongoing university wide assessment processes. This self-study model will provide the structure needed to examine every aspect of the collaboration among all academic and administrative units and to explore the extent to which institutional outcomes are in concert with institutional priorities. The outcomes of the Self-Study will provide guidance in determining areas in which the University is successful in meeting its mission and goals and allow for the discovery of new ways in which it can continuously improve its processes in those areas. More importantly, the comprehensive approach will help the institution discover areas that may require additional focus to ensure continuous improvement toward the primary goals of 1) Connecting students with a successful future; 2) Connecting people and ideas; 3) Connecting to place; 4) Connecting globally and; 5) Meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

### **Montclair State University – Organization and Participants**

The President and Provost appointed an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to serve as the points of contact during the University's participation in the Collaborative Implementation Project and to provide leadership as the institution undertakes a review of its processes and effectiveness in meeting the mission and goals of Montclair State University. The ELT is composed of Dr. Joanne Coté-Bonanno, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Assessment, Dr. Joan Besing, Professor and Program Director of the Graduate Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders and Dr. Christine Lemesianou, Associate Director, School of Communication and Media.



*Figure 1. Organization of Self-Study Personnel.*

In undertaking the self-study process Montclair State University has leveraged some currently existing committees and has formed working groups around the standards that are set forth by MSCHE. Since 2008 the University has had a committee to evaluate university effectiveness. In its first iteration it was called the Task Force for Assessment and University Effectiveness (TAUE) and was renamed the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE) in 2010. The express purpose of the CUE is to monitor, oversee, and support assessment activities and provide analyses of our effectiveness for the full range of Montclair State University's divisions, departments and programs. The CUE now serves as the Steering Committee for the Self-Study. The membership of the Self-Study Steering Committee consists of the ELT and members of the CUE:

*Table 2 Members of the Self-Study Steering Committee.*

1. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	Dr. Willard Gingerich
2. Executive Leadership Team	Dr. Joanne Coté-Bonanno, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Assessment Dr. Joan Besing, Professor and Program Director of the Graduate Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders Dr. Christine Lemesianou, Associate Director, School of Communication and Media
3. Vice Presidents	Shawn Connolly, Vice President for University Facilities Jon Rosenhein, Vice President for Finance and Treasurer Jerry Cutler, Vice President for Human Resources Candace Fleming, Vice President for Information Technology Karen L. Pennington, Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life John Shannon, Vice President for University Advancement
4. Academic Deans	Brian Carolan, Associate Dean, The Graduate School Kimberly Hollister, Vice Dean, School of Business

	Judith Lin Hunt, Dean, Library Services Suzanne McCotter, Associate Dean, College of Education and Human Services Robert Friedman, Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences Lynn Schneemeyer, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Science and Mathematics Ronald Sharps, Associate Dean, College of the Arts
5. Faculty	Melinda Knight, Professor of English and Director of the Center for Writing Excellence Miriam Linver, Associate Professor of Family and Child Studies Kirk McDermid, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Religion and Chair of the General Education Committee Dorothy Rogers, Chair and Associate Professor of Religion Marissa Silverman, Associate Professor, John J. Cali School of Music Kenneth Sumner, Chair and Associate Professor of Psychology Diana Thomas, Professor of Mathematical Sciences Leslie Wilson, Professor of History
6. Administrators and Professional Staff	Fred Bonato, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs Yolanda Brandon, Executive Assistant to the Vice President for University Facilities Leslie Sutton-Smith, Registrar Jeffrey Indiveri-Gant, Director of Undergraduate Admissions Steven Johnson, Director of Institutional Research David Josephson, Executive Director of Budget and Planning Irina Koroleva, Assistant Director of Assessment Charlie Matteis, Director of Organizational Development and Training Masela Obade, Assistant Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Research Analyst Katharine Brophy, Associate Vice President of Finance Barbara Ritola, Academic Programs Coordinator Allyson Straker-Banks, Associate Vice President for Student Academic Services

The ELT in conjunction with the Provost identified the chairs of the Working Groups and the chairs in turn have identified members of their working groups who represent all aspects of the institution and all key constituent groups including faculty, administrators, and staff. The membership of all teams involved in the decennial Self-Study also reflects the cultural, gender, ethnic, and LGBTQ diversity of the campus.

## A Guide for the Reader

The Self-Study is presented in sections in an integrative and multi-layered approach in two parts. In the first part of each section is a table that outlines all criteria and sub-criteria of the Standard and provides dynamic links for each to the Documentation Roadmap (DR). The links provide a range of supporting documents to clearly establish how Montclair State University meets each Standard and associated criteria. Supporting materials are in the form of data reports and other documents, policies, procedures. In order to assess how Montclair State University meets the Standards of Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation, working groups used a systematic approach to gather and analyze data and examined how assessment activities are leveraged in strategic planning and budgeting to ensure continuous institutional effectiveness and improvement.

This evidence is stored in a custom-designed database, which serves as the DR for this study. The institution took a long-term approach in designing the DR to allow the interlinking to any related MSCHE suggestions or recommendations, the corresponding Requirements of Affiliation, objectives identified in the latest University Strategic Plan, and any identification of key priorities. This layering provides the institution with the broader context of the self-study. It is an invaluable tool for accreditation reporting, ongoing assessment to ensure continuous quality improvement, and future strategic planning.

The second part of each section of the report consists of a narrative analysis of key priorities and references specific evidence found in the DR. The research questions presented in the Self-Study Design document served as the basis for each working group to identify the key issues recognized as priorities at Montclair State and examined in light of the five goals described in the 2011 Strategic Plan “Connecting to Tomorrow.” The five goals below provide the broad vision that continues to guide the University:

- Connecting students with a successful future
- Connecting people and ideas
- Connecting to place
- Connecting globally
- Meeting challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow

Although intricately interconnected, in the analysis provided in the Self-Study report that follows the five goals are addressed explicitly in a more targeted manner as the table below indicates:

Table 3 *Map of Accreditation Standards and Montclair State University Strategic Plan Goals.*

	SUCCESSFUL TOMORROW	PEOPLE & IDEAS	PLACE	Globally	CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES
<b>STANDARD I</b>	X				X
<b>STANDARD II</b>	X		X		X
<b>STANDARD III</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>STANDARD IV</b>	X		X		X
<b>STANDARD V</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>STANDARD VI</b>	X				X
<b>STANDARD VII</b>	X				X

Each section lays out the big picture with relevant data, and zooms in to specific extended examples to illustrate strengths but also areas that require further attention. The narrative is based on a review and analysis of all the DR evidence and discussion with relevant Montclair State campus representatives and stakeholders.

### **How to Read Each Standard Section**

Each section associated with a Standard for Accreditation opens with a table that lists each criterion (and relevant sub-criteria). As noted above, each criterion is linked to relevant evidence provided in the DR. If appropriate, related Requirements of Affiliation are identified and supported by existing documentation.

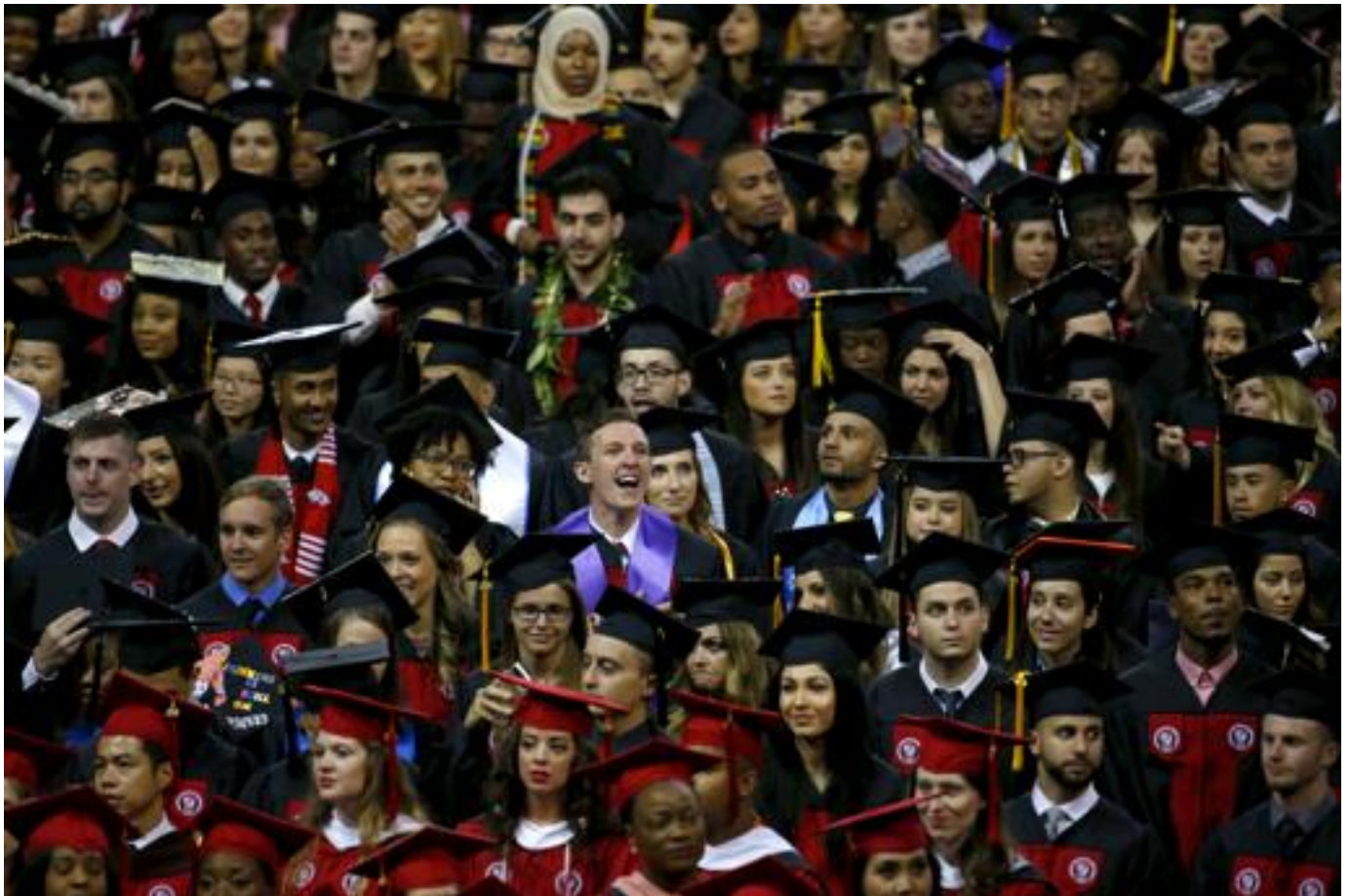
Subsequently, the narrative part of each section focuses on key issues that have been identified by working groups and University stakeholders as priorities in order to establish a strong foundation for the next strategic plan and facilitate continuous quality improvement.

#### **Section Format**

- Statement of the Standard.
- Assessment of Montclair State University’s success in meeting the Standard and related criteria and relevant Requirement(s) of Affiliation.
- Table with hyperlinks to DR and evidence (documents, policies and procedures).
- Narrative section that follows focuses on issues identified as key institutional priorities by the Working Groups and Steering Committee and offers critical analysis as well as illustrative examples. Priorities are discussed in light of the five goals of the strategic plan.
- Citations throughout each section lead to evidence in the DR.
  - Citations are formatted to indicate the Standard, Criterion, and Sub-Criterion (e.g. IV.C1d which references Standard IV, Criterion 1, and sub-criterion d). When multiple pieces of evidence relate to a specific criterion, a number follows (e.g. IV.C1d.4).

- Concluding part of each section offers a summary statement, identification of key findings from the analysis, next steps for strategic planning. Finally, where appropriate, recommendations for institutional improvement are presented to be addressed as the University envisions its next phase and develops a new strategic plan to ensure excellence for another century.

# **STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS**



## STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

### Standard Statement

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

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

Montclair State University meets the four criteria and all sub-criteria of Standard I. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the two Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard I: Specifically requirement #7: The institution has a statement of mission and goals that defines its purpose within the context of higher education and requirement #10: Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments. Evidence that demonstrates that Montclair State meets Standard I and the related Requirements of Affiliation can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap (DR) through active links in the table presented below.

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
<u>I.C1</u>	Clearly defined mission and goals that	
<u>I.C1a</u>	Are developed through appropriate collaborative participation	✓
<u>I.C1b</u>	Address external as well as internal contexts	✓
<u>I.C1c</u>	Are approved and supported by the governing body	✓
<u>I.C1d</u>	Guide decision making	✓
<u>I.C1e</u>	Support of scholarly inquiry and creative activity	✓
<u>I.C1f</u>	Are publicized and widely known by stakeholders	✓
<u>I.C1g</u>	Are periodically evaluated	✓
<u>I.C2</u>	Institutional goals that are realistic, appropriate to higher education, and consistent with mission	✓
<u>I.C3</u>	Goals that focus on student learning and related outcomes and on institutional improvement	✓
<u>I.C4</u>	Periodic assessment of mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable.	✓

The remainder of the section provides analysis of key issues concerning mission and goals that have been identified as priorities at Montclair State University. This section addresses explicitly two of Montclair State's goals identified in the 2011 Strategic Plan: Connecting students with a successful tomorrow and meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

### Introduction – Restatement of the standard that is specific to Montclair State University

The Mission Statement of Montclair State University (I.C1a.3) provides a clear description of its purpose within the context of higher education, the diverse students it serves, and desired outcomes it aims to achieve. The University's five overarching goals, as outlined in its Strategic Plan (I.C1a.2), are linked to the Mission Statement and delineate a clear plan and a detailed set of measurable objectives to guide the

institution as it fulfills its mission. The continual assessment of the University's progress towards these goals provides ample evidence of an institutional bedrock of vision, creativity, and adaptability. These foundational characteristics continue to enable the University to meet its immediate and distant challenges and prepare for the next round of strategic planning through an exciting period of transformation and growth.

## **Analysis of Key Issues Related to Meeting the Standard and Criteria**

### **Communication and Assessment of the University's Mission and Goals**

#### **Mission Statement**

The University Mission Statement was approved in public session by the University's Board of Trustees on October 31, 2002 and is organized around three major components. (I.C1a.5) First, it describes the essential characteristics of the students and faculty it seeks to admit and recruit with emphasis on issues of accessibility and quality. Its second component articulates the varied constituents that are served by the University's comprehensive and growing portfolio of baccalaureate, master's, certificate, and doctoral programs that are closely aligned with its academic strengths and responsive to the local, state and regional needs and employment opportunities. Finally, the Mission Statement clearly sets out the student outcomes it seeks to develop, including the ability to discover, create, and evaluate knowledge, to develop an understanding of global issues, and act ethically.

The current University Mission Statement has not been altered since the accreditation conferred by the 2007 Middle Commission on Higher Education review (I.C1a.1). The current Mission Statement replaced the one that was first approved on May 13, 1981 and revised on April 27, 1994. The Mission Statement, which communicates the University's overarching purpose and establishes its institutional priorities, was developed in collaboration with faculty, administrators, staff, and students. Approved by the University Senate, finalized by the Provost and President and ultimately recommended to and approved by the Board of Trustees (I.C1c.1), this statement undergirds planning and program decisions, curricular matters, faculty and staff hiring, student recruitment and retention, and decisions regarding new facilities and construction efforts. The Mission Statement is prominently posted on the University's website (I.C1f.1) and easily accessible to the broader public.

#### **Strategic Plan: Academic Excellence for a Changing World**

Montclair State University's Mission Statement has guided the development and implementation of its most recent Strategic Plan (I.C1a.2), *Connecting to Tomorrow: Vision, Creativity, Adaptability*, which communicates highly specific short- and long-term institutional objectives and goals to the specific, measurable actions needed to achieve them. The document outlines five goals, four of which mention the theme of *connecting*: 1) Connecting Students with a Successful Tomorrow; 2) Connecting People and Ideas; 3) Connecting to Place; 4) Connecting Globally; and 5) Meeting Challenges and Opportunities on the Way to Tomorrow. These goals provide a clear vision of what the University can and should be as it prepares students for a rapidly changing world. Fortunately, the University is well equipped with a proven record of creativity in implementing past plans and the adaptability to embrace and leverage positive change. Working together and using *Connecting to Tomorrow* as its guide, the University will continue its pursuit of academic excellence and achieve the strategic priorities that will form the foundation for the future of this proud institution.

*Collaboration for Strategic Plan Development.* The University's Strategic Plan was adopted on October 27, 2011 and was developed with input from faculty, staff, and administrative leaders from all six of the University's colleges and members of the eight other administrative units, including Finance, Facilities, and Information Technology, among others (I.C1a.4). The comprehensiveness, ambition and unusual detail evident in this plan not only reflect the University's commitment to direct the efforts of its different administrative units towards a coherent set of mutual goals, the Strategic Plan also expresses a confidence

that the University will turn new challenges into opportunities due to the vision, creativity, and adaptability that have been hallmarks of the institution since its founding over 100 years ago. Like the Mission Statement, the University's Strategic Plan is posted on the website and easily accessed (I.C1f.4).

*Integration and Communication to Achieve Strategic Priorities.* The Strategic Plan integrates the strategic priorities of all nine of the University's administrative divisions (I.C1g.4) and communicates these priorities to both internal and external stakeholders. The Strategic Plan was designed to be nimble in order to respond to and anticipate the shifts in higher education and the broader context it serves. Notably, the Strategic Plan identifies the benchmark institutions—Bowling Green State University, Illinois State University, San Diego State University, among others—who face similar challenges and provide useful comparisons against which the University's progress towards its goals are measured. Progress towards these goals is also regularly communicated to external and internal constituencies through community and economic impact reports (I.C1b.1; I.C1b.2, I.C1b.3) that publicize the extent to which the University is fulfilling its stated mission.

The Mission Statement and Strategic Plan have been widely disseminated and are freely available to an array of stakeholders, including students, faculty, public officials, and prospective employers of the University's graduates. In addition to being accessible through the University's website, hard copies of both documents are kept in administrative offices across the campus. In fact, interviews with administrative leaders indicate that specific goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan are referred to and consulted during meetings regarding resource allocation, program development, faculty hiring (I.C1f.2). Key administrative and faculty leaders have a solid understanding of the University's mission and goals and use this understanding to inform decision-making (I.C1d.1). The analysis of evidence available in the DR suggests that the University is highly developed in regard to its ability and commitment to clearly communicate its mission and goals to both internal and external stakeholders.

### **Assessing the Implementation of the Strategic Plan**

The Mission Statement and Strategic Plan are regularly assessed to ensure that the University's purposes, goals, and objectives are appropriate, relevant, and achievable. Both documents guide broader policies such as undergraduate admissions standards (I.C2.2), student academic progress (I.C2.3), and faculty tenure and promotion procedures (I.C2.1). The concept of continuous assessment of Montclair State University's goals and objectives is most clearly reflected in the Annual Strategic Plan Progress Reports (I.C4.5) and President's Annual Reports (I.C4.9), which regularly demonstrate that goals are appropriate, relevant, achieved, and achievable. For example, the President's 2015 Annual Report provides detailed evidence on the positive impact that the University has had on the communities that surround it by providing "access to fine and performing arts, encouragement and mentoring for budding entrepreneurs, and a wealth of other educational resources and opportunities." This affirms a key component of the University's Mission Statement, which states that the University will play an important "role beyond the campus community."

*Establishing and Monitoring Key Metrics.* In addition, data from the Office of Institutional Research (e.g., I.C3.4), Admissions, the Center for Academic Advising, Enrollment Management, the Graduate School, program-specific accrediting bodies, and other offices are regularly examined to determine if the University is fulfilling its purposes and meeting accountability expectations. The University's academic units are organized in four Colleges: the College of the Arts (CART), the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), the College of Education and Human Services (CEHS), the College of Science and Mathematics (CSAM). There are six Schools: three are independent, the Feliciano School of Business (FSBUS), The Graduate School (TGS), and the School of Nursing (NU) and three that are within Colleges, the School of Communication and Media (SCM), the John J. Cali School of Music (CSM), and the School of Conservation. Reports from all units, particularly annual reports provided by the University's four colleges and six schools (e.g., I.C4.3), provide feedback on the appropriateness and relevance of the specific Strategic Plan goals that inform both short- and long-term institutional planning. Moreover, Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC) reports, required all of academic departments,

provide indirect, but critical evidence that the Strategic Plan's specific goals and objectives are achievable at the departmental level. As described in the University's Assessment Guidebook, organized and sustained program-level assessment provides information on the institution's progress towards student learning goals (IC1g.1). Finally, Strategic Plan Annual Progress Reports provide evidence that the University is assessing its progress towards achieving its objectives and goals. The continuous assessment of the University's mission and goals through a number of systematic University-wide efforts indicates that Montclair State University is highly developed in this area.

## **Connecting the Mission to Goals**

### **The Five Goals**

The Mission Statement directly informs the Strategic Plan's five overarching goals and numerous strategic objectives. Underpinning the Mission Statement is a recognition that the University's value to students hinges on its ability to successfully link students' curricular and extracurricular experiences to the needs of various constituencies; including but not limited to, employers, communities, and the larger society. Therefore, the Strategic Plan's theme of *connectedness* works directly in support of the University's Mission Statement.

### **Benchmarks for Progress: Successes and Challenges**

The Strategic Plan's five goals provide concrete benchmarks through which the University takes stock of how and how well it fulfills its stated mission. The Strategic Plan explicitly notes a number of challenges that await the University in the next ten years. These challenges include: continuing uncertainty in levels of financial support from all external sources, demographic changes in high school graduating cohorts and rapidly changing trends in demands for graduate education, the pace of technological change and its impact on instruction, and scholarship and administration, among others. These challenges are demanding and not entirely unique to Montclair State University. However, analyses of existing data indicate that the University will continue to be successful in devising effective solutions that confront these challenges. For example, the Annual Strategic Plan Progress Reports (IC4.11) (IC4.12) (IC4.13) indicate that in less than five years since its adoption the University has met a large number of the Strategic Plan's goals, including Goal 1, Objective B which states that the University's academic programs, undergraduate and graduate, will reflect the current state of, and best instructional practices in, their respective disciplines, while selected programs will seek and attain national ranking or recognition. Towards this end, the University has developed three new Professional Science Master's (PSM) degree programs and has awarded at least 20 research doctoral degrees per year; two metrics that are explicitly stated in the Strategic Plan. Similarly, the University has met Goal 2 Objective D, which focuses on the incorporation of new modes of instruction into the curriculum, by ensuring that all members of the campus community have ready access to network devices and providing numerous technology training opportunities to faculty and staff through its Office of Information Technology.

These examples are but two of the many included in the Annual Progress Reports that demonstrate the tight coupling of the University's Mission to its Strategic Plan. The Mission Statement, for instance, states that the University's programs will help students "discover, create, evaluate, apply, and share knowledge," which are the core competencies of the three new graduate PSM programs. The Mission Statement also mentions the University's commitment to the "maintenance of a learning community," which requires that all members have access to and the ability to use computing technologies.

### **Consistency and Appropriateness of the Mission and Goals**

In addition to being clearly linked to the University's mission, the five major goals outlined by the Strategic Plan are appropriate and consistent with the broad themes embedded in the Mission Statement. The Mission Statement, for example, describes the University's target learning community as one that is "deeply and broadly reflective of the diverse population of New Jersey." The Strategic Plan directly

builds from this by establishing specific benchmark objectives related to, for example, the goal of Connecting Students with a Successful Tomorrow. This goal includes objectives such as actively and strategically recruiting, retaining, and graduating a diverse undergraduate and graduate student population (Goal 1, Objective A). Towards this end, the University has increased its undergraduate enrollment from 12,174 in 2005 to 16,336 in 2015 ([I.C1d.2](#)) and has recently earned the prestigious designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education ([I.C1a.8](#)). The Hispanic population represents nearly 20% of New Jersey's population and more than 17% of the population nationwide. As a consequence, serving this population is both a moral and economic priority for the University, helping to develop a qualified workforce in and around New Jersey and to enhance students' potential for personal and professional success. Similarly, the recent Campus Pride ranking of the University among the top 30 LGBTQ-friendly Colleges and Universities ([I.C2.4](#)) demonstrates a commitment to serve the state and establish a learning experience and sense of community that is inclusive and safe.

Goal 1, Objective B of the Strategic Plan and its focus on the University's desire to attain national recognition in select programs and remain at the "forefront in the creation of new and innovative strategies for pedagogy, learning, research and campus co-curricular life" is also directly linked to the University's mission. Specifically, the Mission Statement calls for offering programs that "develop in students the ability to discover, create, evaluate, apply, and share knowledge" in programmatic areas that have "particular relevance to the region served by the University." In pursuit of Goal 1, Objective B, the University has recently been categorized as Doctoral University- Moderate Research Activity (R3) institution ([I.C1a.6](#)) ([I.C1a.7](#)) by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as a consequence of its growing portfolio of seven targeted, unique doctoral programs that cater to a specific high-demand market niche, for example, Teacher Education and Teacher Development and Environmental Management. This recognition is an important milestone in the narrative arc of the University's transformation from a two-year Normal School in 1908 to a Doctoral University. This and other examples demonstrate that the University's growth and transformation are driven by lofty yet realistic goals that are firmly rooted in the University's Mission Statement. However, as the University continues to grow and transform, it recognizes that it must regularly assess the extent to which the Mission Statement provides a flexible framework that supports its potential and its service to New Jersey.

### **Commitment to Student Learning and Institutional Improvement**

*Student Learning.* All five of the University's Strategic Plan's goals explicitly focus on connections critical for student learning; they are supported by a number of administrative, educational, and student programs that help make these connections. From an administrative standpoint, regular assessment and evaluation of curricula, teaching, and resources takes place regularly through department, college, and university curriculum committees, the university-wide assessment reporting structure ([I.C3.1](#)), and the FERC ([I.C3.2](#)), all of which guide decision-making with regard to the creation, improvement, or suspension of undergraduate and graduate programs. The new Banner™ student information system, which is currently being phased-in to replace a 20-year old legacy system, will provide a seamless administrative interface for multiple stakeholders to access and evaluate student needs. The Global Education Center ([I.C3.5](#)) creates international synergies by facilitating faculty and student exchanges and reaching across campus to construct rich cultural programming, much as the Center for Pedagogy ([I.C3.6](#)) and the Center for Service Learning and Community Engagement ([I.C3.7](#), [I.C3.7a](#)) connect students with local organizations on and off campus.

A number of educational support programs have been implemented across the University, from the Research Academy for University Learning (RAUL) ([I.C3.9](#)) established in 2006 in order to focus on instructional practices and to encourage dialogue among teaching staff about best practices in effective teaching, to the ADP Center for Learning Technologies in University Hall, a resource for faculty and future teachers. The University offers many training sessions and teaching materials furnished by both RAUL and the Office of Information Technology (OIT), which also employs designers who assist instructors as they incorporate new technologies into their teaching. In addition, the Center for Advising and Student Transitions (CAST) further supports students' academic pursuits and provides advisors with

strategies for improving students' educational experience, thus ensuring graduation rates continue to rise. All these programs are regularly assessed and contribute to the growing national reputation of the University, most recently ranked among the top 200 national universities in the country by U.S. News & World Report (I.C2.5). With this new ranking at #176, its first national ranking by US News, Montclair State joins six other institutions in the state of New Jersey and outperforms all but two of its benchmark institutions.

Student learning at Montclair State University is supported not only by classroom work, but also by a range of co-curricular activities and community-building programs from the First Year Learning Experience, the Honors Program, the Center for Writing Excellence, and the annual Student Research Symposium (I.C3.3) to the Center for Student Involvement and Residence Life programming. Cooperative Experiences and Career Services help them network with the professional world. These myriad opportunities work in support of the Strategic Plan's five goals of facilitating the development of connections among students, faculty, community, employers, and global entities.

*Institutional Improvement.* In addition to this array of educational support programs and co-curricular activities, many of the Strategic Plan's objectives explicitly focus on improving student learning and the institutional supports that are necessary for reaching target metrics. For example, Goal 1 Objective E notes that in an effort to improve student learning the faculty will "continually assess curricula in the majors to ensure that they reflect the evolution and expansion of fields and provide the knowledge and the skills needed for the future success of our graduates." This goal is supported by a number of complementary initiatives that are also noted in the Strategic Plan. In order to support student learning and institutional improvement, all academic departments undergo a FERC that involves a self-study, review and report of several external peer consultants in the specific discipline and affords departments and their faculty the opportunity to reflect on their students' learning outcomes and the curricular adjustments that are necessary to improve those outcomes. In support of the same objective, the University has dedicated a number of institutional resources to increase internship, co-op, and service-learning experiences in order to enhance the students' knowledge and skills. The University's Center for Community Engagement (I.C3.7), which was recently awarded the 2015 Community Engagement Classification (I.C3.7a). The Carnegie Foundation, houses a range of programs and projects that foster community engagement and provides an important venue for applied student learning. Both the Five-Year External Review process and the Center for Community Engagement demonstrate the University's commitment to supporting programs and services that ultimately improve student learning. In addition, these efforts to improve and support student learning are complemented by a number of program-specific initiatives that are geared towards earning or retaining prestigious national accreditation in critical areas across the schools and colleges (I.C4.8). Focus groups with undergraduate and graduate students in spring 2016 indicate that the University's priorities are translating well into the students' overall educational experiences at Montclair State. Students continue to find that their education is a high quality, affordable experience that provides freedom for the exchange of ideas, internship and study abroad opportunities, and a rich array of cultural activities for engagement (I.C1c.3). The same focus groups also highlight the increased need to effectively communicate all these opportunities to students, reflect upon ways to introduce internship experiences earlier in students' academic programs and further enhance global connections, especially for the graduate student population.

## **Strategic Initiatives and Resource Allocation**

### **Using Data to Connect Initiatives to Resources**

As also highlighted in Section VI, the continuous assessment of Montclair State University's administrative units ensures the effectiveness of the institution in serving its students. Data from the Office of Institutional Research (I.C3.4), Admissions, the Center for Advising and Student Transitions (I.C4.2), Enrollment Management (I.C4.6), the Graduate School and other offices is regularly examined to measure the effectiveness of Montclair State in fulfilling its objectives and meeting its responsibilities. The Committee for University Effectiveness (CUE) has been formed to measure Montclair State's

accountability and the integrity of institutional practices and to promote assessment activities and analysis of effectiveness for the full range of University divisions, departments, and programs (I.C4.10). These include planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal. The results of these assessment practices are used for planning programs for institutional improvement. Resource allocation is then based on anticipated enrollment projections, revenue, and expenditure. The Enrollment Management Office and The Graduate School, for example, work collaboratively with the University's colleges and schools to develop and manage measurable strategic initiatives related to enrollment and student retention. Enrollment and retention figures are followed carefully, especially as the University has become increasingly dependent on tuition revenues while being particularly mindful of student debt.

To ensure that strategic initiatives are adequately resourced in order to achieve the goals and objectives related to student learning outlined in the Strategic Plan, the University has pursued a steady, deliberate strategy of generating revenue from a number of different sources (I.C4.7) (I.C4.7a). The pursuit of these alternative revenue sources is also cited as a key objective in the Strategic Plan. For example, Goal 5 Objective A seeks to “increase the amount and diversify the sources of non-state support” and includes benchmark targets of \$8M in external support for programmatic funding and \$10M in external support for basic and applied research for a total of \$18M from federal agencies, corporations and private foundations by 2016. According to data extracted from the FY13-FY16 Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Annual Reports (I.C1e.3), the total amount of new funding generated from external awards is \$36.5M. These external funds support a range of initiatives that ultimately work towards enhancing student learning, including graduate assistantships, the development of new curricula, technological upgrades, and the production of new knowledge and creative works.

A second example of the way in which strategic objectives are adequately resourced and supported by administrative, educational, and student support programs and services is the recent construction of two new academic buildings: The Center for Environmental Life Science and the Feliciano School of Business—and a new Combined Heating and Power Plant and Utility Distribution System. The new academic buildings, which opened in fall 2015 and were supported in part by \$94M in bonds issued by the State as part of the “Building our Future” Bond Act, are key metrics noted in the Strategic Plan: Goal 5 Objective E “Plan and execute new construction and renovations of existing facilities.” To provide additional support for construction, the University has engaged in an impressive level of fundraising that resulted in a \$20 million gift from an anonymous donor, the largest donation in the University's 107-year history. The gift, announced in fall 2015, specifically supports programs in the School of Business and further advances the School's mission of transforming today's students into tomorrow's business leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs. Related to the development of new student programming opportunities, the PSEG Foundation has recently awarded a \$1M grant to the University's PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies to support future research activities and collaborative educational programs that are directed at fostering a sustainable and resilient New Jersey. These gifts and grants, facilitated by University Advancement's Development Unit (I.C3.8), demonstrate that the University is actively increasing the amount and diversifying the sources of support in order to ensure that strategic initiatives are adequately resourced.

### **Summary Statement**

In meeting the requirements for Standard I, Montclair State University also meets the Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education: specifically, Requirement #7, which states that the University “has a statement of mission and goals, approved by its governing body that defines its purpose within the context of higher education” and requirement #10: Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

This section of the Self-Study on Standard I: Mission and Goals is highlighted by three key findings:

1. Evidence indicates that the University's mission and goals are clearly defined, widely communicated with stakeholders, and regularly assessed in order to ensure that outcomes across all administrative units—from Building and Grounds to Academic Affairs—are aligned with the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives;
2. A number of relatively new initiatives have been implemented in order to further establish the connections among the University's numerous stakeholders, including: students, faculty, local community, employers, and global entities. These initiatives, many of which focus on student learning both in and out of the classroom, are a direct outgrowth of the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives and;
3. These and other calculated initiatives are supported by an array of institutional resources designed to enhance the student experience and help the institution efficiently direct resources towards these ends.

The 2002 Mission Statement has provided a stable framework to support the dramatic growth, development, and transformation across the University's nine administrative units. The 2011 Strategic Plan provides a set of five broad institutional goals, each with numerous defined objectives that include concrete metrics whereby the University can measure its progress. Progress towards these strategic priorities is regularly assessed and communicated with stakeholders through a variety of means, most notably through the Annual Progress Reports. Together, these documents provide a transparent, accessible blueprint to further cement Montclair State University's reputation as an innovative leader in public higher education in New Jersey, the region, and nation.

### **Next Steps for Strategic Planning**

As the University prepares for the development of the next Strategic Plan and more immediately seeks reaccreditation by the Middle State Commission on Higher Education, this section of the Self-Study suggests that the University consider the following steps:

1. Due in part to the University's rapid growth and transformation in all operational areas, its mission will likely need to evolve in ways that continue to provide a foundation for this growth and ambition to serve well into the twenty-first century. Therefore, in preparation for the next Strategic Plan, it is recommended that the University engage its internal and external constituents to begin the process of reassessing its stated mission.
2. The University should more widely disseminate the Annual Strategic Plan Progress Reports that highlight its "reaffirmation to fully realizing the vision set forth in the Strategic Plan and writing the next chapter of this remarkable institution." These reports are valuable reference points that assess the University's progress, yet interview data with administrative leaders indicates that knowledge of their existence is limited. Therefore, as a next immediate step, the University should consider using its standing Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE) and Deans' Council as means through which these yearly reports can be distributed, discussed, and evaluated.

In the spring of 2016 Secretary Rochelle Hendricks, New Jersey Office of Higher Education, announced that Montclair State University's petition to change its programmatic mission to Doctoral Degree granting had been approved. This means that Montclair State University is now one of eight doctoral institutions in New Jersey recognized by the Secretary of Higher Education, and one of only four public Carnegie-classified Doctoral Research institutions in the state. This suggests that the next strategic plan carefully weigh what this designation means in terms of identifying new institutional benchmarks, future strategic initiatives, goals, and objectives.

# **STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY**



## STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

### Standard Statement

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

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

Montclair State University meets the nine criteria and all sub-criteria of Standard II. Evidence that demonstrates that Montclair State meets Standard II can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap through active links in the table presented below.

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
<u>II.C1</u>	Commitment to academic and intellectual freedom, freedom of expression	✓
<u>II.C2</u>	Climate that fosters respect of all	✓
<u>II.C3</u>	Grievance policy is documented and disseminated	✓
<u>II.C4</u>	Avoidance of conflict of interest	✓
<u>II.C5</u>	Fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline and separation of employees	✓
<u>II.C6</u>	Honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admissions materials	✓
<u>II.C7</u>	As appropriate to its mission, services and programs in place	
<u>II.C7a</u>	To promote affordability and accessibility	✓
<u>II.C7b</u>	To enable students to understand funding sources, options and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt	✓
<u>II.C8</u>	Compliance with all applicable rules and regulations regarding	
<u>II.C8a</u>	Full disclosure of information on institution wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification and licensing board pass rates	✓
<u>II.C8b</u>	The institution's compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation	✓
<u>II.C8c</u>	Substantive changes affecting mission, goals, programs, operations, sites are disclosed in a timely and accurate fashion	✓
<u>II.C8d</u>	The institution's compliance with the Commission's policies	✓
<u>II.C9</u>	Periodic assessment of ethics and integrity in institutional policies, processes, practices and the manner in which these are implemented	✓

The remainder of the section provides analysis of key issues concerning ethics and integrity that have been identified as priorities at Montclair State University. The section addresses explicitly three of Montclair State's goals as identified in the 2011 Strategic Plan: Connecting students with a successful tomorrow, connecting to place, and meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

## **Introduction – Restatement of the standard that is specific to Montclair State University**

Ethics and integrity are essential to the fabric of Montclair State University, are reflected in all daily institutional operations, and are guided by federal, state and university policies and procedures. Montclair State University has committed all necessary resources to preserving the public trust and upholding the integrity of the design, conduct, and reporting of its research. Policies and procedures related to ethics and integrity are communicated to the university community in a variety of ways. This includes orientation programs for onboarding faculty and staff (e.g. Human Resources, New Faculty Program), the faculty handbook ([II.C1.11](#)), orientation programs for students (e.g. New Student Experience summer programs and the New Student Experience course), the student handbook ([II.C1.12](#)), periodic online modules ([II.C9.7](#)) that faculty and staff must complete to comply with state and federal guidelines. Additionally, training/info sessions are available on an as-needed basis at the regular meetings of administrative staff, deans, chairs, and advisors. Finally, easily accessible online resources on the university's website, many of which are noted in the remainder of this section.

Montclair State University is committed to preserving the public trust and upholding the integrity of the design, conduct, and reporting of its research. The objective of the Research Integrity and Compliance Program ([II.C9.8](#)) is to maintain the highest level of research integrity and serve the compliance needs of our research and healthcare community. The unit has oversight in the major areas of compliance pertaining to research, including the Institutional Review Board, Institutional Animal Care and Use Program, Institutional Biosafety Program, Research Misconduct, and Financial Conflicts of Interest. All investigators – including faculty, staff, or students – conducting research that involves human participants or animals must obtain approval from the appropriate compliance committee(s) prior to initiating research activities. The unit also serves as the lead on compliance with federal, state, and local compliance for healthcare operations including HIPAA. Finally, the unit serves as a liaison to the Global Compliance Committee in maintaining compliance with The International Traffic in Arms Regulation (ITAR), Export Administration Regulations (EAR), and Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) regulations.

In addition, the institution has an ongoing commitment to enhancing and maintaining a respectful, inclusive campus culture. Montclair State University is a growing institution of higher education, admitting and graduating an increasingly diverse population of students. Operating in the public trust, the University makes every effort to respond to this growth in a climate faithful to its mission and five broad goals. In particular, Montclair State University's strategic plan has three areas of focus that directly link to Standard II Ethics and Integrity: “connecting students with a successful future,” “connecting people and ideas” and “meeting challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.” Montclair's mission indicates that it will be “inexorably committed to the maintenance of a learning community that is deeply and broadly reflective of the diverse population of New Jersey.” ([II.C2.25](#))

Toward these ends, the university aims to provide access to opportunities that will lead students to be lifelong learners able to reach their personal and professional goals. With an undergraduate student population that is 50.3% racial/ethnic minority, 2% international, and 62% female, and a graduate population that is 35.3% ethnic/racial minority, 5% international, and 72% female ([II.C2.24](#)) Montclair State University also aims to create a learning environment infused with respect and inclusion to help students value diversity and gain a sense of civic responsibility.

The University has been diligently working to meet student needs in a climate of continuing growth—increasing the student population by 13.5% between 2010 and 2015 ([II.C2.35](#)). Following its examination of all nine criteria within Standard II, the Working Group on Ethics and Integrity has prioritized three areas of focus, relating primarily to Criteria 2, but also 5, 6, 7, and 9: access and inclusion, hiring practices, and student success. Broadly, the three areas we focus on in this narrative relate to student demographics/characteristics and instructional needs in an environment of inclusion and mutual respect.

## Analysis of Key Issues Related to Meeting the Standard and Criteria

### Access and Inclusion

#### **Recognizing Changing Student Demographics**

As a growing institution of higher education, Montclair State University is committed to fostering a climate of respect for all members of our community, facilitating the expansion of the student body from all cultural, ethnic, racial, and national backgrounds. Attending to the needs of an increasingly diverse population of students is a central focus. The University continues to make every effort to respond to this recent growth in order to remain faithful to its mission.

*Commitment to Access and Equity in Education:* The Montclair State University Strategic Plan in its focus on Connecting Students with a Successful Tomorrow has an explicit goal to “actively and strategically recruit, retain and graduate a diverse, increasingly selective undergraduate and graduate student population. Viewing higher education as a key component in a democratic society, issues of access and equity are paramount. College graduates have greater income levels than those without college degrees ([II.C7a.14](#)). College offers expanded opportunities to learn and grow. Simply put, a college education provides our citizens with more prospects. Although college may not be the best choice for every person, it should be accessible for every student who wants to attend and has the academic preparation to do so. Montclair State University made a bold move in this direction when it became an SAT/ACT optional institution in 2015 ([II.C7a.19](#)).

A thorough analysis of campus predictors of student success at the University produced compelling evidence that other factors could be used as a better predictor of college success than SAT scores ([II.C9.9](#)). Consequently, the University revised its freshman admissions protocol, placing primary emphasis on an applicant’s high school GPA combined with close attention to the specific courses taken. In addition to better identifying prospective students who will perform well at the institution, Montclair State believes the decision will provide educational opportunities to striving students from middle and lower socio-economic backgrounds, many of whom do not have the benefit of costly preparation courses.

#### **Addressing Ethnic/Cultural Diversity and Respect**

In 2016 the University met the requirements set forth by the United States Department of Education to be recognized as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HIS), which means that 25 percent of the undergraduate full-time population is Hispanic. Indeed, according to *Hispanic Outlook*, for the last 15 years Montclair State University has ranked among the top 100 universities in the U.S. for Hispanic students – rising in ranking to #51 for 2015. This designation highlights the University’s commitment of providing diverse populations access to higher education. Already responsive to the diversity of the population, Montclair State University provides academic opportunities for students to explore the impact of culture, ethnicity, race, and gender/sexuality on individuals, groups, and societies.

*Diversity in the Curriculum:* Academically, all students are required to complete at least one course in Global Cultural Perspectives ([II.C2.26](#)). Several curricula are offered supporting students’ exploration of diverse cultures—e.g., African American Studies; Arabic Studies; Asian Studies; LGBTQ Studies; Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies; Jewish-American Studies; and Latin American and Latino Studies. The Global Education Center has many active study abroad programs to support students in various disciplines. In order to engage students of all backgrounds in a shared appreciation for diverse American heritages, Montclair State University also boasts a wide variety of ethnic and international student organizations ([II.C2.38](#)) that provide co-curricular programming (e.g., Latinex, Asian, African American, Arab, Haitian, Caribbean, Indian, and African groups), as well as a thriving LGBTQ Center. In addition, the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) ([II.C2.32](#)) provides academic programming and support for low-income students.

*English Language Learners:* Additionally, this growing diversity of the study body means that more students are coming to the University with external obligations, financial pressures, and potential second-language experience not previously seen at the undergraduate level. Meeting the needs of these diverse populations poses significant challenges, as well as addressing any unique needs of students who speak a language other than English at home and English may be their second or third language (II.C2.45). At present, the Center for Writing Excellence, which has ESL specialists on staff, and tutors at the Academic Success Center are resources available for the growing population of English Language Learners. Finding new ways for the staff and faculty to help meet the needs of all these growing populations from working with ELLs, challenges with writing skills, and multi-cultural awareness will continue to be an area of expanded resources.

*Co-Curricular Life:* Students benefit from a wide array of units on campus that provide diversity awareness and support: the Office for Equity and Diversity (II.C2.27), which houses the Women's Center (II.C2.28), LGBTQ Center (II.C2.7), Center for Faith and Spirituality (II.C2.29) and Bias Response Task Force (II.C2.30). These units regularly sponsor programs, such as Diversity Week, Peace Week, Anti-Bullying Week and Sexual Assault and Violence Awareness Week. The Office of Equity and Diversity underwent a major restructuring in 2015 and is launching stronger assessment of these programs (II.C2.39) as well as new initiatives to further enhance the campus climate (e.g. established the Multicultural Student Council, which is made up of multiple student organizations and student leaders that collaboratively work towards diversity). In addition, the University's Sexual Assault Response Team (II.C2.31) is in place to ensure an optimal level of safety and awareness for students.

Beyond the campus, the University has a range of initiatives supported by the Global Education Center in order to expand opportunities for students. In addition to new study abroad opportunities, Montclair State has been engaged in many new and continuing global initiatives. Through the partnership with the Institute of International Education (IIE), the University hosts Foreign Fulbright students and scholars, has participated in the International Academic Partnership Program in Cuba, hosts scholars and artists from the IIE Scholar Rescue Fund and Artist Protection Fund, and hosts Syrian students through membership in the IIE Syria Consortium for Higher Education in Crisis (II.C2.37).

Montclair State University also actively develops and maintains international partnerships around the world, currently with more than seventy institutions in five world regions. Some of the deepest strategic partnerships that encompass multiple activities over a period of years, include the University of Graz, Austria, Universidad Mayor in Chile and East China Normal University (ECNU), China.

*Financial Aid:* Montclair State University has a well-staffed financial aid office that offers support to students, such as counselors available to meet with students and sessions on how to fill out the FAFSA form. The university continues to intensify its efforts with a 61% increase in need and merit-based awards since 2011/2012 and 509 resident grants awarded in 2014-2015 (II.C2.40), but as in most other universities, there is a gap between what students need and what the institution can offer. In terms of making education more accessible to all students, even more need-based aid at the university level would help enormously. Raising major gifts for scholarships is a priority of the institution and efforts have been underway with the Annual Scholarship Dinner, which last year raised a significant amount. The aim is to be an institution that can fill the gap, for as many students as possible, between the full tuition and what a student's family can actually afford after taking into account state and federal aid. This is a continuing challenge to the institution's mission for access.

New Jersey's EOF program provides: "financial assistance and support services (e.g. counseling, tutoring, and developmental course work) to students from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds who attend institutions of higher education in the State of New Jersey" (II.C2.32a). This initiative fully supports students academically and socially through the summer programs and also financially with grants ranging from \$1150-\$1400 annually. Montclair State University offers two EOF programs, a broad EOF program administered (II.C2.32) within the Student Development and Campus Life Division (SDCL) and the Health Careers Program (HCP) administered within the College of

Sciences and Mathematics. The HCP targets students with interest in the health professions and careers in the sciences.

The University offers support for graduate students as well, including waivers of GRE scores and application fees. Master's students, but not doctoral students, may apply to have the requirement for GRE scores waived. It is also possible to have GRE fees reduced by contacting the Financial Aid office. Issues related to Access to Education for graduate programs tend to be on a programmatic level rather than institutional. All programs make efforts to examine policies consistently to make sure they facilitate accessibility, equity and are implemented in ways that take into account diversity. More support is needed for graduate assistantships to allow students with financial need the opportunity to attend. While the numbers of graduate assistantships and the dollars applied have increased since 2012, there are always more applicants who need but cannot afford the full cost of additional graduate training.

Table 4 *Number of Students Awarded Assistantship Funding by Year\**

Funding Source	Masters				Doctoral				Grand total
	TGS**	Grant	Foundation	TOTAL	TGS**	Grant	Foundation	TOTAL	
2012-2013	186	6	0	192	44	4	0	48	240
2013-2014	184	12	5	201	52	5	0	57	258
2014-2015	205	6	5	216	64	8	0	72	288
2015-2016	204	9	2	215	70	7	1	78	293
2016-2017	216	11	1	228	83	8	8	99	327

\*Based on fall appointments

\*\*The Graduate School

In addition to all the above programs and support services, faculty and staff are intricately involved in fostering a climate of respect and inclusion on campus through a range of University-wide initiatives. The university lives its statement on “Tolerance to Create a Climate for Civility and Human Dignity,” through the work of Human Resource’s Office of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Diversity (EO/AA, [II.C2.4](#)). In addition, the President’s Commission on Affirmative Action and Diversity (PCAAD, [II.C2.33](#)) meets regularly for discussion and action related to diversity and campus life. It also hosts a campus-wide program on Affirmative Action and diversity issues each academic year. Some recent achievements of the PCAAD include collaboration with the LGBTQ center to increase the number of gender-neutral restrooms on campus to meet the needs of the transgender community and collaboration with the Center for Diversity Programs to establish private, accessible lactation rooms on campus for students, staff, and faculty in need of this resource. In focus groups conducted in spring 2016, students highlighted that there are ample safe spaces and student clubs where they can discuss and address key issues around diversity ([II.C2.41](#)). What also emerged as a challenge is how to keep the entire Montclair community informed and tuned in to all the available opportunities.

### **Responding to Diversity in Abilities**

Students with both physical and cognitive disabilities as well as mental health concerns are accommodated on campus in a variety of ways. The Disability Resource Center (DRC; [II.C2.34](#)) is committed to the full inclusion of students with both cognitive and physical disabilities in all curricular and co-curricular activities. Students with diagnosed disabilities may register with the DRC and are provided with an accommodation form that provides information about what they require to address their academic or physical needs. The procedure for students with disabilities seeking assistance to address any concerns or complaints is provided right on the complaint form ([II.C2.19](#)). Because only students who self-identify and present proper documentation are eligible to receive services from the DRC, it is unclear exactly how many students might have learning disabilities that go unrecognized and are not receiving the services that are available to them. In addition to installing a number of infrastructure improvements in 2015 to assist the disabled ([II.C2.42](#)), the Facilities Division and University

Accessibility Commission are developing an accessibilities map ([II.C2.43](#)) to help the physically impaired in determining barriers, routes, and entrances to buildings on campus.

The DRC and PCAAD work closely with the University's Environmental Safety and Sustainability Office to improve access and safe mobility options on campus for students with physical disabilities in order to meet both the spirit and the letter of the Americans with Disabilities Act. To meet the increasing demand placed on the DRC, the office has extended hours into the evening. The University has also expanded the operation of its shuttle service and accessible parking spaces ([II.C2.21](#); [II.C2.22](#)). The University will continue to examine access to the campus for individuals who use wheelchairs or other forms of mobility assistance and is committed to making necessary changes to address emerging issues. Support of students who self-report disabilities is explored further in the section on the support of the student experience.

In addition to services provided by the Health Center ([II.C2.44](#)), Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) promotes its "Let's Talk" ([CII.C2.22a](#)) program at seven locations across campus for free and confidential one-to-one sessions with students, requiring no appointment. CAPS also provides services and programs for students with issues related to addiction, anxiety, bereavement, depression, eating disorders, and other issues and mental health-related concerns. Faculty and staff who witness unhealthy or destructive patterns in a student are encouraged to complete an online Student of Concern Form, ([II.C2.23](#)) providing information about a given student's behavior and offering suggestions for action, which are then evaluated by the University Crisis, Assessment, Response and Education Team (CARE). Appropriate actions are developed in consultation with relevant units on campus, such as CAPS or the DRC. As before, support of students who seek help with regard to counseling and psychological services are reported in the section on support of the student experience.

### **Hiring, Retention and Promotion Practices**

The University has maintained strong commitment to the growth of faculty, staff, and appropriate administrative posts that support strategic initiatives and maintains clear processes and protocols for hiring, retention, and promotion. The Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EO/AA) serves as a resource to faculty with questions or concerns about policies and practices related to gender equity and cultural/racial diversity. Among faculty (and staff), there are three ethnic caucuses (i.e., Latinex, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander), established as voluntary membership bodies to help provide a community forum for a diverse faculty. These caucuses convey any concerns of a general nature to Montclair State University's President's Commission for Affirmative Action. Any formal complaints of racial or ethnic discrimination may be reported to the Director of EO/AA.

The University has well documented processes in place for hiring, reappointing, and promoting personnel. Details of the procedures depend on the employment category. General categories include faculty, professional staff, and management. For instance, clear guidelines exist for reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions for tenure-track faculty ([II.C5.13](#)). Indeed, data from the 2014 COACHE survey indicate that Montclair State probationary faculty express higher satisfaction with tenure policies, tenure clarity, and reasonableness of tenure expectations than faculty at comparison institutions and all institutions that participated in the survey. The same report indicates that full-time probationary faculty are content with workloads and support for research. These advantages change when it comes to issues of promotion, which merits the institution's attention as the expectations for performance and impact in the scholarly community, especially for promotion to professor, have been redefined ([II.C5.12](#)).

Adjunct Instructors and a new class of Specialists, Instructional or Clinical, are often newly-minted PhDs or MFAs who bring a fresh perspective to their teaching. Others are highly accomplished professionals or retired tenure-track professors who have a passion for teaching and wish to have impact on the next generation of thought leaders and practitioners. Specialists, who hold one- to five-year non-tenure appointments completely dedicated to instruction, have a very high commitment to teaching quality and to enriching the student learning experience, as do the adjuncts who return semester after semester.

Semester-by-semester student reviews of all adjunct classes assure that department chairs can assess the effectiveness of instructors and implement changes as appropriate.

Specialists are represented by the American Federation of Teachers Local 1904, which consists of all tenured and tenure-track faculty and professional staff, but the AFT Local contract stipulates that Specialists do not have faculty rank, do not vote on personnel matters, and cannot be on search committees other than those directly related to the programs in which they teach.

One of the outcomes of the self-study, is that the institution recognizes that there have been changes to the broad faculty profile (see table below). In addition to the evolving profile, the University has taken note of the slippage in full-time faculty, due to attrition, and is now engaging in an aggressive hiring response.

Table 5 *Summary of Instructional Staff by College/School (2012 – 2015)* <sup>[1]</sup>

College/ School	F-T Faculty (includes tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure track with faculty rank)				F-T Specialists (includes clinical and instructional lines)				P-T Adjuncts (includes adjuncts and other salaried instructors)			
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>CART</b>	70	71	74	72	0	2	3	4	322	358	358	374
<b>CEHS</b>	118	120	120	116	0	1	5	9	212	202	209	236
<b>CHSS</b>	206	198	196	189	0	11	26	28	334	369	382	393
<b>CSAM</b>	107	105	104	105	0	2	4	3	82	87	86	90
<b>FSBUS</b>	78	72	69	70	0	3	11	8	45	62	67	96
<b>SCG</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	26	24	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>1010</b>	<b>1104</b>	<b>1126</b>	<b>1210</b>

[1] Extracted from IPEDS instructional staff headcounts as of November 1. The headcounts include individuals on paid leave (e.g., sabbatical), but exclude individuals on unpaid leave.

### Diversity of Personnel

The University compares well or outperforms peer institutions on faculty well-being and on faculty diversity, and is on par regionally and nationally regarding the full-time/contingent faculty balance (II.C6.14). Currently (2015), the figure below represents Montclair State University's overall populations of minority faculty and staff (II.C5.9):

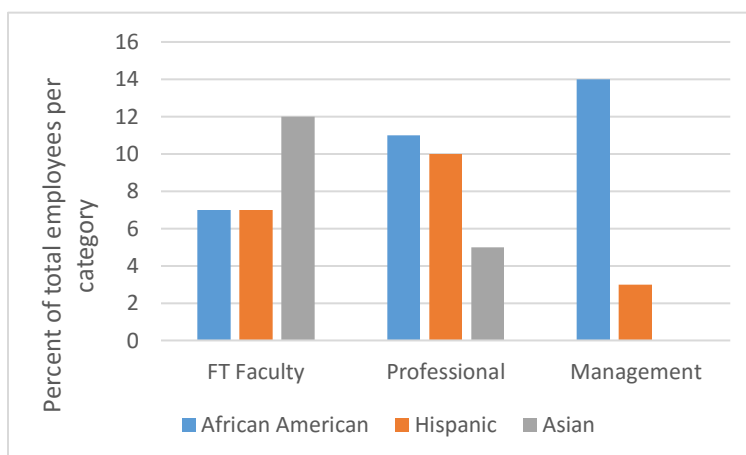


Figure 2. Distribution of minority professionals by employment category.

The University must remain responsive to the changing demographics of New Jersey, recruiting and retaining faculty with strong professional credentials and providing a tolerant and open exploration of ideas. Indeed, diversity among faculty helps to build the environment of inclusion that Montclair State University students deserve and have come to expect. The President's Faculty Recruitment Initiative (PFRI) has proven highly effective in incentivizing departments to give diversity candidates for faculty positions their full attention. The PFRI provides for any approved faculty position the option of a second hire for the department 1) if one of the two recommended hires is a diversity candidate, 2) the department shows need for an additional hire, 3) and the pool of candidates has a strong second choice that does not duplicate the credentials of the first choice. Under this incentive ten additional faculty have been hired in ten different departments since 2010-11 (II.C5.10).

Diversity issues go beyond just the hiring process. For example, University Facilities, one of the largest divisions on campus, faces unique challenges in its business operations, particularly in the management of a staff diverse in economics, education levels, national origin, race, and rank. In 2016 the division hired an external consulting firm that conducted extensive survey and focus group research and strategic planning retreats and generated valuable recommendations. Key among them were strategies for how to develop clear and effective communication channels throughout the division; to develop key skill sets for all staff, and to recruit and develop employees in underrepresented categories (II.C5.14)

### **Helping Students Succeed: The Montclair State Years and Beyond**

Three central aspects of helping our students to succeed are: (a) communicating the university's mission, values, and goals effectively, (b) making good on the promises the University makes to students, and (c) helping to make connections between students' classroom learning and the career paths they will pursue after graduation. This involves promoting academic programs and emphasizing the value of a university education in today's competitive professional worlds. But it also involves providing clearly articulated learning goals that are regularly assessed and reassessed as well as offering gateway and capstone experiences within major programs that will lead students to career opportunities related to their areas of study.

### **Communicating the University's Mission, Values, and Ideals**

In its external communications, Montclair State highlights for students that the education they receive here will be not only worthwhile, but transformative. The *Montclair State University Viewbook (print edition)* indicates that the university is "a supportive, inclusive academic community in which the teaching is passionate, the learning is transformational and the relationships are lifelong." Further, the University's focus on its talented faculty, diverse student population, and expanding campus and facility improvements constitute points of pride in advertising and recruiting. "Gifted professors committed to your success," "diverse students whose dreams inspire your own," and "a scenic, suburban campus with skyline views of one of the greatest cities in the world" are explicit statements that are consistent with the mission and five goals that define the institution.

Each college has adopted a theme meant to inform and inspire, with a focus on the link between classroom learning and career preparation: e.g., Business—"Theory meets the real world" with stress on being "innovative" and "market-centered;" Humanities and Social Sciences—"The world is your classroom;" Sciences and Mathematics—"Where discovery and innovation meet;" Education and Human Services—"Building a healthier, better educated and more just society;" or ARTS—"get a head start on your professional career."

As a campus peopled by professionals in higher education, these statements reflect the community's genuine understandings of the immense value of a degree from Montclair State University. Poised to be a leader in experiential education, the University analyzes how it presents and communicates these varied

options to students to facilitate the decisions they make while completing their studies and transition into career paths.

### **Promoting Programs: Pathways to Success – Career Services and Alumni Relations**

*Career services.* Montclair State’s ability to address the career needs of students and alumni is emerging-to-developed. The University has a central Career Services office, which oversees the co-operative education program and provides a full range of resources and services related to career exploration and assessment, for both current students and alumni. Working in tandem with the central office, the University also provides decentralized career services, with a dedicated career counselor/co-operative education director within each college. For FY 2015, the University developed 624 co-op and internship placements for students (representing a 12% increase from FY 2014) and 10,919 students attended events and workshops organized by Career Services ([II.C6.15](#)). SBUS and CART led co-op and internship placements followed by CSAM, CEHS, and finally CHSS. Expanded opportunities are being developed more consistently for students in all University Schools and Colleges moving forward.

Recognizing the value of civic engagement as a path to student success, Montclair State has a thriving Center for Community Engagement and has been recognized as a community-engaged campus by the Carnegie Foundation ([II.C2.36](#)). The Center acts as a hub for fundraising/grant activities and a clearinghouse for volunteer and service-learning opportunities for students. In AY 2013-2014, Montclair State University received ten grants for seven projects involving institutional engagement with the community, totaling \$452,000. Twenty-five additional projects involving institutional engagement with the community generated \$4,102,660 (e.g. EECO AmeriCorps program). Additionally, in AY 2014-2015, The Volunteer Resource Center (VRC), which operates out of the Center of Student Involvement (CSI), under the Office of Student Development and Campus Life (SDCL), sponsored a number of programs including: CommUnity Rocks - in collaboration with CARS, MLK Day of Service, National Day of Service, University - Community Partnership Fair, NJ Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity in Paterson, Relay for Life, Community Service Fair, Montclair Emergency Services for the Homeless, American Red Cross. The Center also provides a training/mentoring program for faculty who want to engage in service-learning and facilitates the work of the faculty committee on experiential learning—all as a means to enhance student learning and success. Interestingly, findings from the 2014 HERI Report ([II.C6.13](#)) indicate that Montclair State faculty would like to see the institution’s priority on civic engagement initiatives even further strengthened and this is an area that deserves attention in the next strategic plan.

*Alumni relations.* The Office of Alumni Relations has developed a multipronged approach to connecting with and engaging alumni so that they can continue to be part of the life of the University and that the University continues to offer them resources to enhance their success. The efforts of the office fall in four distinct categories that include communication, engagement, philanthropy, and post-graduation survey information.

The University has built an online portal that serves as a resource to its 114,230 alumni ([II.C6.17](#)) and houses a searchable online directory, facilitates an online Alumni Network, MONTCLAIRconnect, and includes networking pages (e.g. Attorney Alumni network page for practicing lawyers or students currently in law school). This database also functions as a means of creating opportunities for alumni to serve as mentors to current students. Alumni Relations offers access to personal career counseling, job listings, a permanent Montclair State email account, and several active communication platforms (e.g., the print magazine *Montclair*, which is issued twice annually, a monthly e-Newsletter *Alumni Connections*, and regular e-mail campaigns with the University’s events calendar).

The University has a strong engagement plan for alumni, the majority of whom remain New Jersey residents, with 80% living in counties that are in close proximity to the University campus. Hallmark events include the annual Homecoming weekend with University-wide and School-based programs, a range of networking events that tap into the needs of alumni in various phases of the life cycle, and

exciting volunteer opportunities. This finding merits further attention as the institution finds new ways to engage this vast network of accomplished professionals just surrounding the campus.

Philanthropy is a broader philosophical goal that is embedded in the University's plan. The STAT program (Students Today, Alumni Tomorrow), which aims to cultivate civic engagement and a philanthropic mindset in current students, is well established and extends to all aspects of private and professional life as well as the relationship alumni continue to have with their alma mater. As an example of initiatives under this umbrella, the "Day of Giving" (II.C7a.18) event launched in April 2016 engaged over 350 students, faculty, and alumni and raised over \$12,000 that went to further support Montclair's Emergency Scholarship Fund, On-Campus Food Pantry, and other important programs that benefit students.

The Office of Alumni Relations and /or Schools conduct annual exit surveys to collect data on various aspects of the students' educational experience (e.g. perceived quality of programs and courses, advising, co-curricular opportunities, career preparation). For instance, the CART 2016 exit survey indicates that 31% of 574 graduates were employed full-time at the time of graduation, 23% were employed on a part-time basis, 38% were seeking employment, and 5% were either enrolled or seeking enrollment for graduate study (II.C6.17). The analysis also indicates that this data collection process is dispersed across the University, which makes it harder to aggregate the data, develop a more thorough University profile, and disseminate and discuss the findings more widely. The Office of Alumni Relations conducts a variety of surveys to collect data on communication, engagement, connection and brand equity. Response rates have been low with such surveys and the office of Alumni Relations is examining new communication mechanisms that will yield more robust and consistent information that can further enhance the communication and engagement plans of the University.

Overall, the University would be best served with a more systematic and centralized approach to data collection from alumni, which can help track how Montclair students transition from school to career and what are long-term markers of personal, professional, and civic success that indicate the lifelong value of their education at Montclair State University.

### **Summary Statement**

Montclair State University meets all criteria of Standard II, including criterion eight which calls for compliance with all applicable federal, state, and Commission reporting policies, regulations, and requirements. The collection and analysis of the data used by the institution are of the highest possible quality and integrity. The data are reliable and valid representations of the status of the institution and permits the institution to represent itself faithfully and with absolute transparency to all stakeholders.

Standard II notes that, "ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions." A significant aspect of this consideration is that the institution should maintain "a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives." Therefore, as Montclair State University's student population continues to grow and change, efforts must be made to increasingly reflect current and anticipated demographics. But it is not sufficient to simply recruit a diverse student pool.

This section of the Self-Study on Standard II: Ethics and Integrity is highlighted by three key findings:

1. Evidence indicates that the University has stayed true to key values of access and inclusion reflected in the mission statement. The institution continues to serve a diverse student population and provide adequate support services and a rich educational experience that recognizes and welcomes varied backgrounds and perspectives on campus.
2. Analysis of personnel matters (hiring, retention, promotion) indicates that there are clear and specific guidelines for all processes across all phases of employment that ensure fairness and impartiality.

3. The University has strong experiential education programs that support students' pathways to careers, civic engagement, and success. Recognizing that such programs will become increasingly relevant to emerging career paths and citizenship roles, there has been an expanded range of services and increased collaboration across career services offices in each school/college.

### Next Steps for Strategic Planning

1. Consistent with its claims, the university must strategically prepare its students for achievement in learning and accomplishment during and after graduation. Toward this end, the university must ensure that its hiring practices contribute to even greater ethnic and disciplinary diversity and an appropriate balance among types and perspectives of instructional staff.
2. Although the University makes great efforts to increase the diversity of the faculty and staff through its recruitment, hiring, and promotion policies, the current profile indicates that improvement is needed in order to reflect those efforts at the senior levels of the professoriate and administration.
3. And, the university must provide students with classroom learning experiences and career preparation that will help them to develop fulfilling career paths after graduation.
4. Tracking alumni, their success and their needs, in more systematic/programmatic ways can help the institution further assess its academic and co-curricular programs and also develop new and targeted programs for alumni in various points of life and career, offer more resources and opportunities for appropriate networking and lifelong education.

### Recommendations for Institutional Improvement

#### Goals/Objectives: Tracking and Connecting with Alumni in a More Systematic Way to Assess the Value Added of a Montclair State University Education

Oversight	Required Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)	Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes
Office of Alumni Relations University Advancement Provost's Office Deans Department/School Chairs/Directors	Establish working group with representatives from oversight units  Office of Information Technology	Year 1 – Gather tools and data currently used to survey and communicate with alumni; Scan resources and develop a plan for budgeting to support the project.
		Year 2 – Design and conduct a University-wide alumni survey and develop a comprehensive communication plan with alumni.
		Year 3 – Begin implementation of communication plan, develop new initiatives for alumni based on survey findings, review progress, and develop plan for assessment

# **STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE**



## STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### Standard Statement

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

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

Montclair State University meets the eight criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard III. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the three Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard III: Specifically, requirement #8: The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs; requirement #9: All student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment; and requirement #10: Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

The self-study inquiry has also targeted a specific suggestion that emerged in the 2012 PRR that the institution continue to work on and report on changes to the structure and assessment of the General Education Program. Analysis indicates that Montclair State has made strides in reviewing and refining the program and its implementation and continues to expand assessment of the program's learning outcomes (this last part will also be addressed explicitly in the section on Standard V).

Evidence that demonstrates that Montclair State meets Standard III and the related Requirements of Affiliation can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap through active links in the table presented below.

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
<u>III.C1</u>	Programs leading to a degree or other recognized educational credential of an appropriate length appropriate to the objectives of the degree or credential designed to foster coherent student learning	✓
<u>III.C2</u>	Student learning experiences designed, delivered and assessed by appropriate professionals who are	
<u>III.C2a</u>	Rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry and service	✓
<u>III.C2b</u>	Qualified for their positions and the work they do	✓
<u>III.C2c</u>	Sufficient in number	✓
<u>III.C2d</u>	Provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities for professional growth and innovation	✓
<u>III.C2e</u>	Reviewed regularly and equitably based policies and procedures	✓
<u>III.C3</u>	Academic programs of study are clearly and accurately described	✓
<u>III.C4</u>	Sufficient learning opportunities and resources support the institution's programs of study and academic progress	✓
<u>III.C5</u>	Institution offers a general education program that has	

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
<u>III.C5a</u>	Sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience	✓
<u>III.C5b</u>	A curriculum designed to acquire and demonstrate essential skills	✓
<u>III.C5c</u>	A program in non-US institutions that do not include general education	NA*
<u>III.C6</u>	In institutions that offer graduate and professional education there are opportunities for students to develop research, scholarship, and independent thinking provided by qualified faculty	✓
<u>III.C7</u>	Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of learning opportunities delivered by third-party providers	NA*
<u>III.C8</u>	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs providing student learning opportunities	✓

The remainder of the section provides analysis of key issues concerning design and delivery of the student experience that have been identified as priorities at Montclair State University. The section addresses explicitly all five of Montclair State's goals: Connecting students with a successful tomorrow, connecting people and ideas, connecting to place, connecting globally, and meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

### Introduction – Restatement of the standard that is specific to Montclair State University

Montclair State University provides students with rich and diverse interlocking learning experiences that include a revitalized General Education Program that reflects stronger coherence, rigorous and innovative academic programs that are relevant and integral to the generation of the flat global world, and a range of other high impact co-curricular activities that offer significant opportunities for students to enrich their learning experience. These nested contexts of learning represent the main goals identified in the strategic plan of the University of connecting students to a successful tomorrow through strong academic programs that are contemporary and allow students to link ideas from the liberal arts tradition to their major and also connect students to local and global communities. Montclair State University's mission clearly articulates its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves and desired outcomes it aims to achieve. The goals are linked to the mission statement and provide a clear plan to guide the institution as it fulfills its mission. (III.C1.10, III.C1.11).

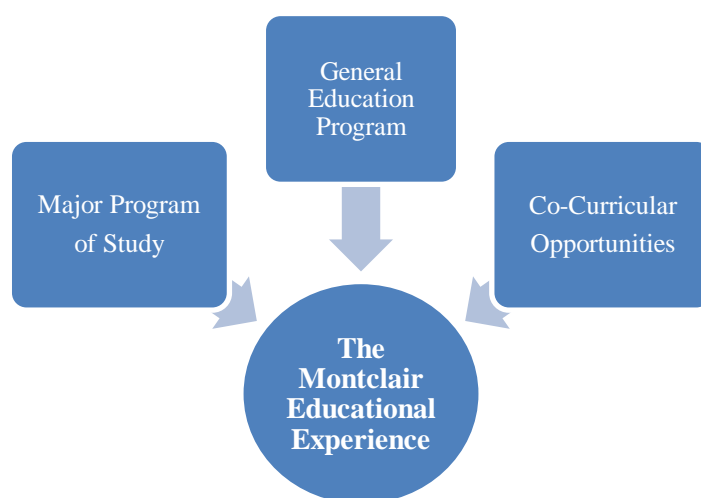


Figure 3. The Montclair Educational Experience.

The General Education program, major academic programs, and other educational offerings are supported by comprehensive and constantly upgraded campus facilities described in the documentation roadmap such as the Red Hawk Math Learning Center (RHMLC; [III.C5b.8](#)), the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE; [III.C5b.9](#)), and the Public Speaking Resource Center (PSRC; [III.C5b.10](#)), which continue to expand their scope and services made available to students, and the broader campus and local communities of the University. The past ten years have also come with improvement for student navigation of course and program information and other self-services now upgraded and streamlined through Montclair State University's newly implemented portal, Network Engagement and Student/Staff Transactions (NEST; [III.C3.10](#)). Freshmen and students transitioning from other institutions are personally guided by the Center for Advising and Student Transitions (CAST; [III.C3.11](#)) and academic advisors in their chosen program of study who are identified in degree audits, which can be accessed through NEST, as soon as students declare and are accepted into a major ([III.C3.9](#); link to degree audit).

Finally, Montclair State University strives to assess the quality of academic programs and the student learning experience through a multi-layered approach to curriculum development and assessment that begins at the course-level, encompasses the program-level, and rises to scrutiny of assessment effectiveness at the institutional level as well. The institution has a streamlined curriculum process that engages faculty, administration, and the State at different levels and requires that assessment considerations are factored in at the inception stage of curriculum development, rather than as an afterthought. The University has established a range of resources that support the implementation of assessment activities and a clear process that allows the reporting and sharing of assessment findings that have built an evidence-based culture on campus that now guides programmatic changes.

### **Analysis of Key Issues Related to Meeting the Standard and Criteria**

#### **General Education: The Intellectual Heart of the University**

This section of the report describes how the General Education program at Montclair State aligns with the institution's mission and strategic directions and how the program aims to provide a shared intellectual experience to undergraduate students. The section also outlines how Montclair State has engaged in a rigorous review of its General Education Program, launched a University-wide campaign to refocus and revitalize the program through a recertification process, and has now explicitly integrated assessment activities into the curriculum process. Specific assessment activities and findings relating to the General Education program's learning objectives will be analyzed and discussed in the section on Standard VI: Educational Effectiveness Assessment.

#### **Aligning General Education with Montclair State University's Mission and Goals**

Montclair State University is a liberal arts institution with an extensive set of General Education course Requirements ([III.C5.1](#)). Accordingly, Objective D of Montclair State's strategic planning goal of *connecting students with a successful tomorrow* states that "the University will plan and implement a comprehensive, integrated, and institution-wide student learning outcomes assessment of the General Education program that informs academic planning and assures that students have in fact acquired the essential learning skills they will need in careers and in life." This objective pertains to Middle States' Standard III's criterion 5a, which requires "a general education program, freestanding or integrated into academic disciplines, that offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity, and preparing them to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field."

Montclair State University's General Education Program, which requires 42 credits for BA/BS programs, has two parallel functions that advance the university's strategic planning objectives. The first is to develop generalized skills that may be applied within and beyond students' particular majors. The second goal is to expose students to a broad liberal arts curriculum ([III.C5.5](#)). To address these goals, the

General Education curriculum uses a “distribution” model that spans Montclair State’s liberal arts and sciences disciplines, providing learning opportunities in 15 distinct categories (BMus and BFA students have 8) ([III.C5a.2](#), [III.C5a.3](#)). The Program employs a decentralized model for offering General Education courses: particular courses are housed and instructed by host departments and guided by a campus-wide General Education Committee that is staffed by faculty representatives. As courses expose students to a wide variety of liberal arts and sciences, they also work to cultivate five universally valuable intellectual and personal skills (Critical Thinking, Communication, National and Global Issues, Application and Integration, and University Success) ([III.C5.5](#)). Some of the essential skills are taught through Program-wide emphases (Communication, Critical Thinking) while others (scientific and quantitative reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy) are more clearly located in specific Categories (e.g., Natural Science Laboratory, Computer Science, Math, and Social Science Perspectives). The Program’s Vision and Categories clearly provide for students to explore diverse perspectives (e.g., Global Cultural Perspectives, Philosophical and Religious Perspectives and Great Works and Their Influences categories) and study values and ethics (e.g., the Philosophical and Religious Perspectives category and National and Global Issues Goal). For a summary, see table below.

Table 6. *The Structural Diversity of the GenEd Program at Montclair State (from [III.C5.6](#)).*

GenEd Category	Courses
New Student Seminar	10 courses, from 9 departments. (GNED199 provides ~85% of seats)
Writing	2 courses from 2 departments. (ENWR105 provides ~98% of seats)
Literature	2 courses, from 2 departments. (ENWR106 provides ~98% of seats)
Public Speaking	1 course (CMST 101)
Fine Arts	33 courses, from 6 departments. (3 courses provide ~33% of seats)
Great Works and Their Influences	10 courses, from 5 departments. (3 courses provide ~66% of seats)
Philosophical and Religious Perspectives	8 courses, from 3 departments. (3 courses provide ~60% of seats)
Computer Science	7 courses, from 4 departments. (2 courses provide ~80% of seats)
Math	11 courses, from 3 departments. (4 courses provide ~75% of seats)
Natural Science Laboratory	19 courses, from 8 departments. (5 courses provide ~50% of seats)
Physical Education	15 courses, from 1 department. (PEGN 278 provides ~30% of seats)
American & European History	10 courses, from 4 departments. (4 courses provide ~60% of seats)
Global Cultural Perspectives	39 courses, from 17 departments. (4 courses provide ~50% of seats)
Social Science Perspectives	44 courses, from 21 departments. (2 courses provide ~30% of seats)
Free Elective	(not applicable)

The GenEd Committee’s current work is the direct result of previous assessment processes ([III.C5.11](#), [III.C5.14](#), [III.C5.15](#)). The Committee was unsatisfied with the data provided by previous assessments, both in quantity and quality, and through transparent discussion and debate formulated more concrete, descriptive criteria to define the GenEd and its component course categories to address those deficiencies ([III.C5.3](#)). This has resulted in the current effort to organize and

coordinate a complete recertification of all 220 courses within the GenEd ([III.C5.12](#)). The section on Standard V discusses in more depth the data collection, analysis, and subsequent actions based on these assessments. The University continues to expand its assessment activities with data collection for the other learning outcomes of the General Education program (Critical Thinking, National and Global Issues, Application and Integration, and Student Success), which will be fully implemented by fall 2018.

In conjunction with a leadership transition, the GenEd Committee realized through a self-study process that the current assessment efforts neglected or poorly defined a third level of assessment distinct from 1) campus-level assessment (the CLA+) and 2) the program-level assessment of FYW and Speech ([III.C5b.11](#), [III.C5b.12](#)) and 3) the (direct and indirect) assessment of individual courses within the GenEd, as component courses of a coherent GenEd Program. (Other sources of assessment data, such as the Red Hawk Learning Center's assessment of RHLC-delivered courses, are at the programmatic level and the populations they assess do not align well with the GenEd population. The RHLC assessment, for example, includes some but not all of the GenEd's mathematics courses, and includes studies of Math courses preparatory for, or subsequent to, GenEd mathematics. ([III.C5b.13](#)). The ideal is to (directly and indirectly) assess GenEd courses, as GenEd courses focused on the twin goals of developing generalized skills and exposing students to a diverse liberal-arts curriculum. Further discussion of both direct and indirect assessment and the actions taken in response to results are found in the section concerning Standard V.

Table 7. *Timeline of assessment implementations, actions inspired by assessment, and related events.*

Time frame	Events
March 2012	The interdisciplinary core of the Program is suspended by the Provost, after years of difficulty establishing sufficient courses to satisfy the requirement.
Summer 2012	Leadership changed on the Committee
Fall 2012-Spring 2014	Advisory Committee on General Education Assessment assembled to recommend options for Program assessment ( <a href="#">III.C5.11</a> )
Fall 2012-Spring 2014	Interdisciplinary Working Group assembled to recommend options for restoring Interdisciplinary Studies component in GenEd. ( <a href="#">III.C5.9</a> )
Nov 2012	Added 5th Goal of "University Success" to properly recognize key role of GenEd in preparing students for academic work in major and co-curricular programs. ( <a href="#">III.C5.18</a> , <a href="#">III.C5.5</a> )
Spring 2013	Circulated "Current State" document to begin discussions about revising GenEd to increase rigor, coherence and institute integrated assessment. ( <a href="#">III.C5.15</a> )
Spring 2013-Spring 2015	Researched extent of major-specific exceptions to GenEd, recommended most be incorporated into GenEd and treated as unexceptional. ( <a href="#">III.C5.2</a> )
Fall 2013-Summer 2014	Committee discusses revisions to Vision, Goals, Category descriptions to increase definition, specificity, coherence of Program. ( <a href="#">III.C5.14</a> )
Fall 2014-Spring 2015	First wiki established to coordinate and publicize revision discussions to campus community; revisions finalized and accepted by Provost Spring 2015 ( <a href="#">III.C5.3</a> )
Fall 2014-Fall 2015	Committee develops and pilots new recertification process for existing GenEd courses, using second wiki ( <a href="#">III.C5.6</a> )
Fall 2015-	Second wiki coordinating recertification of 224 legacy courses; currently 33% (by enrollment) to completion. ( <a href="#">III.C5.13</a> )
Fall 2016	Senate approved Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) category and GenEd Committee soliciting courses to implement for Fall 2018 incoming class; stable of course offerings already in process (using recertification website for new IDS course applications.) Provost's memo informing community of deadlines for recertification for all GenEd courses. Over 40% for GenEd recertification across categories. ( <a href="#">III.C5.17</a> )

Direct assessment primarily applies AAC&U rubrics to assess a variety of artifacts (e.g., essays, presentations, exams, etc.). Indirect assessment focuses on explicit learning objectives and pedagogical strategies to determine how well courses deliver on General Education goals. As well, the General Education Committee regularly relies on institutional research data (e.g., data pertaining to enrollment, faculty rank, CLA/CLA+, etc.) and qualitative feedback from instructors and students to learn about the Program's strengths and opportunities.

In order to guide and maintain the General Education Program, the committee implements various assessment methods, in forms that are both direct (assessment Program-level skill development) and indirect (assessment of disciplinary breadth of students' learning).

### **Curricular Renewal of the GenEd**

The GenEd Committee's self-assessment process, and indirect assessment of the Program, are developed and play key roles in guiding curricular development of individual courses within the Program, and of the Program itself ([III.C5.14](#)). As results are obtained, the Committee discusses and deliberates, making policy decisions and/or disseminating results and decisions to faculty primarily through faculty representatives on the Committee, or presentations at College/School meetings.

Recent examples include the first website-based discussion on assessing and refining Category descriptions ([III.C5.3](#)), and Working Groups on Interdisciplinarity ([III.C5.9](#)) and Assessment ([III.C5.11](#)), which resulted in the current work to alter the 'L' category of the GenEd, and recertification activity. The Committee engaged faculty across campus to contribute to a set of clearer course category definitions that could be more systematically tied to the Vision, and provide a more objective and transparent foundation for managing courses within the GenEd; the success of those discussions provided a foundation for implementing the new recertification activities that will more effectively manage GenEd courses without unjustifiably infringing on department or faculty autonomy. Assessments will continue to guide improvements in pedagogy, by identifying areas of excellence and need in meeting Program Learning Goals and demonstrated faculty strengths will also be used to improve instruction, e.g., by identifying faculty and courses that excel in developing students and using those resources in professional development and curricular reform across the Program.

Two other examples include institutional research into instructor rank ([III.C5.10](#)) to further monitor instructor-rank statistics to observe trends and correlate instructor rank with instructional effectiveness, and the extent of program-specific exceptions to GenEd requirements ([III.C5.2](#)). In particular, the identification of exceptions resulted in the Committee recommending most of these be integrated into the GenEd program, in order to increase program transparency and improve advising and pathways to graduation for students switching majors ([III.C5.16](#)).

### **Pedagogical Excellence**

#### **Academic Renewal and Innovation**

As an institution in the midst of a transition from a regional master's university to a doctoral-serving institution, there are several key factors that the University takes into account as it considers ways to ensure pedagogical excellence for undergraduate, masters, and doctoral students. Curricular actions, whether to create new programs or revise existing ones, go through a rigorous review process with approvals required at department, college, and university levels (see table below). Curriculum approval procedures can be found on the Provost's website ([III.C1.7](#)) The University established a systematic and technology-based method to collect assessment information and data across disciplines and support units in 2010, all designed to advance academic excellence, improve the

student experience, and ensure that academic programs continue to evolve in appropriate ways. As a component of its OneMontclair transformation, a new component that facilitates the course and program curriculum submission and approval process and will begin implementation in spring 2017 ([III.C1.12](#)).

Table 8. *Summary of Curriculum and Assessment Processes.*

<b>Course Proposals and Alterations</b>	Reviewed and approved by Department and College/School Curriculum Committees and Provost.	All course proposals require the articulation of specific course learning objectives, how learning objectives are assessed, and how the course meets any program learning goals (PLGs) identified in the specific Program Assessment Plan. Note: link to 1-2 specific course proposals.
<b>Program Proposals and Alterations</b>	Reviewed and approved by Department, College/School Curriculum Committees, UCC and Graduate Council, and Provost.  New Programs also approved by Academic Issues Committee and the New Jersey President's Council.	Program alterations and new program proposals (PAs) require an updated or new learning outcomes assessment plan for the program that is thorough and sustainable.

### **Undergraduate and Graduate Programs**

As of AY 2015-16, Montclair State offers 216 undergraduate degrees and 141 of graduate degrees through the College of the Arts, the College of Education and Human Services, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Science and Mathematics, the Feliciano School of Business and the Graduate School. The University has now added the School of Nursing to its academic units, which launched its first program in the current academic year. The most popular majors ([III.C3.5](#)) at Montclair University are summarized in the table below and include:

Table 9. *Most popular undergraduate and graduate majors AY 2015-2016.*

<u>Undergraduate</u>	<u>Graduate</u>
1. Business Administration (BS)	1. Teaching (MAT)
2. Psychology (BA)	2. Educational Leadership (MA)
3. Biology (BS)	3. Business Administration (MBA)
4. Family and Child Studies (BA)	4. Counseling (MA)
5. Justice Studies (BA)	5. Child Advocacy (MA)

Since 2012, Montclair has developed 6 number of new undergraduate programs, 24 number of new graduate programs, and a total of 546 new courses. Degree program innovation that is consistent with Montclair's mission and strategic goals has been a priority of all academic units. Select examples from all Colleges and Schools are summarized in the table above.

These examples highlight that innovation emerges at Montclair not only in how degree programs continue to address emerging disciplinary and social and professional directions and needs, but also new and flexible program structures, cross-disciplinary boundaries, as well as varied methods of program delivery and reach.

Table 10. *Curriculum Renewal at Montclair State University.*

College of the Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communication and Media Arts (BA)</li> <li>▪ Dance (Low-Residency MFA)</li> </ul>
College of Education and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public Health (BS)</li> <li>▪ Athletic Training (MS)</li> </ul>
College of Humanities and Social Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arabic (BA)</li> <li>▪ Data Collection and Management (Graduate Certificate Program)</li> </ul>
College of Science and Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustainability Science (BS/MS)</li> </ul>
Feliciano School of Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Entrepreneurship (Graduate Certificate Program)</li> <li>▪ Entrepreneurship (Undergraduate Minor)</li> </ul>
School of Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nursing (RN to BSN)</li> </ul>

### **Academic Excellence**

As Montclair evolves as an institution and expands its academic program offerings, it is important that the University continue to offer rigorous programs that challenge students academically and provide intellectual and professional preparation for careers and citizenship. As the 2015 National Survey of Student Engagement NSSE ([III.C2a.20](#)) results indicate, both freshman and senior students report lower numbers for “time spent preparing for class” compared to those of peer institutions. Montclair State University students spend fewer hours reading for their courses but have longer writing assignments (in pages) compared to other benchmark institutions. The university recognizes an opportunity for growth here as only 71% of freshman and 74% of seniors (compared to 81% and 80% at peer institutions) report that “their institution emphasizes spending significant time studying and on academic work.” Related to the above findings, the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) - Ruffalo Noel Levitz Survey (2016), “I am able to experience intellectual growth here,” “The content of courses within my major is valuable,” and “There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus” ([III.C4.26](#)) are strengths of Montclair State University’s programs. Comparative findings from four-year public institutions, however, also indicate that there is some room for improvement in the first two of the above areas, time spent preparing and time spent studying. These recent issues have come under discussion, engaging curriculum committees, the University Senate, academic Deans and the Office of the Provost, all of whom are now coordinating the establishment of a more formalized response (task force) to these findings.

Multiple learning opportunities and resources are made available to students, spanning both Academic Affairs and Student Services divisions of the University. ([III.C4.5](#), [III.C4.9](#), [III.C4.10](#), [III.C4.12](#), [III.C4.13](#), [III.C4.16](#), [III.C4.17](#)). To meet the needs of a growing student population, the University has reorganized and expanded academic and support services including the Center for Writing Excellence, Academic Success Center and the Center for Advising and Student Transitions, to name a few. Stakeholders reported in interviews and focus groups that the University has excellent resources available to students, many citing the Center for Writing Excellence ([III.C4.34](#), [III.C4.35](#)). A challenge that the University has now recognized is how to most effectively market all the options available to students in strategic and targeted ways. The launch of the HawkSync communication channel in AY 2014-2015, which has an exclusive student-centered focus, is a strong and promising direction in this regard.

Most of the University’s undergraduate and graduate programs are also accredited by national and international professional associations ([III.C1.1](#)), which is another indicator of the quality of academic programs. Accreditors include the AACSB International (The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (Baccalaureate and Graduate degree programs in business, School of Business), CAA/ASHA (Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech Language Hearing Association - CAA has accredited the MA with a concentration in Speech-Language pathology; and the Doctoral program in Audiology in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, College of Humanities and Social Sciences), and CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation for programs preparing elementary and secondary school teachers,

as well as administrative and school service personnel). All accredited programs at Montclair State University remain in good standing. The College of the Arts is among a select group of art colleges nationwide to hold all four arts-related accreditations. (See accreditation letters in [III.C1.2](#))

### **Montclair State Faculty: Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship**

Integrally connected to curriculum is instruction. Excellent teaching is a hallmark of the Montclair State and embedded in the DNA of the university's mission. The statement of Professional Roles and Expectations ([III.C2a.1](#)) of faculty members at Montclair State University, which lays out the criteria by which peer and administrative judgments of faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion are made speak strongly to the institution's respect for teaching effectiveness. New faculty members are introduced to available support for their teaching, among other aspects of their work, through the New Faculty Program ([III.C2d.13](#)) that meets weekly throughout the fall semester. Participation in this faculty program replaces one course in the workload and allows new faculty to transition into the culture of the University. Faculty also have opportunities to learn and share pedagogical practices through programs offered by the Research Academy on University Learning (RAUL) ([III.C2d.1](#), [III.C2d.2](#), [III.C2d.3](#)), the Leadership Associates Program offered through Montclair State's Office of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy ([III.C2d.10](#)), and programs offered through Montclair State's Training and Integration Group such as: Empowering Online Teaching and Learning ([III.C2d.4](#)).

Faculty and staff have a clear commitment to quality instruction, which encourages student growth through their present studies and sets them on the pathway as future citizens of the world. Key to this commitment is the *content and planning* of coursework and the *delivery* of that content. Surveys administered by the Office of Institutional Research provide some insight into the ways in which that instruction is enacted. The HERI Faculty Survey ([III.C2a.4](#)) indicates that Montclair State University faculty use student-centered pedagogies in their courses at a higher rate than the comparison group and that faculty structure their courses in ways that encourage habits of mind for lifelong learners. FSSE findings ([III.C2a.5](#)), indicate that the institution's faculty dedicate 43% percent of their reported working hours to teaching (rather than research or service activities). The analysis also indicated one of the challenges for Montclair State University and its students – as 49% of freshman report that there is a very good chance or some chance that they will work full-time while attending college ([III.C2a.10](#)). Examining these issues from yet another angle, the NSSE report ([III.C2.a.19](#)) of engagement indicators also raises one of the challenges for Montclair State University. Both indicators of the “experiences with faculty” theme, which include student-faculty interaction and effective teaching practices, are either comparable or lower to all comparison groups. Analysis indicates that this results in part from the sudden growth of the student population at the institution, the steady attrition in faculty, and perhaps the repositioning of faculty attention to research expectations that impact the quantitative and qualitative experience that students have with faculty in and out of the classroom.

The IPEDS report demonstrates that increase in faculty hires has not kept pace with the growth in the student population and is in part the result of an increase in faculty retirements ([III.C2c.5](#), [III.C2c.6](#)). Faculty hiring has been adjusted to address this challenge. Data from student focus groups, which were conducted in the fall of 2015 to engage students and explore in an in-depth manner a range of issues emerging in the analysis for the MSCHE self-study, overwhelmingly indicated that students feel that their professors and the passion they bring to their teaching are key to ensuring a high quality learning experience. Also important in instruction is the *demeanor, disposition, and expertise* of faculty and staff. In interviews with faculty and staff, empathy and genuinely caring about students' well-being and growth as learners are key qualities mentioned as well as faculty being experts in their fields.

Challenges that faculty and staff have identified that hinder their delivery of content include that students are often distracted by outside influences which reflect their complex lives (e.g. technology, parking, childcare, financial aid). Faculty and staff also perceive students as often arriving at Montclair State with insufficient preparation, particularly in literacy and math skills. There is also a sense that students are

more interested in their grade and getting a job post-graduation than in learning for learning's sake. Lastly, there is a sense that faculty and staff are missing opportunities to engage with broader, overarching themes that could move education away from "silos" to delivering more integrated learning experiences to students. Interviews with faculty and staff indicate that these areas of concern can continue to be addressed through comprehensive professional development and focus on teaching as an institutional priority.

*Teaching evaluations.* Montclair State University has clear procedures for evaluating faculty based on observations and student surveys. Both student surveys and observations are done annually for full-time faculty who are pre-tenure ([III.C2e.1](#)), AFT Local Selected Procedures Agreement regarding Observation of Professional Performance ([III.C2e.3](#)) and periodically thereafter. Departments or schools/colleges determine criteria for the evaluation surveys and observation forms. Student evaluation data and observations and excellence in teaching are intricately embedded in the decision-making process for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. Procedures for personnel decisions are clearly laid out in the paperwork Faculty Personnel Action Forms ([III.C2e.2](#)) for Personnel Action. After tenure, faculty are expected to submit data about their performance once every five years in order to be eligible for Career Development funds ([III.C2e.4](#)).

Part-time faculty are evaluated every semester using a common survey administered online by the Office of Institutional Research. This process was initiated on a pilot basis in 2006 and was fully functional across all Colleges and Schools as of spring 2016 when 2,075 courses were included with a 65.7% student response rate ([III.C2e.5](#)). Adjunct faculty members are evaluated each semester by their students and the data are reviewed by both department chairs and Deans' Offices ([III.C2e.6](#)). Faculty evaluations for AY2015-2016, below, indicate the commitment that faculty bring to their teaching assignments as well as the importance of continuing to expand training and support mechanisms for faculty to further enhance quality instruction and student learning ([III.C2e.7](#), [III.C2e.8](#), [III.C2e.9](#), [III.C2e.10](#)).

Table 11. *Summary of Adjunct Evaluations.*

	Fall Semester Ratings - Six-Year Average Very High/High	Spring Semester Ratings - Six-Year Average Very High/High
Overall rating of the instruction (5=very high – 1= very low)	71.4%	72.6%
Overall rating of the course (5=very high – 1= very low)	66.9%	68.7%
Effectiveness of the instructor in stimulating your interest in the subject (5=very high – 1= very low)	67.2%	68.7%
Effectiveness of the course in challenging you intellectually (5=very high – 1= very low)	65.0%	67.7%
How much you learned in the course (5=very much – 1=nothing)	72.3%	73.7%

*Scholarship.* The recent recognition of Montclair State as a research doctoral institution by Carnegie and the State of New Jersey confirms the growing productivity and scholarly reputation of the Montclair faculty and their qualifications to deliver their academic programs. Scholarly and artistic activities across all fields, intertwined teaching and research emphasis are further developed in the high impact practices section.)

Documents related to faculty expertise clearly indicate that Montclair State faculty are contributing meaningfully to their fields on a national and international level. Evidence of this is also found in applications for tenure and promotion as well as Five Year External Review Reports ([III.C2d.7](#)). Now a Research Doctoral University, Montclair faculty have been recognized and been supported in their pursuit of research opportunities and have been proactive in this regard (see table below):

Table 12. *Summary Data Research and Sponsored Programs (Grants).*

	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Number of Proposal Submissions</b>	141	151	157	156
<b>Number of Award Actions</b>	71	62	59	68
<b>Total Awarded Dollar Amount</b>	\$11,365,450	\$9,046,898	\$7,567,927	\$8,377,991

More granular review of annual reports and data indicate that the number of proposals and awards are trending upwards for the last 5-10 years despite a very competitive funding environment. The NSF Higher Education Research and Development survey (HERD) ([III.C2a.14](#)) also indicates a steady pace of research productivity with the University hovering around \$5M a year. The ongoing commitment to research and scholarship at Montclair State is further indicated in the completion of strategic initiatives, such as the opening of the CELS building and the vivarium, as well the steady influx of talented tenure track faculty with strong research backgrounds and interests.

Analysis of the data also indicates that certain fields lead the way with regard to successfully funded grant applications (with CSAM and CEHS leading the way followed by CHSS, FSBUS, and finally CART) ([III.C2b.3](#), [III.C2b.4](#)). The data present current challenges in the grants landscape in general but also the need for Montclair State to more effectively help all of its faculty recognize and pursue opportunities for research and funding. Integral here is the enhancement of learning opportunities for all students, undergraduate and graduate, to be involved in exciting research projects led by their faculty. The Provost's University Authors (launched in 2009) and Grant Recognition (launched in 2013) initiatives indicate the ongoing strategic attention to research activities at the university and the recognition of faculty who continue to invest in this direction. As recognized in the 2016 University Authors Report, since 2009 Montclair State faculty have more than 336 publications ([III.C2a.7](#)).

The University annually invests \$1-2 million in salary support for faculty sabbaticals and is on schedule for over \$2.0 million in 2017-2018. These semesters (full salary) or years (3/4 salary) of faculty renewed and acceleration of their research and instructional agendas empower faculty to return to their labs and classrooms re-energized and with heightened recognition by their peers ([III.C2a.16](#)).

The University also continues to expand the number of Centers and Institutes ([III.C2a.15](#)) that advance knowledge, research collaboration, and innovation in areas that are strategic priorities for the University and also address unique local/state needs and pressing social issues. The work conducted at these collaborative hubs brings together the rich intellectual capital and resources of the University and provides undergraduate and graduate students opportunities for advanced research training and community-based outreach alongside faculty whose research foci reflect a broad range of interests and industries. Examples of Centers and Institutes include the recently established Center for Cooperative Media ([III.C2a.11](#)), the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health ([III.C2a.12](#)), the Professional Resources in Science & Mathematics (PRISM) program in the Bristol-Myers Squibb – Center for Science Teaching and Learning at Montclair State University ([III.C2a.13](#)), and the Center for Quantitative Obesity Research ([III.C2a.17](#)).

### **High-Impact Educational Practices (HIPs)**

Montclair State University provides an integrated learning experience that blends the General Education program and major/minor program of study with substantial co-curricular opportunities that are consistent with guidelines for best practices in education. These high impact practices include student participation in learning communities, service-learning, research with faculty, internships, study abroad programs, and culminating senior experience ([III.C4.11](#)). Overall survey findings indicate that 74% of Montclair first-year students report participation in one or two or more HIPs (percentage is higher than that of any other comparison group) and that 84% of seniors report corresponding participation, which is very comparable to all the other comparison groups. The comparative advantage of the Montclair State learning experience

for incoming students seems to even out by the senior year. In order to maintain that advantage with regard to student participation in high impact practices, the institution should examine ways to expand service-learning opportunities, research with faculty, internships and study abroad opportunities.

### **Learning communities**

Montclair State has fully embraced the practice of this cohort-based approach to education that strengthens retention and academic success with now 90% of entering first-year students enrolled in an LC (III.C4.27). Learning communities provide great support for Montclair's goals to connect people and ideas and connect students to place and community. NSSE findings (III.C4.11) indicate that this is a hallmark element of the Montclair State educational experience and the institution has a comparative advantage to comparison group institutions for both freshman and seniors. In addition, the university has also piloted sophomore cohort learning communities in fall 2014 in two majors in CEHS (in the exercise science and family and child studies programs) with very positive results (III.C4.33) and will continue to expand the LCs program and monitor the success of such efforts.

### **Service-learning and community-based learning**

Many programs in different colleges/schools have a range of courses that include a service-learning component (III.C4.28). The focus of this section is on university-wide programs that explicitly focus on service-learning and community-based learning. The Center for Community Engagement's (III.C4.8) expanded activities and grant seeking successes have been noted, most recently in Montclair State University's designation as a Community Engaged Campus by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This classification is a strong recognition of Montclair's commitment to connect students to place and provide a rich intellectual environment that also prepares students for citizenship and public service. The Center continues to guide service-learning and participatory action research initiatives, curricular communities and programs such as the Emerging Leaders Learning Community and the Leadership Development through Civic Engagement minor national service programs such as the Bonner Leader and EECO AmeriCorps programs. A prime example of these efforts is the Orange Community School Initiative (OCSI) (III.C4.14), which aims to help empower and engage community members in Orange, NJ. This is the first university-assisted community school initiative where public schools function as vital neighborhood centers that provide comprehensive educational and social services through local partnerships. The project has engaged multiple faculty/student teams from various disciplines at Montclair and a number of community partners. This is a multi-year project and its ongoing progress and success continues to be documented and monitored. NSSE findings (III.C4.11), demonstrate that the university is doing well with both freshman and seniors in relation to Montclair State benchmark institutions, but is lagging behind Carnegie Class institutions, more significantly with regard to freshman. Montclair is moving in the right direction and could explore opportunities to integrate community-based projects earlier in the Montclair State University curriculum and learning experience.

Montclair State is one of the founding members of the New Jersey Campus Compact (NJCC) (III.C4.29), an organization that works to advance the public purposes of NJ colleges and universities. The Provost currently sits on the NJCC Board of Directors. Through its NJCC membership, MSU gains access to professional development opportunities for faculty and administrators and support in advancing the University's strategic community engagement priorities. This year the NJCC awarded MSU a fulltime VISTA worker to support the OCSI.

### **Internships/Field Experiences/Student Teaching/Clinical Placement**

Internships and other experiences are integral to Montclair State's goal to help students connect people and ideas and make contributions to local and global communities. This part of the educational experience allows Montclair students to develop as reflective practitioners and problem-solvers. Montclair has a deep 40-year history with regard to cooperative education and internships and a rigorous process in place that

involves faculty and the Career Services office in every School/College. Faculty oversee internship assignments, guide students through the experience and help them link their learning to practice. They also conduct site visits and meet with internship supervisors, and evaluate projects. Aligning with a decentralized approach to career services, College/School Career Services Directors and their staff carefully vet partnering organizations and placements in their respective areas of study, and facilitate the administrative side of the program's requirements. NSSE findings, ([III.C4.11](#)), show the institution's track record compares well with Carnegie Class institutions but can improve when compared to that of Montclair State's benchmark institutions. Details regarding the process can be found here: ([III.C4.30](#)) Specific guidelines for the successful completion of such learning assignments are provided by individual departments and programs (see CSAM Field Geology rubric [III.C4.21](#); CART SCM guidelines [III.C4.22](#); CHSS Audiology and Speech Language Pathology externship guidelines [III.C4.23](#); FSBUS guidelines [III.C4.24](#); and CHES Center for Pedagogy guidelines [III.C4.25](#)).

Two things emerge from the analysis of processes and procedures guiding internships at Montclair State. The first is that there is some disparity in the opportunities available to students in the different Colleges/Schools). This is an opening to strengthen this part of the educational experience of the Montclair State undergraduate education and ensure that students in all academic disciplines and fields are prepared to launch rewarding career paths upon graduation. The recent promotion of the Internship Coordinator to Director of the Center for Career Services will provide knowledgeable and experienced leadership in support of all the diverse internship options across the schools and colleges. The second is that with the introduction of *Symplify*™ this next academic year into the workflow of implementing the internship program, there will be increased opportunity to integrate feedback of individual experiences from partners and assessment of learning findings into curriculum discussions. The software will also evaluate the quality of the program and its outcomes in a more productive manner. Finally, the University will continue to assess the cooperative education and internship program, on an ongoing basis, to ensure the program is of great benefit to students and servicing local and regional industry partners. Discussions will take place on emerging issues regarding paid and unpaid internships and how all students at Montclair State who wish to participate in such experiences, will have the ability to do so. Fundraising is one option, as it would establish need-based scholarship funds to support costs related to experiential learning (e.g. internships, community-based learning, study abroad) and would assist students who rely on financial aid while working full-time to fund their education and is on the agenda for the new capital campaign, which is now in its silent phase ([III.C4.31](#)). The goal is to provide real world experience to the most students prior to graduation.

### **Study abroad programs**

Engaging with issues of diversity, understanding other cultures and worldviews, and gaining a global perspective is a key goal of the Montclair State educational experience and study abroad programs are important in advancing this goal. The University utilizes a wide range of administrative models for these programs (semester long programs, customized summer programs, experiential learning programs) ensuring that all are evaluated and meet the academic standards and goals of Montclair State. Partnerships and participating programs have continued to expand since 2012. ([III.C4.32](#)) as has the participation rate of undergraduate and graduate students. In 2015 Montclair State joined with the Institute of International Education (IIE) and more than 600 organizations to become a member of Generation Study Abroad, thus making participation in global experiences an immediate priority for the institution ([III.C4.15](#)). As indicated in the IIE Open Doors report, in AY2011-2012 Montclair had 181 students participate in a study abroad program. In AY2014-2015, the last reported year for Open Doors, the number of students who participated was 310.

The MBA program is the first within the University to require a study abroad in the curriculum. All MBA students participate in a 10-day international study trip that is integrated into their program. At the undergraduate level, as a result of increased collaboration between academic units and global leaders and staff from the Global Education Center, discipline-specific study abroad initiatives have developed in the

last couple of years. Among them are the course-mapped semester exchange programs with Bournemouth University in the UK. Montclair State has established semester-long programs at Bournemouth for undergraduate students majoring in Nutrition and Food Science, Sports, Events and Tourism Marketing, and all academic programs within the School of Communication and Media. Programs for other disciplines are currently in development. With other partners, Montclair offers discipline-specific opportunities for students in the arts, family and child studies, music and languages. In the past year Montclair has also participated as a partner institution in Erasmus+ grants for student mobility with University of Graz and Bournemouth and have secured funding for Montclair State students to study abroad for a semester at these partners.

In addition to the semester-long programs, the University continues to build short-term faculty-led programs. One significant new initiative has been the increase in short-term embedded travel in a spring semester course. Since last year, the University has doubled the number of these programs available, which now include academic disciplines never before represented. In spring 2017, the University expects to run seven courses that include spring break travel. The academic fields include Theatre, Visual Arts, Justice Studies, Entrepreneurship, Classics, Film and Dance. In developing these initiatives, the Global Education Center has worked with some of the strongest international partners such as University of Graz, Austria and has also identified new opportunities for students in Cuba, Sweden, Viet Nam and Croatia. In addition to expanding the diversity of location and type of program, the University continues work to increase the diversity of participants by conducting outreach to EOF programs, Veterans' Affairs, and promoting and advising on the Gilman Scholarship for Pell Grant recipients. Since AY2011-2012, 25 Montclair State students have been awarded the Gilman Scholarship to support their study abroad. NSSE findings indicate the University lags behind Montclair State's benchmark and Carnegie Class institutions in regard to participation rates. (III.C4.11). As with many institutions, the modest numbers are most likely a result of the three barriers identified by IIE and widely acknowledged in the field: Cost, Culture and Curriculum. Montclair State University committed to addressing these barriers for students through the development of low cost programs and flexible term options, promotion of the idea and opportunities of study abroad directly to students and in partnership with faculty, and focus on integrating study abroad into the curriculum across disciplines. Increased efforts are needed to enhance partnerships and opportunities.

### **Research with faculty**

Participation in scholarly activities for students in all disciplines and at all levels of study is an important component of the educational experience inside and outside the classroom at Montclair State University and NSSE findings demonstrate that the institution is well-poised to meet this challenge as it expands (data indicate relatively comparable findings to Montclair State University's benchmark and Carnegie institutions for both first year and senior students (III.C4.11). In April 2016, Montclair State held the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Research Symposium on campus (III.C6.7) which provides an interdisciplinary forum to showcase and reward outstanding student scholarship. The Symposium provides a venue for sharing research with the academic community, peers, and the greater community through poster displays as well as oral and multimedia presentations. The symposium was initiated by CSAM and CHSS and now has expanded to include all colleges and schools. The 2016 symposium had over 300 participants (compared to 31 participants in 2008, in its second year) and continues to grow and evolve to reflect the increased collaborations between faculty and students in research projects.

There is increased attention now on developing expanded opportunities for student participation in research collaborations with faculty. Existing reports and data from ORSP (III.C4.18), the HERI Faculty Survey (III.C4.19), and the HERI Senior Survey (III.C4.20) indicate that the University has established both internal and external grants that support student trainees, graduate assistants, and post docs in scholarly pursuits. Given the University's new classification as a Research Institution, dedicated efforts are anticipated toward a long-term plan and new resources, primarily from grants and gifts in order to continue to create a student culture that embraces scholarship and provides additional support for their

apprentice scholarly activities (e.g. broader participation in regional, national, and international conferences)

### **Summary Statement**

Montclair State University meets the eight criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard III. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the three Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard III: Specifically requirement #8: The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs; requirement #9: All student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment; and requirement #10: Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

This section of the Self-Study on Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience is highlighted by three key findings:

1. Analysis around key issues demonstrates that the General Education Committee has taken important steps in assessing the strengths and limitations of the program and has now implemented a course recertification process that will provide a strong foundation for systematic and robust collection and analysis of data for learning outcomes. This process will strengthen the quality of the program, provide more coherence, and allow key stakeholders, none more so than students, to understand the relevance of the liberal arts part of their education and how it contributes to broader learning outcomes and successful careers and lives.
2. Analysis also indicates that Montclair State has a strong and dedicated faculty that balances teaching and research responsibilities well. The faculty must continue to grow to meet the evolving needs of the institution, its academic programs and expanding student population. There is a strong, formal curricular process that will be supported by new software which will encourage and revitalize curriculum development efforts.
3. With regard to high impact learning practices, the University has a solid track record that recognizes the need to expand the sphere of learning within and beyond the classroom. Montclair State has vital programs and initiatives in the form of learning communities, experiential learning such as community-based learning, internships, and study abroad, and research collaborations that must continue to expand.

### **Next Steps for Strategic Planning**

Analysis in this section of the Self-Study suggests that the University consider the following steps:

1. The General Education Committee must complete the recertification process that will allow the institution to launch systematic assessment of learning in all five learning outcomes of the GenEd program.
2. The University should continue to monitor formal student survey data and faculty should continue discussions about the rigor of academic programs and support systems available to students.
3. The University needs a comprehensive plan to better assess needs and realistically determine the number, composition, and profile of the faculty body.
4. With the designation of Montclair State University as a community-engaged campus, the institution needs to continue to expand initiatives and faculty and student involvement coming from the Center for Community Engagement.
5. Given Montclair's emphasis on connecting students globally and providing opportunities for them to develop internationalized perspectives, the University should expand its support of the Global Education Center and explore other pathways to partnerships and student support.

6. Expansion of the research culture among both undergraduate and graduate students must continue. On the graduate level, the University has already moved to creating a new home for the Graduate School and all graduate students to strengthen a sense of community. Now the institution should look for other mechanisms to energize and support student research and also look for the continued collaboration of the Graduate School, the Graduate Council, and the faculty in graduate programs as the institution redefines policies and continues to expand a research culture.

### Recommendations for Institutional Improvement

#### Goals/Objectives: General Education – Complete the Recertification Process for all Courses

Oversight	Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)	Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes
Provost's Office, Academic Affairs Deans Chairs/Directors Senate	GenEd Committee and Chair GenEd Program Assistant (for administrative support) Program Coordinators of GenEd Courses Course Coordinators of GenEd Courses OIT Support for Assessment Implementation and Data Analysis	Year 1: Complete recertification of existing GenEd courses (Fall 2017)
		Year 2: Certification process for new GenEd submissions (Begins Fall 2017) for interdisciplinary category and existing categories
		Year 3: Assess recertification/certification process and review of categories (mapping of all courses, gaps, etc.)

#### Goals/Objectives: Enhance the Research Culture at the Undergraduate and Graduate Levels of Study

Oversight	Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)	Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes
Provost's Office Academic Affairs	Task Force composed of faculty at the undergraduate and graduate levels  Additional offices to serve as resource include The Graduate School, ORSP, College/School Dean's Office representatives of the Student Research Symposium series, Internal Grants Committee representative, leadership from Research Centers and Institutes	Year 1: Fact finding process to understand current research activities and culture, conduct gap analysis, and generate report with recommendations.
		Year 2: Develop an action plan based on the recommendations of the Task Force's gap analysis
		Years 3-5: Begin implementation of various phases of the action plan and

**Goals/Objectives: Enhance the Research Culture at the Undergraduate  
and Graduate Levels of Study**

<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)</b>	<b>Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes</b>
		develop evaluation processes and procedures
		Years 6-8: Begin assessment of implemented phases, make timely and strategic improvements to facilitate the change in research culture

# **STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**



## STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

### Standard Statement

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

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

Montclair State University meets the six criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard IV. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the two Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard IV. Specifically, requirement #8: systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes and requirement #10: institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning and the results of academic and institutional assessments. Two suggestions that emerged in the 2012 PRR included attention and reporting on the relationship between recruitment, enrollment, advising, retention and timely graduation. Implementation and assessment of several institutional initiatives is ongoing. Moving forward, the new enterprise systems will provide more efficient reporting; provide access to a wider group of community members and greater opportunity to use self-service options to answer questions. These changes will facilitate assessment of programs and ensure continuous quality improvement. Evidence that demonstrates that Montclair State meets Standard IV and the related Requirements of Affiliation can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap through active links in the table presented below.

<b>Standard and Criterion</b>		<b>Meet Criterion</b>
<u>IV.C1</u>	Clearly stated ethical policies and processes to admit, retain and facilitate student success	
<u>IV.C1a</u>	Including accurate and comprehensive information about expenses, financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans repayment and refunds	✓
<u>IV.C1b</u>	With a process by which students who are not adequately prepared are supported in order to attain educational goals	✓
<u>IV.C1c</u>	With programs to enhance retention and guide students throughout their educational experience	✓
<u>IV.C1d</u>	With processes designed to enhance students' success in achieving their goals	✓
<u>IV.C2</u>	Policies and procedures regarding evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits earned in various ways	✓
<u>IV.C3</u>	Policies and procedures for the safe and secure maintenance and release of student information and records	✓
<u>IV.C4</u>	Athletic, student life and other extracurricular activities are regulated by the same policies and procedures used in all programs	✓

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
IV.C5	Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of student support services delivered by third-party providers	NA
<u>IV.C6</u>	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience	✓

The remainder of the section provides analyses of key issues concerning support of the student experience that have been identified as priorities at Montclair State University. The section addresses explicitly three of Montclair State's goals: Connecting students with a successful tomorrow, connecting to place, and meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

### **Introduction – Restatement of the standard that is specific to Montclair State University**

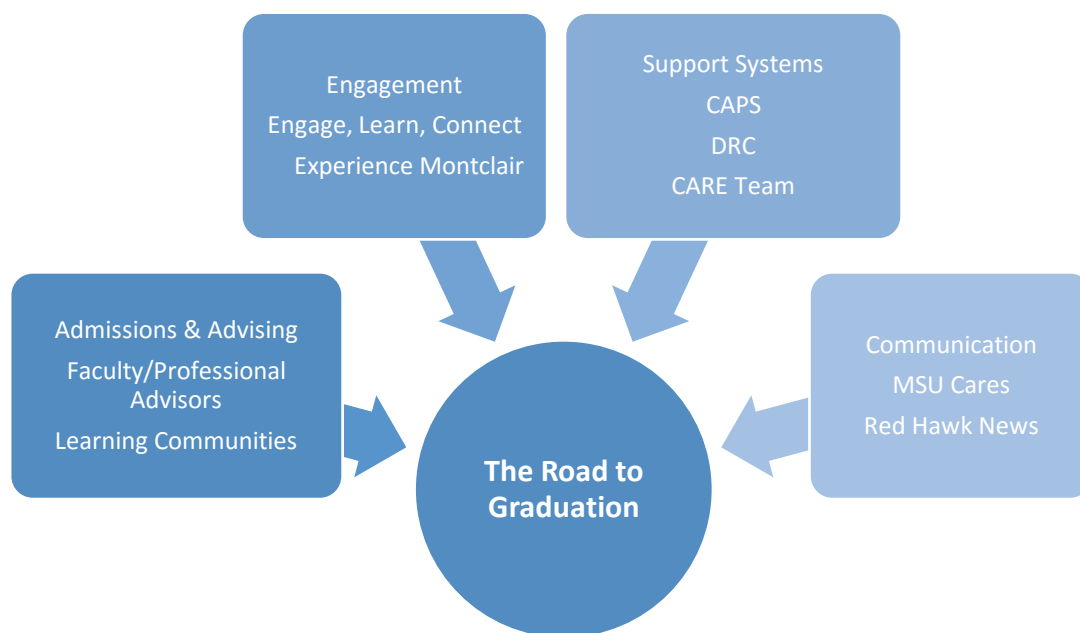
Montclair State University provides comprehensive, coherent and effective support systems to foster student success. The University supports students from admission through graduation using integrated initiatives to meet the needs of the students and facilitate student retention and degree completion. The goals of the strategic plan to ensure that students are able to connect to a successful tomorrow, connect with people and ideas, and connect to place in the local, regional, national and international arenas guide the development and deployment of the support systems available to students. From recruitment to graduation, Montclair State University supports the student experience in a manner that is congruent with its mission (IV.C1.1).

Support of the student experience at Montclair State is a shared responsibility. Highly qualified and experienced professionals in the divisions of Student Development and Campus Life (SDCL) and Academic Affairs (AA) are responsible for the design and implementation of support programs. Professionals in Student Academic Services (SAS) also support the student experience. The Graduate School has developed programming for graduate students to support their unique needs. Key performance indicators (KPIs) determined by the strategic plan and well-established external and internal benchmarks and assessments of specific services are used to design and implement programs that are central to student success.

The personnel in SDCL (IV.C1.9), AA (IV.C1.10), and SAS (IV.C1.11) provide a range of support programs and services. The design of these programs enhance the quality of the learning environment, contribute to the student's educational experiences, and fosters success from the time students enter the University until they graduate. These professionals use data-driven approaches to identify and track areas of need and success and inform the formation and implementation of policy. The data derived from the current KPIs and those culled from the many internal and external benchmarks used guide the development of new KPIs to assure an upward spiral of continuous quality improvement in the services and programs provided to the all students at Montclair State University.

In meeting the needs of the growing student body and the changing demographics of the students enrolled at Montclair State, the faculty and professional staff have been nimble in developing and evaluating programs intended to support students regardless of their academic and personal backgrounds. One recent key decision made by institution was to make the submission of SATs optional as part of the application process. A fuller description of the impact of this decision is below.

As can be seen in Figure 3, the process of connecting students to a successful tomorrow begins with activities and programs sponsored by SDCL and allows students to begin to transition to college life. These activities and programs give them the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed for a rich educational experience and prepare them to meet their goals. In fact, the SDCL vision statement indicates that it is their responsibility to provide an integration of diverse student experiences in the educational environment and to create a strong foundation for achieving life goals (IV.C1.3).



*Figure 4. The Road to Graduation.*

Inspection of the organizational chart of the SDCL (IV.C1.8) indicates that the offices involved in supporting the student experience are designed to meet the needs of all students. It is evident that there are personnel charged to work with traditional first-time full-time freshman, transfer students, graduate students, student-athletes, students from underrepresented populations who exhibit potential for high achievement, adult students, veteran or military students and students who may have learning disabilities or differences, need counseling or psychological support services or need access to medical care. It is clear that the personnel in SDCL work together to help students, regardless of their backgrounds, adjust to college life, enroll and develop schedules, track academic progress, study well, stay healthy, enjoy college life and be safe.

In response to the ever-increasing need to evaluate current activity and make changes to meet current and future student needs, the University has been hampered by the use of outdated enterprise systems to track student success. However, during the last two years the University has been implementing several new systems that will allow for more easily accessible reporting of student challenges and successes. Montclair is in the beginning stages of reaping the benefits from the installation of student-focused software such as Banner™ and DegreeWorks™. This implementation is being done in tandem with an overall implementation of new enterprise systems, which includes finance (PeopleSoft™) and human resources systems (WorkDay™) (IV.C1d.7, IV.C1.12) and will look for more efficient reporting and easier access to self-service options for answering questions on the outcomes of the many programs and services offered to students. At the same time, the University recognizes that human capital has been stretched during this transition period. To serve all students in the best way, all operations continue to run simultaneously in old and new platforms. The concurrent implementation of three major systems and all the accessory software has strained the day-to-day operations of the University.

Nevertheless, 4-year graduation rates at Montclair State University continue to increase among Hispanic and African-American students (IV.C1c.23). In addition, recent ranking reports from U.S. News & World Reports and The Wall Street Journal have provided some rather striking data, which highlights Montclair State's success at graduating students sooner than their academic profiles would predict. Graduation Rate Predicted-vs-Graduation Rate Actual data of the US News report show a change of 19 points between their predicted 6-year graduation rate of 47% and the actual rate of 66%. No other New Jersey institution approaches this performance and only San Diego State among our benchmarks comes close at 18 points.

The Wall Street Journal likewise found better than average student satisfaction in Environment and Outcomes (IV.C1.5, IV.C1c.26).

## Analysis of Key Issues Related to Meeting the Standard and Criteria

### Student Success: A Shared Accomplishment

#### Aligning Student Success Efforts with Montclair State University's Mission and Goals

As an institution that has grown and developed rapidly, Montclair State University has responded well to the demands placed on it. Increases in the size of the student body at the undergraduate and graduate levels and changes in the demographics and diversity of the student body have required this multi-faceted and successful approach to supporting the student experience all with the goal to facilitate retention and graduation in a timely fashion.

#### Admissions.

Regardless of the data tracking and analysis systems, the University administration, faculty and staff have kept a sharp focus on student success, which is guided to high quality higher education by the mission and the strategic plan. If nothing else, Montclair State University is about accessibility. A key decision that has provided an opportunity for greater access was a change in the admissions policy. This change makes submission of the SAT score optional for undergraduates. In addition, a rigor score based on the rigor of classes taken in high school, a recalculation of the high school GPA, and performance in high school courses considered key indicators of success. After much deliberation and debate, this decision was implemented during the 2015 fall admissions cycle. While the implementation has been recent, the initial data are promising with regard to first year GPA and first year retention (IV.C1b.9). For example, the first year retention rate rises from 85% to 90% for students whose recalculated high school GPA was at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher in contrast to a relatively flat retention rate ranging from 80% to 85% for students whose SAT scores were in the same percentile range. This trend is also apparent for students whose family income was less than \$50,000. The same trend occurs regarding the superiority of the re-calculated high school GPA as a predictor of the Average 1<sup>st</sup> year GPA in comparison to the predictive power of the SAT score regardless of the family income bracket. First year retention and GPA are also positively related to the rigor score used in the decision-making processes. The distribution of average entering GPA is also changing (see the Figure below). These data are indeed promising and will continue to be studied in terms of the impact of the change in admissions policy on longer-term retention and changes in diversity of the entering class and subsequently the student body of Montclair State University.

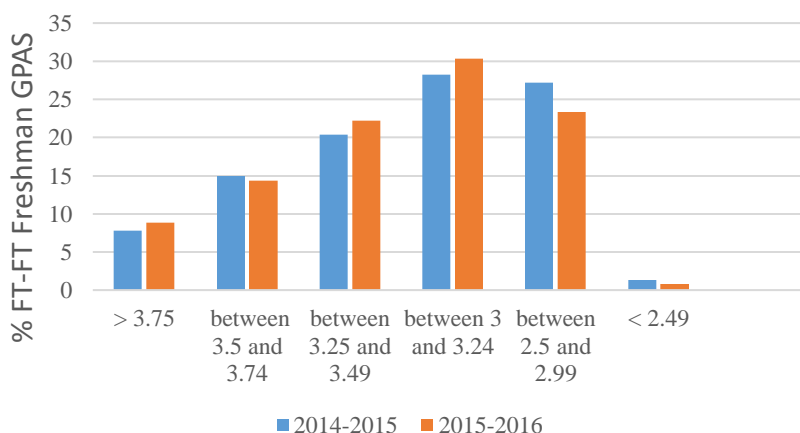


Figure 5. Distribution of First Time-Full Time Freshmen GPA.

## **Advising.**

Recognizing the critical role of advising to student retention and consequent success, the institution engages students in advising activities at the beginning of their Montclair experience, which is carried through to preparing for graduation. Advising at Montclair State is a multi-layered and tailored to provide the structure to allow students to persist to graduation. All students are expected to seek academic advising at least once per semester. Freshmen and undeclared sophomores are required to meet with an advisor prior to registration. CAST serves as a general resource for all freshmen, undeclared sophomores, declared students seeking to explore new majors and all military and veteran students. Students who are in their freshman year and have a declared major receive advising support from a department advisor who serves as the point of contact. Students enrolled in special programs (i.e., Equal Opportunity Fund (EOF), Health Careers program, the Honors program), are assigned advisors in their particular area. In addition to these expectations with regard to advising, CAST has developed a series of resources for use by students and faculty all with the goal of providing access to best practices in advising. The University has also invested in Starfish™, a software package, to facilitate tracking of student success and challenges and Degree Works™ to allow just-in-time assessment of progress toward meeting the requirements of a student's selected degree program (IV.C1c.1, IV.C1c.2). As of the end of fall 2016 semester, 653 faculty and staff members involved with academic advising had completed training in Degree Works™ and Self-Service Banner™ in preparation for the upcoming cycle of advising for spring 2017 (IV.C1c.22) and IT will continue to provide a la carte training sessions as required.

While advising at the beginning of a student's program of study is critical to early retention and success, diligent attention must be paid to advising throughout the remainder of a student's program to ensure that each is on a path to timely graduation. Realizing this need and following discussion with the University Senate, the University developed eight major refinements in academic policies which were instituted in spring 2013 (IV.C1d.6). The goal of these policies is to ensure that students move through their programs of study in a planned and determined way. As an example, consider Policy II – Admission to a major. This policy outlines that students who have completed 60 credits must be admitted to a major before they can enroll in any other courses. As of fall 2016, only 0.095% of undergraduate students are undeclared and have more than 60 credits, a clear indication of the effectiveness of the policy. These eight academic policies obviously intersect and have varied impact on retention and graduation and the University will continue to monitor their effectiveness.

Effective support of the student experience is reflected not only in perception but in retention and graduation data for the overall student population. A review of the spring 2016 Graduation and Retention Report indicates that the overall retention rate from the first year to the second year was 83.2% for the cohort that entered in 2014 compared to the 81.2% for cohort that entered in 2009. The retention rate from the second to the third year was 73% for the cohort that entered in 2013 and 73.3% for the 2009 cohort. Finally the retention rate from the third to the fourth year was 75% for the cohort that entered in 2012 compared to the 70% retention for the 2009 cohort. Graduation rates have also improved when comparing the four-year graduation rate for the cohort that entered in 2012 compared to the 38% for the 2009 cohort. The five-year (60.9% for 2010) graduation rate was flat and six-year graduation rates (65.6% for 2009) showed a slight increase when compared to the previous year (IV.C1c.27). These numbers can be improved but they are consistent with our benchmark institutions.

An example of Montclair State University's success in providing a very deliberate program of student support from admission to graduation can be seen by examining the outcome data from students enrolled in EOF program (See Figure 5 below). It is clear that the institution has maintained a steady retention rate from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> year for all groups. It should be noted that the retention rate in EOF program is higher than all other admitted students. This serves as evidence regarding the effectiveness of the support systems provided through their programs. Graduation rates for EOF students went from 24.7% in 2009 to 43.5% in 2011 (IV.C1c.27).

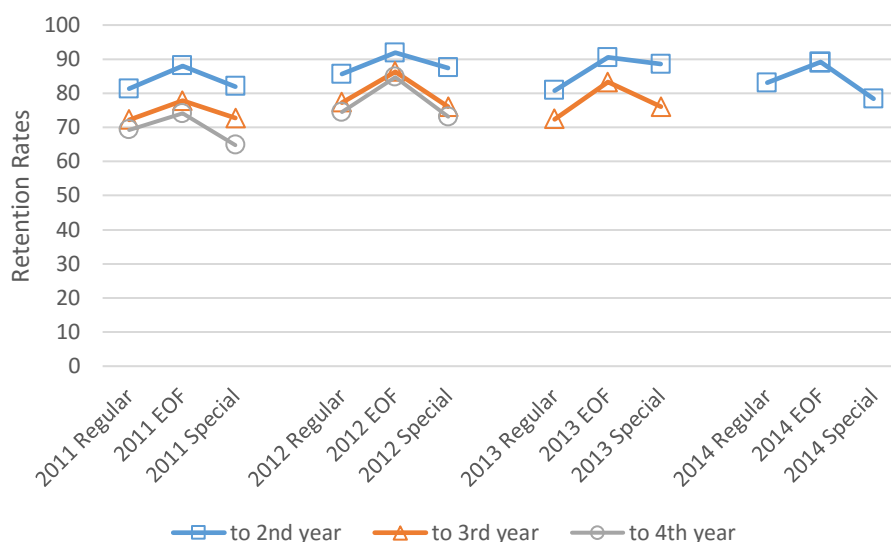


Figure 6. A comparison of retention rates for EOF students and all other admitted freshman by cohort.

Noting that advising is a key to success for students, the institution takes seriously the analysis of the results from the comments obtained during focus group interviews as part of the self-study process (I.C1c.3). In addition, the most recent findings from the 2016 Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey (IV.C1c.28) indicate that students feel welcome on the campus and feel safe while studying at the institution. On the other hand, a review of the scales related to the importance of academic advising and satisfaction with academic advising there have been significant changes ( $p < .01$ ) in the gaps between importance and satisfaction of the period from 2013 – 2016. It is important to note when interpreting these data that the University has undergone tremendous growth and change in this same time period. This period of growth and change has put strains on all the systems and personnel involved in providing advising.

### **Engagement**

Connecting to place (Goal 3 of the strategic plan) is best exemplified by the efforts undertaken to engage students at Montclair State. Engagement at Montclair State University is evaluated in terms of two unique but related efforts. First, engagement with the University in the form of connecting with available sources of information and support. Second, engagement in the form of civic community engagement and leadership development through civic engagement. Engagement with the University provides a natural stepping-stone to community and civic engagement. (IV.C1.8)

From the day that applicants become students, SDCL and Academic Affairs work collaboratively to involve them in University life and culture through an orientation process that allows them to learn, connect and engage with each other, with campus organizations and campus outreach activities. Figure 6 shown below illustrates the onboarding process for students. For example, Red Hawk 411 is an on-campus orientation process undertaken to begin to allow students to make connections to the University community and to resources designed to support student success. Red Hawk 411 is a multi-component program that begins in the summer before the first academic year, an on-line orientation experience is provided, which also occurs in the same summer. On opening day in September incoming students participate in Red Hawk Day, a primary engagement program of the University (IV.C1c.6, IV.C6.10, IV.C6.11) This busy day engages the entire campus – faculty, staff and all incoming students and sets the tone for their relationship with the University. The 12-hour program for the day begins with Convocation, continues with a blend of social and informative sessions, includes lunch where students interact with faculty and staff from their respective Colleges/Schools, and culminates with games and competitions.

After the initial steps new students participate in Red Hawk Frenzy, a month-long series of activities that involve training sessions, ask me booths, a career crawl and participation in a National Day of Service.

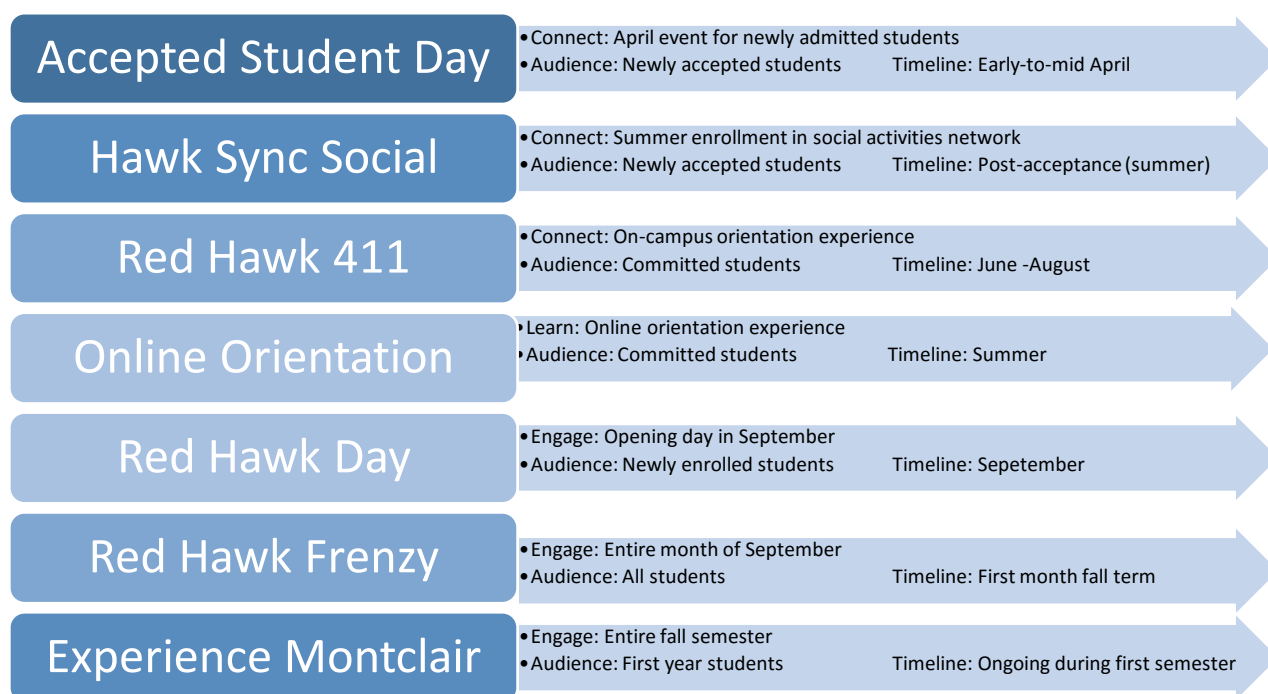


Figure 7. An illustration of the onboarding processes for freshman.

Engagement in civic and community activities is a highly regarded and a well-respected part of the culture at Montclair State. While this type of engagement is a source of local pride, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has recognized Montclair State as a Community Engaged Campus. (I.C3.7, I.C3.7a) One of the principal organizations on campus responsible for community engagement is the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) (IV.C1c.29). The Center hosts a wide array of programs and projects to foster community engagement and democratic practice. The programs involve educators, students and community partners in experiential learning modes like service-learning and curricular programs like the Emerging Leaders Learning Community (IV.C1c.30) and a civic engagement minor (IV.C1c.31) that is designed to enhance Leadership Development. This unit also engages students at the national level through service initiatives like the National Day of Service (IV.C1c.32), the Bonner Leader (IV.C1c.33) and EECO AmeriCorps program. (IV.C1c.34)

An example of a local program that is new to Montclair State is the Red Hawk Pantry Campaign. In April 2016, the SDCL established the Red Hawk Pantry to serve the needs of Montclair students who face food insecurity. This project grew out of the results of a survey conducted by students in an Organizational Psychology class. The results indicated that 10% of students expressed food insecurity on a daily basis, 15% on a weekly basis and 12% on a monthly basis. Armed with these data and information from the College and University Food Bank Alliance founded by Michigan State University and Oregon State University, the Pantry opened to assist current students not on meal plans. In addition to food, the pantry offers household and personal care products. The addition of these items was because students shared a need for such items. As seen in Table below the pantry has experienced growth and has garnered support from groups and various units across the campus. For example, participants in Greek Life have donated 2000 cans of food; Montclair State Parking services instituted a Cans for Citations program which raised 1339 items for the pantry. Various other departments and student organization have also been active contributors. University Advancement has spearheaded fundraising efforts and secured donations to provide household/personal care products as well as fresh food from a local supermarket chain. This

donation is sufficient to stock the pantry on a regular basis through December 2016. This is a grassroots effort that has engaged students and faculty who volunteer to work in the pantry, students, staff and faculty, who collect items and raise funds to support the pantry, and various administrative and academic units and student organizations who support the effort. (IV.C1c.36)

Table 13. *Participation in the Red Hawk Pantry Campaign.*

Dates the Pantry was open	Number of Participants
April 18	3
May 4	18
June 6	22
July 7	18
August 10	37

### **Support Systems**

As an institution that welcomes diversity in the student population, Montclair State realizes its responsibility to students by providing support systems that have unique roles but that work collaboratively to support student success.

*Disability Resource Center (DRC).* The mission of the DRC is to unite the community to provide students with disabilities with excellence and equity in education. Services and accommodations are provided to students in accordance with federal law. Students must self-identify to the Center, provide appropriate documentation and meet with a specialist to arrange an accommodation plan. The Center also serves as an advisory resource to faculty and staff assuring that accommodations are provided in a reasonable and appropriate manner. Consistent with growth that is occurring institution wide, the DRC has experienced increased demands to provide services to not only increases in the number of students but also increases in the complexity of student disabilities. For example, the number of students served by the DRC in 2011 – 2012 was 769 and 1083 students were served by the DRC in 2015-2016 (IV.C6.7)

*Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).* As a department of University Health and Counseling Services CAPS is designed to provide counseling and psychological services for students. CAPS goals are to support students so that they can make the most of their opportunities and allow them to develop to their fullest potential by learning new skills and resolving issues that may serve as roadblocks to success. In addition to the direct support of students, the personnel in CAPS support faculty and staff through various programs and have developed guides that enable faculty to recognize that some of their students may need the support from this entity. CAPS provides many services (IV.C1c.35), one of which is the Let's Talk program. This is a walk-in program that provides easy access to informal, confidential one-on-one consultations. The sessions occur Monday – Friday at various time and locations so that they are easily accessible. As noted above with the increases in the student population and the diversity of the population, the number of individuals seeking these services in FY16 increased 11% over the year before, with over 5,800 clinical contacts made via telephone triage, individual and group therapy appointments, and off-site but on-campus Let's Talk visits. With the opening of two additional sites there was a 37% increase in visits to Let's Talk (IV.C6.13)

*Collaborative Efforts Among all Student Support Services.* Because the need for support of students is often intertwined, student services has developed an online hub that allow students to access support depending on their particular need at the time (IV.C1.7). The MSU Cares webpage has links for support of students who may feel disconnected, alone, stressed, afraid, not feeling well or having trouble in class or just need to talk.

## Communication Mechanisms

Effective communication channels are essential to the success of all of the programs mentioned above and while each unit has effective communication with its constituents, it became clear to the University that an overall communication mechanism to engage and support students was needed. The position of Director of Student Communications was developed and is housed within SDCL. The individual in this position is charged with the development and implementation of the University's student communications program. The primary communication tool is the Red Hawk News. It is delivered to all members of the campus via campus listserv and includes information about cultural opportunities, activities that are planned both on and off campus, deadlines for add/drop, information about financial aid and any other information relevant to support the student experience. The ultimate goal is to provide a vehicle by which students can be informed about the University and which will foster a sense of community among all of its recipients.

For example, in order to improve the graduation rates, a focused and deliberate communication model was developed to reach Junior and Senior students using email, twitter, and other social media. This focused communication approach intended to improve graduation rates and may have contributed to the modest 1.8% change (IV.C6.14).

In 2014 the office of Student Communications worked with individuals from CAPS and DRC to develop an edition of RedHawk News with a single focus on Wellness. In 2015 70 Wellness editions of RedHawk News sent by email were delivered to students with an average open rate of 3,100 per message. As of beginning of October 2016, 60 Wellness focused editions of RedHawk News have been sent with an average open rate of 4,000 per message. These open rates are consistent with the industry average and reflect the effectiveness of these new communication channels and vehicles. (IV.C6.15)

## Summary Statement

Montclair State University satisfactorily meets the six criteria outlined in Standard IV and the two requirements for affiliation that map onto the standard: Specifically requirement #8: systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes and requirement #10: institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

This section of the Self-Study on Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience is highlighted by four key findings.

1. Montclair State University is true to its mission as an institution, it admits students who have demonstrated the potential for high achievement and deeply and broadly reflect the diverse population of New Jersey.
2. It is clear from the multitude of services available to students that the institution is poised and prepared to support students from beginning their academic pursuits until they graduate. In particular, the curricular and co-curricular programs cultivate the ability to think critically, act ethically, and develop informed citizen participants prepared to take their place in a democratic society. Because of the programming provided to support the student experience, students and graduates are effectively connected to successful tomorrows, connected to people and ideas and connected to place, all of which are goals of the current Strategic Plan.
3. The strengths and successes in Montclair State's support of the student experience rests with the highly qualified and professional staff who use the Strategic Plan and the University Mission to guide their work. While there have been many successful programs, the institution has been challenged to use the extensive data sets collected to improve programs in large part because of the archaic nature of the systems used. In addition, as in other parts of the institution, these

individuals and their programs have been forced to function in an environment where resources are scarce. The installation of the new enterprise systems will enable these professionals to become even more nimble in responding to student needs and with greater efficiency thanks to better access to reports that will measure the value-added to student success by the innovative programs created in SDCL, AA and SAS.

4. As the undergraduate population becomes larger and more diverse so too does the graduate population. While the number of graduate students has remained fairly constant, the type of graduate student is gradually changing from a cohort of part-time evening students to full-time day students. This change is expected to continue given the change in Carnegie Classification™ to a Research Doctoral 3 institution. In order to capitalize on the effects of the change in status the University will be challenged to develop more extensive support programs for graduate students. For example, while graduate students do have access to many of the support services available for undergraduate students, the needs of graduate students are different. Personnel who are familiar with the needs of undergraduates should extend their knowledge and skills to meet the unique needs of graduate students. Further, the university should develop a comprehensive program of graduate student support that enhances opportunities for research activity and addresses contemporary life challenges that increase stress and compromise students' emotional, physical and social well-being.
5. Following the suggestion from the 2012 PRR, the institution has examined and put in place mechanisms to attend to the relationships among recruitment, enrollment, advising, retention and timely graduation rates. While it is difficult to determine a direct cause and effect between changes in recruitment efforts, admission criteria and enrollment and advising processes and the impact on retention to timely graduation it is clear from the data that the changes made have resulted in improved retention and more timely graduation. With the full implementation of the new enterprise systems the more efficient reporting and self-service options will facilitate assessment of programs and to ensure continuous improvement.

### **Next Steps for Strategic Planning**

The success of these programs to support the student experience will be challenged as the institution continues to grow in size and diversity. Analysis in this section of the Self-Study suggests that the University consider the following steps:

1. While advising is handled in the undergraduate programs by advisors within SDC and faculty and professional advisors in the various majors, the resources used to support these efforts are stretched in terms of monetary and personnel capital. There is increased appreciation of how growing enrollments and other demands have placed added pressure on faculty to maintain the level of personal contact that effective advising requires. Better use of technologies and the professionalization of advising may provide more efficient ways to maintain robust advising processes at Montclair State University.
2. As noted above there are gaps between the perceived importance and satisfaction as related to advising and recruitment/financial aid. This suggests that there is work to be done to address these gaps. Further, while there were no significant changes in the three-year period regarding the importance of helping students set goals and improve some aspects of recruitment and financial aid processes, these are areas that will continue to need attention.
3. As with advising, support of students who face challenges in learning, physical abilities, emotional needs, and health needs will be required to meet the effects imposed by the ongoing growth in the number and diversity within the student body. This is an area that will continue to need ongoing assessment and attention.
4. Finally, while the data are regarding support of the student experience at Montclair State, the data have been gathered in systematic albeit isolated ways. This approach has had at least two effects; students are being surveyed by many different entities so they are beginning to experience survey fatigue and in some cases different entities collect similar data that are then not shared in an

effective way. A more coordinated and centralized approach to assessments, which include student surveys, should be considered so that the various processes do not bog students down and more effective use of data can be realized.

## Recommendations for Institutional Improvement

### Goals/Objectives: Track And Assess Initiatives in Academic Advising and the Interface with Admissions and Impact on Retention and Graduation

Oversight	Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)	Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes
Provost's Office Academic Affairs SDCL/SAS The Graduate School	Form Academic Advising Task Force (Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, representatives from faculty, College/School Dean's Offices, Graduate Council representatives and GPCs, admissions, CAST)	Year 1: Systematically document processes by which students move from admissions to advisement. Document activities across interrelated areas of student support. Assess resources and implementation of all models of academic advising already in existence and provide plan with short-term and long-term goals and recommendations
		Year 2: Begin implementation of short-term goals regarding advising and continue planning for long-term goals
		Year 3: Assess progress with regard to advising, continue to streamline the transition from admissions to advising, and develop metrics of the impact on retention and graduation.

### Goals/Objectives: Coordinate Campus-Wide Student Surveys

Oversight	Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)	Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes
OIR Academic Affairs SDCL	Working Group (representatives from SDCL, College/School Dean's Offices, department Chairs, SGA)	Year 1: Document current survey practices on campus across units, establish the needs and survey instruments, and create a calendar of survey activities. Develop a process through which survey needs can be continuously evaluated and adjusted
	Support from OIT	Year 2: Begin implementation of the survey calendar, develop a communication plan to inform stakeholders, and establish protocols for access to survey findings and reports

**Goals/Objectives: Coordinate Campus-Wide Student Surveys**

<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)</b>	<b>Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes</b>
		Year 3: Continue to refine calendar and the tools used locally, review implementation processes, and ongoing use of the data for institutional improvements

# STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT



## STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

### Standard Statement

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

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

Montclair State University meets the five criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard V. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the three Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard V: Specifically requirement #8: The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs; requirement #9: All student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment; and requirement #10: Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

The institution continues to evolve its assessment systems, processes, and reporting tools to enable data-driven decision-making for continuous institutional improvement in response to a suggestion from the 2012 PRR.

Evidence that demonstrates that Montclair State meets Standard V and the related Requirements of Affiliation can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap through active links in the table presented below.

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
<u>V.C1</u>	Clearly stated educational goal at the institution and degree/program levels which are interrelated with one another and with the institution's mission	✓
<u>V.C2</u>	Organized and systematic assessments conducted by appropriate personnel in order to	
<u>V.C2a</u>	Define meaningful curricular goals with defensible standards for evaluation	✓
<u>V.C2b</u>	Articulate the preparation of students for successful careers, meaningful lives.	✓
<u>V.C2c</u>	Support and sustain assessment of student achievement and communicate results to stakeholders	✓
<u>V.C3</u>	Consideration and use of assessment results for the improvement of educational effectiveness by some combination of...	
<u>V.C3a</u>	Assisting students in improving their learning	✓
<u>V.C3b</u>	Improving pedagogy and curriculum	✓
<u>V.C3c</u>	Review and revision of academic programs and support services	✓
<u>V.C3d</u>	Offering a range of professional development	✓
<u>V.C3e</u>	Planning and budgeting for academic programs and services	✓
<u>V.C3f</u>	of informing appropriate constituents about the institution and its programs	✓
<u>V.C3g</u>	Improving key indicators of student success	✓

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
<u>V.C3h</u>	Implementing other processes and procedures to improve educational programs and services	✓
<u>V.C4</u>	Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of assessment of services delivered by third-party providers	✓
<u>V.C5</u>	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment processes for improvement of educational effectiveness	✓

The remainder of the section provides analysis of key issues concerning support of the assessment of educational effectiveness that have been identified as priorities at Montclair State University. The section addresses explicitly all five of Montclair State's goals: Connecting students with a successful tomorrow, connecting people and ideas, connecting to place, connecting globally, and meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

### **Introduction – Restatement of the standard that is specific to Montclair State University**

Success in educational effectiveness is a shared responsibility among individuals who teach in the classrooms, design and deliver the student learning experience (see Standard III), support the student experience (see Standard IV) and provide the infrastructure within which students learn and university personnel work (see Standard VI).

Montclair State University has a well-developed plan with robust implementation to assess educational effectiveness (V.C2c.7). An overall assessment of educational effectiveness relies on evaluations of educational goals as related to programs of study and degree level as well as assessment of the administrative units that support the educational goals. At Montclair State assessment of educational goals are guided by the mission to provide “programs characterized by academic rigor and currency in the development of knowledge and its applications.” These assessment processes occur at a very granular level during instructional activities and at the broader course, program, degree or certificate levels. Specifically, the university uses a comprehensive approach in which assessment of data related to student learning outcomes (SLO) are provided by faculty or assessment liaisons and the data are tracked in an assessment database. In addition to these reporting mechanisms, an annual department and school/college level impact report, a report from a Five-Year External Review Committee (the FERC) and where appropriate external specialized accreditor reports are reviewed to determine success and challenges at the programmatic level. An organizational chart for the assessment of learning captures the interlocked layers of activity at Montclair State University (V.C2c.8).

Indeed, success in meeting the mission requires that administrative units function at the highest levels possible and so are also engaged in assessment processes that allow the institution as a whole to provide an environment for students that is consistent with the strategic plan. Specifically, all of the programs of assessment are tied to the strategic plan and are designed to insure that students can be connected to successful tomorrows, connect with people and ideas and connect to place and so that the institution can respond to the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

All assessment activities are tracked in databases designed for specific purposes (e.g., the SLO assessment database for academic program activities and TracDat™ for administrative unit activities). The Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE) serves not only as a steering committee for this report but also serves as a standing University-wide committee to ensure that assessment serves to guide the effectiveness of Montclair State across the institution.

## Analysis of Key Issues Related to Meeting the Standard and Criteria

### Assessment of Educational Effectiveness at The Program and Department Level

Guided by best practices in educational effectiveness, Montclair State University has developed a comprehensive plan of assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) for programs of study (minors and majors), which lead to degrees and certificates and for general education - the intellectual heart of the university (V.C1.13). Assessment is organized with clearly stated educational goals that are thoughtfully planned by faculty with relevant educational experience in their disciplines. A systematic assessment of SLOs by faculty and staff ensures that meaningful curricular goals are clearly articulated in order to connect students to a successful tomorrow.

Assessment of educational effectiveness has been a successful process beginning with the development and implementation of a plan to centralize all appraisals of effectiveness. The Provost and Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Assessment have deployed a systematic plan to facilitate ongoing implementation of assessment (V.C3d.1) the results of which have been captured in the SLO database. As of January 2017, 96% have submitted their assessment plans with measurable goals and quantitative rubrics/ assessment tools (V.C1.15). An essential part of successful assessment is the ability to take a longer, broader view of educational effectiveness. The Five-Year External Review Committee (FERC), which is an extension of the previous long-standing Visiting Committee process, serves this role (V.C5.3, V.C5.4, V.C5.5).

All academic departments engage in regular assessment activity and it is clear from their annual assessment plans, impact reports, and ongoing discussions of data and results, and use of those results for continuous quality improvement that assessment is an important component of academic departments' activities (V.C1.1; V.C1.2; V.C2c.6; V.C3a.1; V.C5.9). Review and analysis of assessment plans in the University assessment database indicate that all 107 of undergraduate degree granting programs and 62 degree granting graduate programs have an active assessment plan and submit an annual impact report (V.C5.10; V.C3a.1). In addition to university wide assessment, some programs, departments and schools are engaged in routine assessment in accordance with the requirements of their specialized external accreditors (V.C5.14). Further, as of 2012-2013 all new program proposals require a detailed description of the assessment protocols will be used to determine their effectiveness of the program (V.C3b.8; V.C3b.9).

In order to appreciate the success of Montclair State's assessment efforts consider the following examples. The examples in Table 15 are provided as representative of the outcomes of the collective assessment processes.

Table 14. *Follow-up and Change Actions as a Result of Assessment.*

College/School	Change Actions
<b>CART</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Curricular revisions (<i>all departments</i>)</li><li>▪ Development of new graduate programs (<i>Theatre &amp; Dance</i>)</li><li>▪ Increase in undergraduate (<i>Theatre &amp; Dance</i>), graduate and international enrollments (<i>The Cali School of Music</i>)</li></ul>
<b>CHSS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ New course offerings (<i>Department of Linguistics, Classics and General Humanities, English, Religion, Anthropology</i>)</li><li>▪ Revisions to the syllabi of all courses involved in assessment (<i>Department of Linguistics, Spanish/Italian, Religion</i>) and changes in assessment tools, courses (<i>History, Religion</i>)</li><li>▪ Launching new programs (<i>Modern Languages &amp; Literature, Political Science and Law, McCormick Center for Child Advocacy and Policy, English, Psychology</i>)</li><li>▪ Curricular revisions (<i>English, Religion, Anthropology</i>)</li><li>▪ New faculty hires</li></ul>

College/School	Change Actions
<b>CEHS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launching new programs (<i>Counseling &amp; Educational Leadership, Educational Foundations, Public Health</i>)</li> <li>▪ Curricular revisions (<i>Health &amp; Nutrition Sciences, Secondary &amp; Special Education</i>)</li> <li>▪ Admission suspension to two programs due to low enrollment and changing requirements (<i>Secondary &amp; Special Education</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>CSAM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New faculty and administrative hires (<i>Mathematical Sciences, Biology and Molecular Biology, Computer Science</i>)</li> <li>▪ Curricular revisions (<i>Biology and Molecular Biology, Department of Earth and Environmental Studies &amp; Doctoral Program in Environmental Management</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>FSBUS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launching new programs (<i>Information Management and Business Analytics, Accounting Law &amp; Taxation, Online MBA</i>)</li> <li>▪ Revisions (<i>Economics, Finance &amp; Real Estate</i>)</li> <li>▪ New course offerings (<i>Marketing</i>)</li> </ul>

### **An Extended Example of Assessment from the College of the Arts**

The results of assessment of educational effectiveness in the College of the Arts (CART) provide examples of the impact of assessment at the curricular, program and department or school levels. CART is committed to function as a professional school of arts and communication in a liberal arts environment. The College has 26 undergraduate major programs, 8 graduate programs, 6 certificates/diplomas, and 7 minors. The programs are housed in 4 academic units—School of Communication and Media, John J. Cali School of Music, Department of Art and Design, and Department of Theatre and Dance. There are 28 concentrations within the major undergraduate programs and 10 concentrations within the graduate programs. CART units have focused on assessment for undergraduate and graduate programs as well as certificates and minors, responsive to University and College goals.

During academic year 2014-2015 there were 31 curricular actions taken in all CART units to refine and improve academic program offerings. In AY 2014-2015 there were 19 altered, 7 new, and 5 suspended or terminated programs in CART's four academic units. Most curricular actions were tied to the University goal, "Connecting Students with a Successful Tomorrow," especially regarding the objective "Flexibility and Imagination in Curricular Design," with an emphasis on broadening options and interdisciplinarity. The least number of curricular actions took place in Art & Design, since their faculty Taskforce was charged by the Dean to examine the unit's entire curriculum for major restructuring in the coming year.

Each of the new programs will need assessment plans and rubrics. Programs with low enrollment or inadequate program design were suspended or terminated. In order to broaden CART's global reach among new programs, two were developed to respond to the goal, "Connecting to Place." These were the international post-baccalaureate certificate programs in Art & Design and in Music designed in partnership with East China Normal University, which may test the viability of similar collaborative programs in other arts and communication disciplines.

Periodic data collection and review of action plans is ongoing for all programs. Especially in light of the many program alterations, Assessment Liaisons have been charged with ensuring that the correct data is being collected and the correct tools/measures are being applied to best examine issues and suggest desired outcomes. Written analysis of assessment data supports rationales for curricular action; however, such analysis is already required in the Annual Impact Reports apart from drafting curricular programs. Recommendations from five-year external reviews and accreditation visits are also used to help assess curricular needs.

Assessments have generally suggested need for increased course options or free electives to gain greater flexibility for student aspirants and more business or operational course content and fieldwork to best prepare students for careers. Most programs and concentrations are career focused, e.g., Music

Performance, BFA in Theatre (Acting), to teacher preparation K-12, teacher education concentrations are offered in three academic units—Music Education, Dance Education, and [Visual] Art Education. In order to ensure that students have the necessary breadth of knowledge in their respective fields, academic units have strived to provide a common core of courses across their programs. (V.C1.2 and V.C1.3). Additional assessment information from the Feliciano School of Business and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is available (V.C3a.3).

### **Five-Year External Review Process (FERC)**

In addition, there are other processes in place, key among them the Five-Year External Reviews (FERCs) and external discipline accreditations that ensure the ongoing and broader review of the rigor and quality of academic programs and departments/schools.

Table 15. *Five-Year External Reviews (FERC) and External Accreditations.*

<b>College/ School</b>	<b># of Degree Granting Academic programs</b>	<b># of Departments with FERC Review AYs 2012-2016</b>	<b># of Degree Granting Programs with External Accreditations</b>
<b>CART</b>	Undergraduate (UG) 26 Graduate (G) 8	3 out of 4	NASD (Theatre and Dance) – 2 NASM (Cali School of Music) – 9 NAST (Theatre and Dance) – 4 NASAD (Art and Design) – 10
<b>CHSS</b>	UG 37 G 16	9 out of 14	ABA (Justice Studies) – 2 ASHA (Communication Sciences and Disorders) – 2
<b>CEHS</b>	UG 14 G 25	5 out of 8	ACEND (Health and Nutrition Sciences) – 2 CAATE (Exercise Science and Physical Education) – 1 CACREP (Counseling and Educational Leadership) – 2 CAEP(V.C3g.5) (All teacher education programs) – 32 CEPH (Health and Nutrition Sciences) – 2
<b>CSAM</b>	UG 20 G 11	2 out of 6	ABET (Computer Science) – 2 CAEP (All teacher education programs) – 11
<b>SBUS</b>	UG 9 G 6	5 out of 5	AACSB – 15

*Five-year external review committee:* FERCs are integral to the ongoing assessment process of educational effectiveness at Montclair State University. A recent example involves the department of Linguistics in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, conducted in 2015-2016 (V.C5.6, V.C5.7, V.C5.8, V.C5.10, V.C5.11, V.C5.12). The visiting team's review indicated particular strengths of the department and its programs, including a collegial and competent faculty, the Graduate Certificate Program in computational linguistics, and a thriving American Sign Language program. The review also highlighted certain areas for improvement, specifically examine how to realign curriculum across programs to reflect current faculty expertise and consider new hires in key areas. Since the team visit in spring 2015, the department has moved aggressively forward with some of the recommendations adding a great variety of courses that are more aligned with faculty expertise and meet current job market demands and has hired two new faculty members who created a Minor in American Sign Language Studies, which has been approved at the University level and will be implemented in spring 2017. Further, the department has developed and submitted for review two new concentrations at the B.A. level: 1) a new concentration in ASL interpreting; and 2) a new concentration in Language Technologies that are now moving through the University's curriculum process.

*External Accreditations:* Many programs at Montclair carry external accreditations, with annual or periodic reviews and required updates (see Table above for summary data for external reviews AYs12-15). For instance, the AY11-12 annual report for the Speech and Language Pathology Master's program submitted to the Council on Academic Accreditation on Audiology and Speech Language Pathology jumpstarted a curriculum revision process in order to align the program to changes in the professional scope of practice. The faculty revised the curriculum during AY13-14 (V.C3c.9) and the full

implementation of the revised program will complete this academic year. Similarly, the last review of the academic programs in the department of Art and Design conducted by National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) in 2008 identified a strong need for curricular revision. The Dean of the College of the Arts and faculty in Art and Design have engaged in a rigorous review of all curriculum, with the assistance of a professional consultant, in order to update and revitalize programs in this area. The revised curricula are now entering the final stages of review at the University (V.C3c.10). The ongoing scanning of disciplinary and environmental changes in professional demands continues to guide program development at the University.

### **The Evolution of GenEd Assessment**

The PRR of 2012 described the GenEd Program's assessment efforts with regards to its Program-level Learning Goals: data from the Communication goal was (and is) being generated through program/course-level direct assessments in the First Year Writing Program, the public speaking (CMST 101) requirement of the GenEd. Data regarding students' performance as Critical Thinkers was (and is) being generated from standardized tests on samples of first-year and graduating-senior populations, currently using the CLA+ instrument. Since the PRR of 2012, the Committee has identified several challenges with implementing effective and useful direct assessment of the other two Learning Goals: unlike the Communication goal, there does not exist a conveniently small and centralized set of courses whose primary objective is to support those goals. A CLA+ analogue for the other 2 goals is also not available, given the diversity of disciplines in which GenEd courses pursue those two Goals. (A universal, discipline-agnostic test of student ability to integrate & apply academic content seems self-contradictory.) This very first step of building a sustainable assessment plan revealed key issues to the Committee: in trying to develop systematic assessment tools (for indirect and direct assessment) the current structure of the Program (in terms of category descriptions and requirements) was vague. The diversity and size of the Program (200+ courses, thousands of sections) also required some careful thought about details of deployment, so that we could feasibly require direct assessment, collect data, and have data in aggregate form(s) to make broad conclusions about student performance across the Program and develop useful actions to address identified issues. These realizations led to a thorough self-study and development of a recertification program that addresses assessment, as well as many other structural, administrative and curricular issues in a unified process.

### **Assessing the GenEd for Constructive Evolution**

The GenEd program has had fairly well-developed curricular goals, as represented by its Learning Goals and Category descriptions, but has only very recently engaged in a comprehensive assessment program directly assessing students' progress as well as indirect assessment of courses through fit of course learning objectives to GenEd category descriptions. Before this newly-instituted assessment regime, elements of the GenEd - Math, New Student Seminar, First Year Writing (FYW) and Communication; have conducted assessments on their relatively centrally-administered portions of the GenEd, with results informing their development. The GenEd Committee is also engaged in direct assessment using representative sampling of students, most recently in 2013-14 with the CLA+ (and again in 2016-17.) This section will briefly describe each of these campus- and program-level assessments, and then discuss the more GenEd specific course-level assessments and their outcomes.

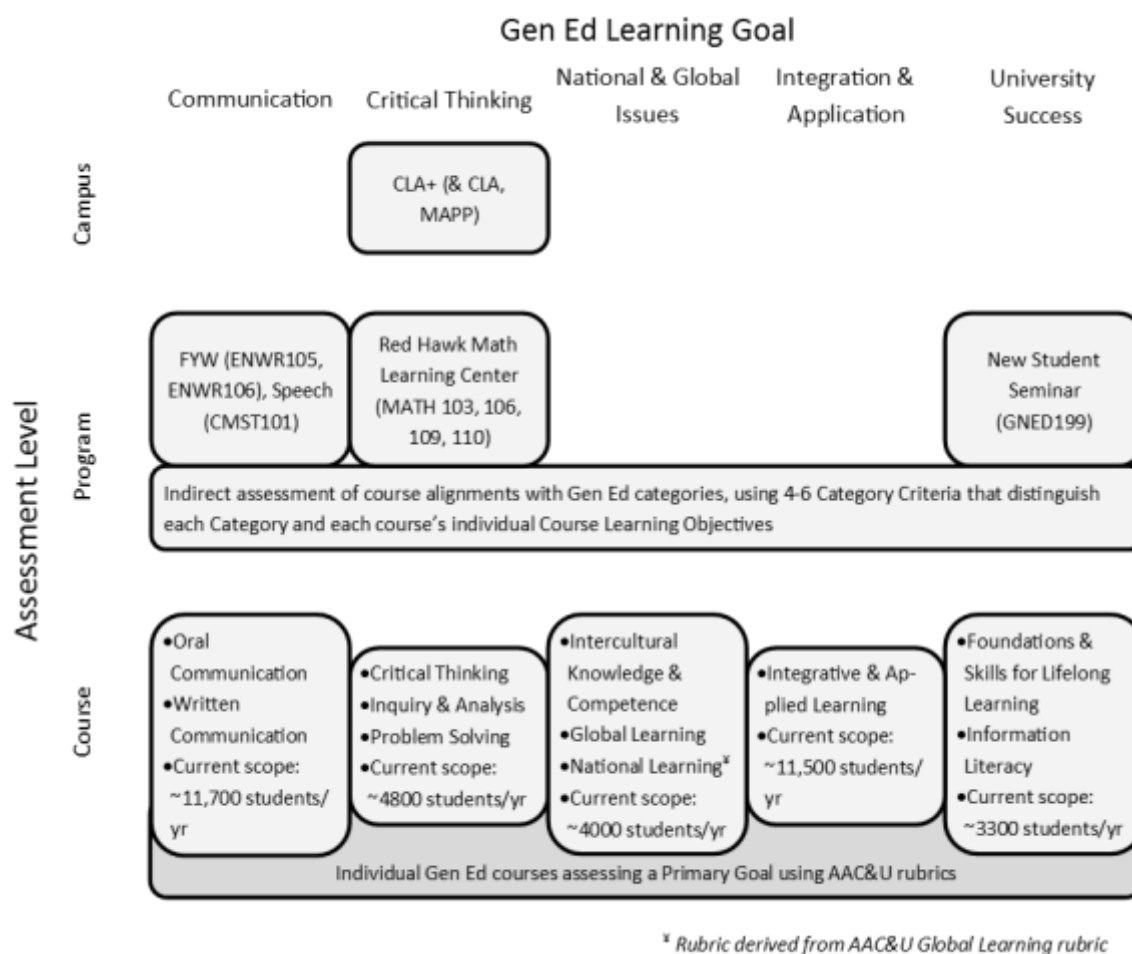


Figure 8. GenEd Learning Goal and Assessment Level.

### Campus-level Assessment of GenEd Goals

The office of Institutional Research has coordinated assessment of the GenEd Program using MAPP (2008-9), CLA (2010-11) and CLA+ (2013-14), with another scheduled deployment (of CLA+) in 2016-17. Results Compare Montclair State University students to peer institutions and (more recently) measure first-year to senior gains in critical thinking and argumentation abilities (aligned with the GenEd's Critical Thinking Learning Goal), which reveal consistently high value-added performance with a strength in CLA/CLA+ 'performance task' (constructed-response) scores.(V.C2a.7) One unanticipated finding of the most recent assessment was the academic diversity of our students as compared to peer institutions; the GenEd Committee is discussing ways to support faculty teaching in light of this finding.(V.C2a.8)

### Program-level Assessment of GenEd Goals

*New Student Seminar:* The new student seminar was added to the GenEd program in 2002 and was linked directly to a fifth learning goal of the program, University Success, in 2012. This program offered 131 sections in AY 2016-2017 (125 of them in fall semester), serving a total of 2,773 of students. The faculty profile for the year comprised 7 faculty members, 66 adjunct instructors, and 55 staff members.

The data presented in the graph below indicate that some of the key learning objectives of the new student seminar are not realized through the curriculum, including helping students develop necessary skills for University success, informing students about various campus resources, policies and procedures, and

connecting them to campus communities. The data confirm a long-standing impression about the course and are prompting further review, an assessment of the course's standing within the broader GenEd curriculum, and a thorough revision of the course and its outcomes.

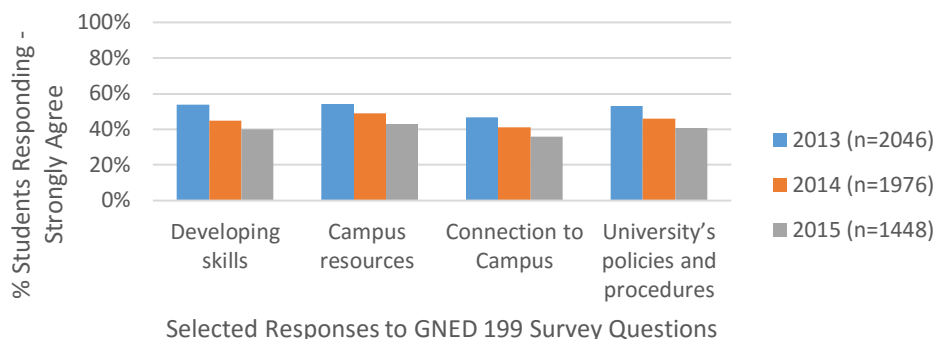


Figure 9. Selected results from the New Student Seminar GNED 199.

*The First-Year Writing Program (FYW):* The FYW program is the largest at the University, provides general education writing instruction to the undergraduate population and employs a faculty of about 80-85 full and part-time instructors each semester. The program offered 403 sections in AY15-16 and served 7,592 students. Effective January 2017, the program split from the English department and was constituted as a new department, the Department of Writing Studies (WRIT).

The FYW program's indirect assessments include routine faculty class observations, student evaluations, program grade data reports by semester, and period surveys of faculty opinion on topics related to program materials (i.e. handbooks, textbooks) and their own classroom experiences (new teaching approaches, professional development needs, assessment of students' strengths and weaknesses outside of grade performance).

The student placement process continues to be reviewed and refined (a special consultant was contracted AY2014-2015) to assure students are placed in the most effective classes/workshops. For direct assessment, all courses end with students' submission of cumulative portfolios to demonstrate improvement over time. The central focus of each course is academic argument and analytical writing, though the content can vary by course number and as per instructor discretion. Students produce three essays in WRIT 100 and four essays in WRIT 105 and 106, respectively; all essays in each course undergo a three-draft process that includes peer and instructor feedback (V.C2a.12).

The program tracks the performance of EOF (Educational Opportunity Fund) students, identifies and targets late-stage undergraduates in first-year writing (for example, offering sections of first-year writing exclusively for juniors/seniors) to move these students more effectively through the program, and annually conducts performance assessments in relation to courses (WRIT 100, for example, the lowest level course). WRIT 100 has now been converted to a tutorial workshop format to accompany the weakest writers in WRIT 105.

Course design and delivery initiatives are also carefully implemented and tracked to assess effectiveness and enhanced student learning. For example, the Studio Pilot (AY14-AY16), investigated an alternative delivery model for FYW, and tested out the possibility of improved effectiveness of a technologically-enhanced, individualized and potentially accelerated approach to FYW instruction. Assessment data indicate that this alternative is not a good *program-wide replacement* for the traditional classroom model of FYW instruction for the general student population. Specifically, findings revealed that the FYW Studio Pilot is not more efficient and effective as a program delivery mode and that student retention was a concern across the period of the pilot, as WD, D and F ratings were higher in the Studio

than in the rest of the program. The pilot program resulted in specific and valuable recommendations for future consideration (V.C2a.12).

*The Public Speaking Program:* The program's assessment plan has two cycles: the first directly assesses student learning (conducted in fall 2016) and the second indirectly measures student improvement and satisfaction through a survey (last conducted spring 2015).

*Direct assessment measures.* An assessment of student performance in the course CMST101, Fundamentals of Speech was conducted in fall 2016. There were 68 sections with a total of 1,720 students enrolled in the course. 1,424 (83%) students were evaluated by instructors.

Using the AACU Oral Communication VALUE Rubric instructors evaluated students' presentation of a persuasive speech. This assignment requires students to use argumentative claims and compelling research to persuade an audience. Students were assessed in the areas of organization, language use, delivery, supporting material, and central message. The students were awarded a score of 0-4 for each assessment category. The fall 2016 assessment was compiled by instructors completing paper copies of the assessments and the data was computed by a School of Communication and Media administrator.

The data below represents 83% (1,720 students total; 1424 students assessed) of the students enrolled in CMST101 in the fall of 2015. Findings indicate that the majority of students are delivering presentations that demonstrate a comprehension of class material and mastery of course objectives. Some highlights include 92% of students delivered compelling and memorable central messages; 60% receiving a score of 4 and 32% receiving a score of 3. Other areas of high performance include the use of an appropriate and clear organizational pattern (45.9% with a score of 4 and 40% with a score of 3), as well as effective, impactful language choices (51.9% with a score of 4 and 43.9% with a score of 3).

Table 16. *Outcomes of assessment results for CMST 101.*

Category	Score of 4	Score of 3	Score of 2	Score of 1
Organization	653 45.9%	583 40.9%	162 11.4%	26 1.8%
Language	740 51.9%	625 43.9%	53 3.8%	6 .4%
Delivery	457 32%	720 50.6%	225 15.9%	22 1.5%
Supporting Material	637 44.7%	562 39.5%	190 13.4%	35 2.4%
Central Message	853 60%	456 32%	92 6.4%	23 1.6%

Two areas of improvement were revealed by the assessment. Student delivery is an area that faculty will work diligently towards improving. While roughly 82% of students received a score of 3 or 4 in this area, close to 18% of students scored a 1 or 2 in this area. Another area of improvement is the use of supporting material with roughly 19% of students earning a score of 2 or 1 in this category. The need to strengthen instruction in these areas will be addressed at the fall 2016 annual instructor workshop. Additionally, the Program has recently opened the Public Speaking Resource Center (V.C2a.16) and developed a webpage in conjunction with Montclair State Library to aid in research. These resources will provide instructors additional support to reinforce these areas.

*Indirect assessment measures.* In the case of public speaking, where anxiety and confidence are especially relevant, self-reports are valuable indirect data. Of the 130+ sections offered each year, 40 were anonymously surveyed (with an 85% response rate, n=880) about their experiences and development.

The majority of students report that their public speaking skills and confidence in themselves as public speakers increased tremendously. For example, the chart below indicates that 36% reported low public speaking competence before taking the course. Only 1% reported similar results upon the completion of the course (V.C2a.14). Correspondingly, whereas only 15% of the students reported high public speaking competence before taking the course, that number increased to 54% upon completion of the course.

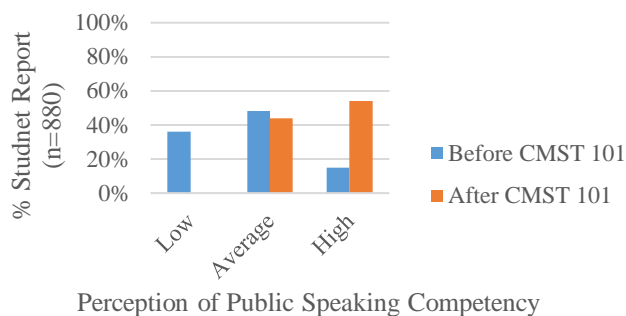


Figure 10. The impact of CMST 101 on student perception of public speaking competency.

Also, as the graph below right summarizes, 10% of the students reported low anxiety when speaking in public before taking the course, but that rose to 32% reporting low anxiety after the completion of the course.

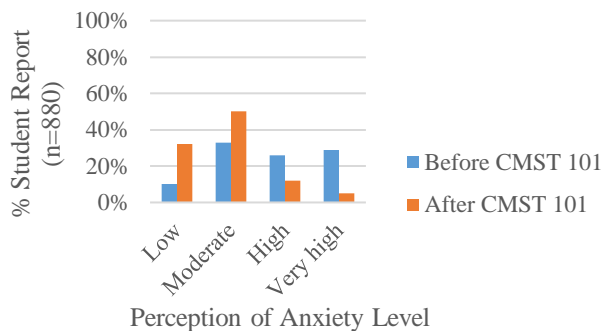


Figure 11. The impact of CMST 101 on student perception of anxiety level.

The survey also confirmed that recent advising efforts are having their intended effect. 64% of the students were completing the course during their freshman year, with only 17% of students were completing the course during their junior and senior years of study, down from 30% in spring 2012.

*The Red Hawk Math Center and Math Literacy:* The Red Hawk Math Learning Center opened in spring 2012 and has been fully operational since fall 2012. It offers eight classes ranging from Basic Algebra through Bio-Statistics. The Center uses the Emporium model which utilizes technology (prerecorded mini-lectures, online textbook, homework assignments, quizzes and tests), mandatory lab attendance with on-demand tutorial support, weekly face to face recitation sessions and supplementary tutoring. In the spring of 2016, the Center completed an extensive formal assessment that evaluated student success rates during the fall semesters from 2011 (the year before the center opened, traditional classroom) through 2015. In addition, assessment tracked the 2012, 2013 and 2014 student cohorts' success in follow-on math classes (after taking a class in the RHMLC) compared to students who placed directly into the advanced classes.

Some key findings from assessment cycles indicate that 1) for most classes, pass rates using the emporium model were stable and comparable to the traditional classrooms. An exception is the basic algebra class which saw a reduction in 2015; this drop may have been related to changing admissions

standards; 2) generally, students who took advanced math classes following a RHMLC class did not do as well as the students that placed directly into the advanced classes. This gap varied greatly. The largest gap was for basic algebra to intermediate algebra while gaps for other classes were smaller (i.e. basic algebra to statistics and intermediate algebra to pre-calculus) or nonexistent (basic algebra to the development of mathematics); 3) African-American students have less success on average.

In addition to the formal assessment, the director observed recitation sessions and collected input from the math advisory committee (math professors), recitation leaders, tutors and students. Based on the input, the RHMLC leadership team (the director and four instructors) has made several improvements to the center, among them more discussion and group work in the recitation sessions, increased the recitation and tutor training hours to improve support of a diverse student body, and increased and improved communication to students and staff. In future assessments, the Center aims to track the success of these added efforts (V.C2a.17).

The Center's leadership and department faculty are working now to address these issues. They are revisiting curricula in an effort to better align pre-calculus course content with subsequent calculus courses. They also noted the need to develop complementary programs that set high expectations and effective pathways for success for all students. They also intend to develop this study further, to help predict future success in STEM majors, early-intervention strategies, and retention strategies.

*Direct GenEd assessment across all courses:* The newer and more ambitious direct assessment initiated by the GenEd Committee in academic year 2016-2017 requires that every course offering within the GenEd directly measure some aspect of every student's progress towards the GenEd's Learning Goals. Each course is able to choose which Goal to assess, and (within some constraints) a suitable measure and activity to assess. (V.C2a.10) (The Committee is suggesting faculty select appropriate rows from a variety of AAC&U LEAP VALUE rubrics as their assessment tools, to facilitate aggregation of data across the GenEd.) As courses are recertified by the Committee, they must commit to this program of direct assessment, as well as indirect assessment of the course's role and contributions to the Vision of the Program. (V.C2a.9) (V.C2a.11) Initial pilot of the regime confirmed its feasibility and phase-in is in process (anticipated completion 2017-18) (V.C2a.15); the Committee expects that data will allow us to focus on faculty development, advocate for resources, and refine assessment techniques to more precisely interrogate suggestive data.

As results from the assessments are produced, the Committee will be actively seeking feedback from faculty on the ease and effectiveness of assessments, facilitating adjustments and reflection on our assessment process. One main aim is to attempt to find widely acceptable assessment measures: either a subset of the current AAC&U LEAP VALUE rubric rows, or other as-yet unidentified replacements. Results and feedback will also influence the evolution of our Learning Goals and the structure of the Program and its Categories, in the longer term.

### **Assessment of Administrative Divisions**

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has primary responsibility for designing systems, collecting data, and reporting outcomes of Institutional Effectiveness Assessment particularly as it relates to the goals and objectives within the University's Strategic Plan. OIR realizes its responsibility by providing expertise in evaluation methods, data management and analysis and facility in reporting findings. While OIR supports assessment of academic units it is directly responsible for assessment of seven administrative divisions: University Advancement, Budget and Planning, Facilities, Finance and Treasury, Human Resources, Information Technology and Student Development and Campus Life. Specific responsibilities of the ORI are available in the (V.C1.8.)

In 2012, OIR developed processes and procedures to assure successful implementation of the assessment of the administrative divisions. The plan, which was approved by the Community on University Effectiveness (CUE), is comprehensive and has multiple layers to facilitate effective assessment (V.C1.8.) Professionals in OIR maintain detailed mapping of activities tied to Strategic Plan objectives, external

measures (e.g., CAS standards for Student Affairs units) and other goals and objectives developed by each unit to ensure that each unit serves the institution in a thoughtful and reasoned manner. (V.C1.14). These data are maintained in TracDat™, the University's assessment database, which houses all planning unit goals, objectives, assessment plans and methods, results, and follow-up actions in one central place. For a summary of this activity to date see Activity timeline table (V.C2c.7).

Impressive gains have been realized since the introduction of formal assessment procedures within the administrative divisions. Administrative divisions implement comprehensive assessment of the University's Strategic Plan by focusing on specific objectives that are relevant to their work (V.C1.8). Under the direction of the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE), all seven non-instructional units are engaged in full-cycle assessment from planning, data collection, analysis, discussion and use of results. The analysis of the results of the gains realized will be presented in greater detail in the discussion of Montclair State's meeting the criteria of Standard VI.

In addition to functioning as a repository of assessment goals and objectives and the results of assessment, OIR also serves to facilitate outcomes assessment at many other levels. The Office has been nimble, resourceful and effective in using survey research to gather, interpret and share findings from survey research. Historically, both local instruments and national instruments have been used to collect information about students, faculty and staff perceptions concerning various aspects of the University's activities. Data obtained from these surveys complement assessment results. When taken together, the assessment data and the survey results provide the institution with richer perspectives that are used to guide decision-making. The results of these surveys are shared with the campus community in the form of reports, which include executive summaries, detailed reports and peer comparison reports for the interested stakeholders.

#### **Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE): The nexus of assessment of effectiveness for continuous quality improvement and sustainability**

Montclair State University is committed to a full-cycle of assessment starting with clearly stated educational goals at various levels right from the course/degree/program level up to the institutional level. Meaningful and clearly articulated educational and learning goals provide the basis for assessment, which must be compatible with the school or college goals, and ultimately with the Montclair State's mission and strategic plan objectives. To assure this compatibility each College/School/Department/Program must have adequately and clearly defined their goals (V.C1.9, V.C1.1, V.C1.2, V.C1.3).

In fall 2010, a standing committee, the Committee on University Effectiveness (CUE), was formed by the Provost with representation of each unit and division on campus. The Committee 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. For more information on the CUE's work please see (V.C5.2)

The University continues to strengthen its efforts in acquiring and using assessment results for continuous quality improvement that should sustain the University as it faces challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow (Strategic Plan Goal 5). Under the guidance of the CUE, it has already developed significant strength in many areas of institutional effectiveness, including student learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness assessment as is evident in examples provided above.

While progress in assessment of educational effectiveness has been laudatory, it is particularly noteworthy, that despite the massive changeover of software systems that are used to support the institution's infrastructure (i.e., Banner™, DegreeWorks™, PeopleSoft™ for financial management, and Workday™) assessment processes continue. While the faculty, staff and administration look forward to the improvements that will be realized by the implementation of these new systems, the foundational work in assessment has created a library of guidebooks, templates, online tutorials, databases and

webpages ([V.C2c.1](#), [V.C2c.2](#), [V.C2c.3](#), [V.C2c.4](#), [V.C2c.5](#)) that position the institution to achieve sustainable future success in its assessment efforts across all divisions and units.

As noted earlier, Montclair State University has well-developed assessment processes ([V.C1.13](#); [V.C2c.7](#)). In the 2012 Periodic Review Report, Montclair State University was identified to have shown enthusiastic commitment to not only develop, but also sustain ([V.C3d.1](#)) and continuously review and improve its assessment process ([V.C5.2](#), [V.C5.3](#), [V.C5.5](#); [V.C2c.6](#)). All the efforts related to assessment have had a single focus: to improve student learning outcomes and strengthen the structures that support student learning and achievement. With these approaches to assessments students are provided with opportunities to realize their educational goals, which are consistent with Montclair State's mission and the role the institution serves to connect students to a successful tomorrow. In addition, the effectiveness of the assessment protocols ensures that the institution will be able to address the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

### Summary Statement

Montclair State University meets the terms of Standard V Educational Effectiveness Assessment with regard to all its criteria. Montclair State University also meets three of the Middle States Commission's Requirements of Affiliation that relate to assessment as follows: requirement #8 on systematic evaluation of all programs; #9 on rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement; and #10 on institutional planning that integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement. In other words, Montclair State University adheres to an evidence-based process in its efforts to assess its effectiveness as an educational institution.

The institution continues to evolve its assessment systems, processes, and reporting tools to enable data-driven decision-making for continuous institutional improvement in response to a suggestion from the 2012 PRR.

As a result of this Self-Study it is clear that assessment at Montclair State University continues to grow and flourish in both the academic and administrative divisions and serves as the bedrock for future growth. This section of the Self-Study on Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment by three key findings.

1. The University's Strategic Plan provides five overall goals and specific objectives which have been used to guide the institution as it meets the demands of a growing and changing demographic in terms of students, staff, administration and faculty who work together to ensure student success. The institution has mapped the activities in which it engages to concrete and measureable outcomes that allow an assessment of institutional effectiveness in meeting its mission. Further, the analysis demonstrates that Montclair State University is committed to the processes and protocols of assessment to ensure continuous quality improvement at every level.
2. The University has created and developed a centralized, uniform framework within which individual academic programs/departments plan and establish goals and objectives, and analyze results to assess performance and then use the results to inform decision-making. Hence assessment has become routine, systematic and uniform, producing data on student learning that is subsequently used for further improvement. Every academic program has a detailed mapping ([V.C1.1](#)) of the competencies that are developed in specific courses and how the courses subsequently contribute to the overall program. The entire mapping process is a culmination of faculty planning, discussions and reflection. These broad conversations and planning process have provided insight into our student learning, which include defining meaningful curricular goals with appropriate standards for evaluating whether students are achieving those goals. Also apparent in the assessment plans submitted by faculty is an articulation how they prepare students in a manner that is consistent with the University's mission of connecting students with successful careers or further education where appropriate.
3. In addition to the centralized and uniform framework used by the academic units, the administrative units have similar uniform and robust systems to assess the effectiveness of these

units in providing platforms for educational success. Specifically, analysis of data held in the documentation roadmap and TracDat™ confirm that assessment is developed in the administrative units. While analyses and interpretation of the data from the administrative units is valuable in terms of evaluations of educational effectiveness, perhaps its full value is more fully realized in an analysis of institutional effectiveness in planning, resources and institutional improvements (see Standard VI) which is explored more fully in the next section.

### Next Steps for Strategic Planning

Although Montclair State University has integrated thorough assessment processes in all its operations, it continuously evaluates its progress and strives to strengthen certain aspects of assessment such as more faculty engagement, enhancing administrators' support, and encouraging more reflection on and use of assessment findings. Assessment of student learning is part of a comprehensive institutional assessment and receives support from the University's seven non-instructional divisions, which engage in systematic planning and assessment of their programs that support overall student outcomes. The current on-going effort is to bring all academic departments and administrative divisions to work synergistically with a shared commitment to the collection, analysis and use of assessment results. With the support of CUE, planning units need to seek and employ the assessment schemes that will be most effective for each unit. Other areas of improvement identified include:

1. Review of GenEd assessment strategies and complete assessment of learning across all five goals of the GenEd program to inform the ongoing refinement and improvement of the program.
2. Facilitate assessment discussions on different topics including data analysis across various divisions on campus.
3. Increase the visibility of program goals and assessment outcomes to various constituents on and off campus.
4. Enhance the culture of assessment at all levels of the University.

### Recommendations for Institutional Improvement

#### Goals/Objectives: GenEd Program – Assessment of All Learning Goals

Oversight	Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)	Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes
Provost's Office Academic Affairs	GenEd Committee GenEd Administrative Assistance OIT RAUL SDCL	Year 1: Launching assessment efforts across all categories (gather and review preliminary data); review of procedures
		Year 2: Generate and share complete annual reports and action plans based on assessment data
		Year 3: Full scale data collection and analysis, assess and adjust assessment process, initiate ongoing cycles of curriculum revisions as needed

**Goals/Objectives: Revision of GenEd 199: New Student Seminar Requirement**

<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)</b>	<b>Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes</b>
Provost's Office Academic Affairs GenEd Committee	GenEd Committee OIT – TTI – Modules Faculty in Mathematics, Biology, This section of the Self-Study on Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience is highlighted by four key findings. This section of the Self-Study on Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience is highlighted by four key findings. Political Science, etc.) SDCL	Year 1: Establish working group and launch review of category and goals; collect data from all current versions of the course, generate report and recommendations for curriculum revision directions
		Year 2: Working group focus on curricula development and appropriate assessment to continue to enhance University Success learning goal
		Year 3: Begin implementation of revised curriculum and assessment efforts

# **STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT**



## STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

### Standard Statement

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

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

Montclair State University meets all nine criteria of Standard VI. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the three Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard VI: Specifically requirement #8: The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs; requirement #10: Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments; and requirement #11: The institution has documented financial resources adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability. Evidence that demonstrates that Montclair State meets Standard VI and the related Requirements of Affiliation can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap through active links in the table presented below.

<b>Standard and Criterion</b>		<b>Meet Criterion</b>
<u>VI.C1</u>	Objectives that are clearly stated, assessed properly and linked to achievement of mission and goals and reflect the assessment results	✓
<u>VI.C2</u>	Clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that involve constituent participation and use of assessment results	✓
<u>VI.C3</u>	Financial planning and budgeting process that is aligned with mission and goals of the institution and linked to units' strategic plans and objectives	✓
<u>VI.C4</u>	Fiscal and human resources as well physical and technical infrastructure to support its operations	✓
<u>VI.C5</u>	Well-define decision-making processes with clear assignment and accountability	✓
<u>VI.C6</u>	Comprehensive planning for facilities, infrastructure and technology that addresses sustainability and deferred maintenance and is linked to strategic and financial planning processes	✓
<u>VI.C7</u>	An annual independent audit confirming financial viability	✓
<u>VI.C8</u>	Strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources to support the mission and goals	✓
<u>VI.C9</u>	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes and resource availability	✓

The remainder of this section addresses how four key administrative units of the University – Financial, Office of Information Technology (OIT), Human Resources (HR), and Facilities – implement planning, assessment, accountability, and sustainability in support of the strategic plan and educational programs. The section addresses explicitly two of Montclair State's goals: Connecting students with a successful tomorrow and meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

## Introduction – Restatement of the standard that is specific to Montclair State University

Montclair State University's planning processes, resources and infrastructures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges. The University is committed to extending its scholarly, technical, intellectual, professional and cultural resources for the benefit of the communities it serves, internally and externally. From radically reducing its carbon footprint, to integrating new technology, to fostering public-private partnerships, Montclair State is preparing for a future of sustainability.

In 2016 *Money* magazine ranked Montclair State University among the nation's "Best Colleges." The University is in the top 25 percent of schools that deliver the most value, dollar for dollar, in terms of an affordable, high-quality education that puts students on the path to career success. The rankings are based on 21 factors in the areas of educational quality, affordability and alumni earnings. Montclair State was also included in *Money*'s list of the nation's "50 Colleges That Add the Most Value." Ranked by *Money* on value-added grades for graduation rates, earnings and student loan repayment, these top-scoring schools are the most successful at helping students exceed expectations (VI.C1.9).

Montclair State has charted a steady course in a constrained budget environment, prioritizing students and maximizing the contribution of the University to developing the future workforce of New Jersey (VI.C1.2).

## Analysis of Key Issues Related to Meeting the Standard and Criteria

### Financial

*Planning.* Planning is key to the financial stability, growth and sustainability of Montclair State University. The University's financial plan and allocation of resources are driven by the University's strategic plan adopted in 2011. In the challenging public higher education environment, with declining state support, it is incumbent upon Montclair State to seek funding from external sources and operate in ways that are efficient and cost-effective in order to minimize increases in tuition. Each year, the University updates its five-year financial plan to ensure that funding for major strategic plan goals and objectives are incorporated into the plan, and that sufficient financial resources will be available (VI.C3.1).

New Jersey's senior public institutions, of which Montclair State University is the second largest, remain significantly underfunded. Despite flat or declining general state appropriations over the past nine years, Montclair State University remains one of the most affordable of New Jersey's public institutions. The proportion of revenues provided by State appropriations has been declining over the past decade, from 34% of the annual budget in 2005 to 20% in FY16. Nevertheless, Montclair State continues to offer one of the highest, if not the highest, value proposition for higher education in the state. To plan for the continued reductions in State appropriations, the University has been very diligent in how it allocates its financial resources, particularly in how the budget is planned.

The budget is an important annual planning document for the University and reflects choices, priorities and tactics set forth as the result of intensive planning. The aim of the budgeting strategy is to ensure a solid financial position for the University. The University's budgeting and resource allocation models are data-driven and guided by strategic planning, priorities, and ongoing institutional demands. Through a systematic budget and planning process, the University has successfully allocated resources to the key areas identified in the strategic plan. Priorities are determined by the strategic plan and the annual budget process is the formal mechanism through which funding allocations are decided (VI.C3.2).

Resource planning begins before the actual budget process occurs. Initially, in the second quarter of the fiscal year, the University sets forth its major strategic priorities in the required annual state budget

submission. In the third quarter, concurrent with the internal budget process, the Board of Trustees will hold a tuition and fee hearing for the University community. The Board of Trustees and University leadership consider a number of factors in deciding whether to recommend changes to tuition rates, including the University's immediate and long-term strategic priorities; the availability of state funding for general and fringe benefit appropriations; the current level of student charges, including tuition and fees; comparative tuition and fee rates for undergraduate and graduate programs at State and benchmark institutions; the availability of financial aid programs; efforts to improve graduation rates and thereby reduce student debt; and changes resulting from state-negotiated collective bargaining agreements and other mandated programs. Each of these factors helps determine the total availability of funding for the coming fiscal year and shape how resources are allocated (VI.C3.1).

Every year, the University submits its proposed budget for operating expenses to the New Jersey State Governor. The State sets the parameters for anticipated expenditure growth as well as other budgetary assumptions. The State Budget submission is an opportunity for the University to describe its prior academic and program achievements and the major upcoming goals and objectives.

Many University offices are involved in the development of enrollment projections, revenue and expense forecasts and other programmatic and performance data that help formulate the planning and budget process. Fiscal agents and department heads consult with their deans and vice presidents to ensure that budgets are developed with a long-term perspective and with reference to the University's strategic plan. The guiding principles in the budget development process include the protection of core academic programs to preserve the University's essential teaching and research activities; the preservation of faculty positions and the recruitment and hiring of new faculty to facilitate the continuing growth and development of the University's academic programs; and the streamlining of workflows to improve administrative efficiencies, including both personnel and non-personnel expenditures. Departments are also required to reallocate existing resources to ensure that the highest priorities in each division are maintained, particularly when limited financial resources are available (VI.C3.1).

*Accountability.* Seeking to better align revenue with financial commitments, the University has upgraded its capability by introducing a new enterprise system to manage its finances, the PeopleSoft™ Financial Management System (FMS) (See the full explanation of the University's ERP transformation, the OneMontclair project, below in Instructional Technology). This new system enables more timely financial reporting by fund to ensure unrestricted funds will be used in accordance with policies established by the State of New Jersey and the University's Board of Trustees. It also ensures that restricted funds are utilized in accordance with the time and/or use restrictions stipulated by the donor or sponsor (VI.C3.12).

Montclair State University's finances are audited annually by an external accounting firm. The University's external auditors have issued management letters with no material weaknesses and noted deficiencies have not repeated in subsequent years. This is a reflection of the University's commitment to implementing and maintaining strong internal controls and proper stewardship of financial services.

### **Internal audit**

In order to improve transparency into its finances, services and operations, Montclair State University re-established the Department of Internal Audit. The purpose of the department is to provide independent and objective reviews and assessments of the business activities, operations, financial systems and internal accounting controls of the University. The scope of the Department's responsibilities includes efforts to assist in ensuring reliability and integrity of information, that University risks are minimized and assets safeguarded and compliance with University policies and procedures, governmental laws and regulations.

An audit encompasses many facets – controls, procedures, training, compliance, etc. - and involves every department/division of the University. The Director of Internal Audit looks at recommendations

suggested by the external auditing firm for the Division of Treasury and Finance and investigates any recommendations if needed. The audit policies and procedures are updated periodically and are done so at the discretion of the Audit Committee of the University Board of Trustees (VI.C5.10).

When a new divisional Vice President is hired, the Director of Internal Audit meets with him or her to discuss potential risks, and audits that may be in process. Previous audit risk levels, those audits that have not been undertaken as of yet, are also revisited and discussed and reprioritized if needed. Follow-up depends on the type of audit – if it is something procedural it may be followed up with management at a later time; however, if it is of immediate concern (e.g. – fire safety check procedures for a dorm room), it is followed up immediately until the matter is resolved (VI.C5.10).

The PeopleSoft™ Financial System along with the Adaptive Insights™ Planning budgeting and planning systems report actual to budget results, which allows the University to track performance against financial goals. Through weekly and monthly reporting of financial and budgetary results, finance and budget staff work with operating and academic units to identify and understand variances and make the necessary corrections on a timely basis. Although the system has not yet been configured to do so, PeopleSoft™ has the capability to incorporate benchmarks and their achievement results in the accounting structure through the use of statistical accounts.

Department managers have access to the PeopleSoft™ Budget Overview which provides a summary of available funds as well as queries which include transaction details to ensure that they are managing the funds entrusted to them in a responsible manner. With Adaptive Planning, managers and fiscal agents can view budget versus actual expenditure reports, which are updated bi-weekly from PeopleSoft™. The system allows users to drill down by cost center and account (expenditure category) to identify current expenditures and available balances. The University Board of Trustees approves the annual operating budget. The budget is normally approved following the approval of the New Jersey State Budget by the Legislature and the Governor (VI.C3.9).

The Office of Budget and Planning is a small division, which allows for a quick and thorough decision making process. There is a clear assignment of responsibility and accountability. Most of the processes that the division is involved in are team oriented. For example, the annual budget process involves the full efforts of the entire staff. Weekly meetings are held during the budget process, which allows for consensus building and input from each team member. If a consensus is not reached, the decision will be made by the Executive Director or the Associate Director of the unit.

Each Budget & Planning staff member has a portfolio of specific Divisions or Colleges that s/he works with more closely. In addition, oversight and management of major components of the University budget are assigned to staff members. For example, specific individuals manage the personnel budget, revenue budget and accounting adjustments. One employee also manages the University's budget and planning system and reporting (VI.C1.2).

*Assessment.* Proposed operating budgets are developed by fiscal managers for each cost center and then reviewed by Division vice-presidents. The President will make final allocation decisions based on the immediate and long-term strategic priorities. The Board of Trustees will review and approve the final budget subsequent to the adoption of the New Jersey State budget by the legislature and governor. At the close of the fiscal year (June 30th), the University is subject to an accounting and financial audit by an external certified public accounting firm. The results of the annual audit are presented to the Board of Trustees. In addition to the audit, the Budget Office conducts a review of individual unit budgets, and the results are then incorporated into the planning process for future fiscal years.

Just prior to each annual Budget Call, the Office of Budget & Planning reviews process tasks and steps and updates these based on feedback from the community and budgetary needs specific to that cycle. In addition, a draft of the annual Budget Call Memorandum is submitted for input from the Executive Council (President, Provost and Vice Presidents). Assessment of the budget processes is an on-going

process through the connection between Budget & Planning staff and the Divisions and Colleges. These connections lead to improvements to and clarification of the policies and procedures.

The budget is structured and controlled through the University's financial system, PeopleSoft™ FMS. During the fiscal year, managers and fiscal agents review the budget versus actual expenditures of their program accounts through Adaptive Insights™. Departments are responsible for not exceeding their budgeted allocations, and over-or-under expenditure deviations from the budget trigger review processes, which ensure close adherence to the University's resource plan. This review continues throughout the fiscal year to confirm that department goals are being met, and allows for the reallocation of resources or increased allocations based on unforeseen needs or opportunities and the availability of funds. In addition, quarterly financial reports are submitted to the Board of Trustees. The annual budget process, occurring in the last quarter of the fiscal year, provides all departments with an opportunity to evaluate goals against outcomes and resources.

New systems, such as the recent implementations of PeopleSoft™ FMS and Adaptive Insights™, has created a need and opportunity for full assessment of business processes and input from core users, unit budget managers and department heads. Prior to implementation of the systems, extensive reviews of business practices were conducted with subject matter experts and end users. There are plans to incorporate Survey Monkey or a similar tool to assess customer satisfaction once the PeopleSoft™ Financial Management System is stabilized. Until that time, in-person assessments and training sessions are being conducted for end users. The Division also utilizes Service Now for tracking and monitoring assistance requests and their resolution (VI.C3.1).

The Office of Finance and Treasury hosts a monthly Advisory Committee meeting for the unit budget managers and other key unit employees. The Office of Budget & Planning is represented at the meeting, which is an open forum to deliver announcements to and gather input from the broader campus community. Feedback leading to actionable tasks or process changes is assigned to the office owning the process in question. Budget & Planning collects surveys from participants in training classes and uses them to inform changes to training content and materials.

The annual budget process provides the University with the framework to measure success against strategic goals and determine the resources required to achieve these goals. A clear example of the process can be seen in the allocation of sufficient instructional resources as one of the University's highest priorities. A strategic plan goal is to "augment, annually, the number of full-time faculty in high-demand programs and those for which the addition of faculty will have an impact on the maintenance of achievement of national ranking or recognition."

The evaluation of instructional needs is a metric-driven process involving the Office of Institutional Research, the Office of Budget and Planning, Colleges and Schools, the Provost's Office and the President. Each year Institutional Research, in conjunction with Budget and Planning, develops a report of key enrollment and instructional resource drivers, including: multi-year enrollment trends, full-time and part-time faculty headcount, semester hours taught, course section sizes, faculty to student ratios, and academic department revenue and expense data. Concurrently, academic department chairs and college or school Deans evaluate faculty needs based on existing or planned academic program growth. The Provost will then provide a recommendation to the President on where new faculty lines should be added. This recommendation must be supported by instructional data and is dependent upon the availability of financial resources. The annual review of instructional resources based on detailed metrics allows the University to grow faculty in its most critical areas.

*Sustainability.* Several sources of revenue enable the University to deliver its educational services and requisite support functions. The most important of these are the revenues generated through student tuition and fees and appropriations from the State of New Jersey. (VI.C4.17) (VI.C4.6).

Even with the continued reduction in State appropriations, Montclair State University still ranks below the State sector average for undergraduate and graduate tuition. (VI.C4.18).

Annual debt service represented 8.9% of FY2015 operations, up from 7.5% in FY2011 (VI.C4.14). The University's level of debt is consistent with other higher education institutions in New Jersey and reflects the state's historically minimal funding of capital construction. The University was the recipient of state bond funds in 2013, which was the first state-backed funding for higher education in 25 years. These grant awards, in conjunction with matching University funds, allowed the construction of the Feliciano School of Business, the Center for Environmental and Life Sciences, and campus network infrastructure.

In order to continue the critical investment in new facilities while limiting additional debt burden, the University has completed two major projects under the New Jersey Stimulus Act. Under public-private partnerships, in 2011 the University completed the largest college residential project ever built in New Jersey, providing housing and dining services for 2,000 students, and in 2013 constructed a new energy cogeneration plant, which significantly reduced the institution's carbon footprint (see below in Facilities). 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 fundraising efforts, and pursue other non-state sources of funds (VI.C4.1).

Recent credit ratings, issued by Moody's and Fitch, in connection with bond refunding transactions over the past ten years, reflect the University's strong financial management strategy which has sustained strong cash flows amidst declining state support; the transactions during the period generated present value savings of nearly \$34.6 million (VI.C4.15, VI.C4.16).

Another source of revenue is the Montclair State University Foundation, the independent fundraising arm of the University. The Foundation, audited annually by an external accounting firm, operates under the authority of the President of the University, the Foundation Board of Directors, and the Investment Committee of the Foundation Board of Directors. The University's endowment is robust and strong, and projected to continue to grow for the next few years. On average, the Foundation transfers @ \$4.5 - \$5 million of its funds to the University every year. Around 83 percent of the portfolio investment income transfers to the University. This is a significant amount as most benchmark institutions give on average about 67 percent to their own institutions (VI.C4.11).

Additionally, the University is currently in the silent phase of its upcoming comprehensive campaign and financial goals and priorities for the campaign have been set. This campaign is the largest and most ambitious in Montclair State University's history. The University's goal is to raise \$75 million in private contributions by 2020, focusing on priorities that are central to the University's mission. These goals were a collaboration between the Associate Vice President for the Foundation, the Associate Vice President for Development with input from the Executive Director of Budget and Planning for the University. Leadership for the campaign is in place during the silent phase of the campaign and a mission statement with financial goals approved. Priorities for the campaign are already beyond the goals of the current strategic plan and do correlate to the evolving needs of the University. The campaign will fund scholarships, provide financial support for faculty and student research, support facilities for which there is an acute need and the campus programs that make the University a vibrant and vital educational resource for the state and the nation. As of May 2016, more than fifty percent of the \$75 million goal has been raised (VI.C4.10).

This comprehensive campaign, which began the silent phase in July 2014, is expected to go public in the fall of 2017 at the earliest, and culminate in December 31, 2019. The priorities of the campaign are central to the University's mission and the sustainability of the University for the future, academically and financially (VI.C4.10).

## **Technology**

*Planning.* All technology planning is driven, at the highest level, from the University's strategic plan. More detailed and specialized planning occurs within each IT operating unit (Enterprise Technology Services, Enterprise Application Services, Technology Support Services, Technology Training and Integration, and Institutional Research) to forecast budget requirements each fiscal year.

There are specific sections of the University's strategic plan that address technology needs/requirements for academic and administrative functions, and those are used as the overarching 'roadmap' of technology services that Information Technology focuses on. These were developed in close consultation with staff and faculty from other University Divisions, and progress in achieving these goals is closely monitored. As an example, for workstation computer purchases, a committee including representatives from each academic and administrative unit periodically updates standard model selections and configurations based on evolving University requirements and market options (VI.C6.7).

Additionally, major enterprise technology investments such as a wireless network infrastructure upgrade, a new Learning Management System (Canvas), or a new Administrative System are prioritized at the enterprise campus level based on the relative value that various opportunities would deliver to the University community vis-a-vis the availability of funding. These priorities are reviewed and affirmed prior to the commitment of each major project and also annually as part of the University budget process (VI.C6.7).

One of the top strategic initiatives for Montclair State University during the past six years was to implement a complete overhaul of its enterprise systems. The purpose of the initiative, known as OneMontclair, was to replace all administrative systems that have served as the primary business and information platforms for Budgeting and Planning, Finance, Human Resources, Student and Campus Services, University Advancement, and Institutional Research (VI.C6.3).

In 2013, the University received \$7.65 million in New Jersey State funding to maintain and enhance its technology infrastructure. When combined with the University's matching funds, these improvements represent a nearly \$14 million investment in meeting teaching, learning and business needs for the next decade. The University has selected three best-in-class systems – PeopleSoft™, Banner™ and Workday™ – to manage its financial, academic and human resource processes respectively. Other upgrades include enhanced connectivity for students and faculty including mobile access, complete financial integration across all University departments, and ready access to key data to facilitate analytical decision-making (VI.C6.5).

OneMontclair was designed to provide a networked system that substantially improves service to administrators, students, faculty, staff and other users and adequately supports institutional initiatives, taking into account growing service demand, and stable or shrinking staff and fiscal budgets. The system must ensure that the planning efforts and investments made in process optimization and technology will enable or directly support the University's strategic goals, improve customer service and create efficiencies and economies of scope and scale wherever possible (VI.C4.1). The implementation and integration of the new systems and reporting mechanisms into the workflow and cycles of University life are continuously assessed in order to maximize the potential of the technology and minimize the interruptions that come with such major upgrades and change at the institutional level.

*Accountability.* The Information Technology Division's organizational structure is well defined and separates IT support functions into logical operational units: technology infrastructure, application management, user support services, training and instructional design, and Institutional Research and reporting. Decisions that affect other IT units or the campus at large follow a hierarchical process from unit managers to Directors/AVP's to the VP/CIO and if necessary the University President's Executive Council.

Each IT Director/AVP is responsible for the operations of his/her respective unit and is accountable for the performance and productivity of the staff. There is excellent cross-unit collaboration and

communications among the IT managerial staff as well as clear direction and support from the Vice President/CIO (VI.C6.7).

*Assessment.* For major initiatives like campus network upgrades or launch/continuing support of core applications, IT solicits feedback through online surveys, data mining of Service Desk call activity, and various forms of direct outreach to the user community such as email communication or regularly scheduled meetings with stakeholders. National data used for benchmarking is also gathered through periodic participation in surveys administered by the Educause Center for Analysis and Research (ECAR), as well as through participation in national surveys designed to gauge student satisfaction (Ruffalo, Noel Levitz) and student engagement in learning (NSSE).

Units within the IT Division routinely assess the services and technologies they provide to the University related to the Strategic Plan. This entails describing unit goals, assessment methods, assessment results, and follow-up actions (if needed). This information on the effectiveness of IT services and technologies is stored in one of the University's assessment databases (TracDat™), which is managed and maintained within the IT Division. IT is also responsible for the management and maintenance of the University's database of information related to the assessment of student learning outcomes, as well as the production of reports and dashboards used to monitor all assessment activity at the University under the direction of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Assessment

Based on feedback from the above sources, IT can evaluate the success and/or popularity of a particular technology or policy change and take appropriate measures to correct any deficiencies. Corrective action can range from additional modifications to a technology solution to make it more efficient or useful, to improving documentation or end-user training on specific technologies (VI.C6.7).

*Sustainability.* Montclair State's technical infrastructure is well-equipped to support the University's overall mission of providing a first-class education to its students. The University has continually improved the scope and quality of our technical services, user support and training, network connectivity and bandwidth, and administrative computing operations to keep pace with the emerging needs of its faculty, staff, and students.

Like most public higher education institutions, Montclair State University faces the common challenges of lean budgets, staffing constraints in certain operational areas, and the ongoing effort to remain ahead of the constant march of technology innovation. While IT staffing levels are less than ideal, and effectively supporting the many business and academic technologies is often challenging, there are no areas of the operation that are not adequately supported. To provide the best service possible with existing resources, IT focuses on the areas that have the most direct impact on the University's students, faculty, and staff to ensure that those areas are being serviced adequately.

Additionally, the University made a determination to transition from Blackboard to Canvas, a cutting-edge, open-source learning management system. The Canvas evaluation process began at the start of the spring 2013 term and was completed by April 2013. A recommendation based on the participants' evaluation was finalized and submitted by May 1, 2013, with the recommendation reviewed by the Provost and the Chief Information Officer for implementation. The task of implementing Canvas required collaboration across the university and implementation of the Canvas system was completed in Fiscal Year 2014 (VI.C2.7, VI.C8.8).

The University continues to improve upon its technology infrastructure and resources to ensure they are able to effectively carry out the University's teaching, learning and research mission. The University is currently upgrading its wired and wireless campus network infrastructure to provide increased speed, capacity, reliability and security to all academic, administrative and residential buildings as well as outdoor areas. The first phases of the program were implemented over the spring and summer of 2015, updating the Computer Center network facilities, campus Internet connectivity, and network electronics across the southern end of campus. Subsequent phases will continue into 2017 (VI.C6.7).

In February 2016, Montclair State University entered into a strategic alliance with Sony Electronics, one of the world's and the state's technology leaders. The agreement puts into place a long-term plan to enable the University's communication and media students to gain real-world experience and get a high-tech preview of their future careers. The University's new School of Communication and Media building, currently under construction, will provide a facility where Sony will offer industry professional training similar to what is offered at its Digital Motion Picture Center (DMPC) on the lot of Sony Pictures Studios in Culver City, California. The new building will have the distinction of being one of the most extensive ultra HD 4K studio and production facilities in the country located on a university campus. It will include studios and classrooms, as well as a theater outfitted with Sony laser projectors, studio cameras, production switchers and monitors. Sony will use the space to host business development events, conduct training and promote new technologies, establishing Montclair State University as a preferred environment for Sony's introduction of new products, technologies and services relating to television, film, media and higher education (VI.C6.11).

## **Human Resources**

*Planning.* In 2014, the new VP of Human Resources undertook a ninety-day assessment of the operations of the Human Resources Division. Preliminary conclusions led to a proposal for a strategic human resources consulting firm to help move HR from a transactional unit, that did not contribute to the mission of the University, to one that supports the Academic mission of the University and to right size the division as per peer institutions. An organizational study was conducted by Sibson Consulting in November 2014, a firm which specializes in human and benefits consulting for corporations and nonprofits. The study surveyed all HR members, reviewed the division's organizational structure and conducted one-on-one and small group interviews that resulted in a report with recommendations to the Montclair leadership team.

Planning in the Human Resources Division has required the active involvement in the assessment of the organizational structure of existing Divisions, Departments, and Units. The division is now moving forward guided by the recommendations of Sibson Consulting to achieve greater efficiencies, create synergies, and redefine positions. This is all in support of the University's mission, and in furtherance of the University's goal of providing a high quality learning environment for students, and an enriching work environment for faculty and staff.

Human resources supports the priorities set forth in the Strategic Plan. For example, for fiscal year 2017 and beyond there is continued investment in the University's most important resource – a highly qualified faculty. Twenty-eight new tenure-track faculty were recruited to join the faculty in September 2016, and forty-two new positions are in searches for fall 2017 (VI.C4.13). Human resources provides procedures for the recruitment and hiring process for faculty and staff and also facilitate the onboarding of new personnel and separation of employees (VI.C4.19, VI.C4.20).

*Accountability.* Achieving the goals outlined in the University's strategic plan is highly dependent upon people – faculty and staff – who are recruited to come to the University. The Human Resources Division plays an important role in the process of attracting high quality faculty and staff to the University, and giving them good reasons to stay. For these reasons, Human Resources has devoted much time and attention to ensuring that its goals are aligned with those of the University as outlined in the strategic plan. One of the objectives of the internal assessment of 2014 was to ensure that the people, positions and structure were most effectively aligned to provide high quality services to the campus community. The resulting restructuring, based on recommendations from Sibson Consulting, that are to be implemented in three phases aim to create greater internal and external clarity on the roles and responsibilities of staff, thereby enhancing customer service and improving accountability.

For example, the first recommendation identified the need to aggregate staff and services into a Talent Management unit. This recommendation has already been implemented and has enabled the Division to

create synergies, leverage talent, and foster collaboration and is anticipated to have a positive impact on customer satisfaction and service quality. The creation of this unit also provided an opportunity to create a formal relationship and process with existing initiatives in the EEO/Affirmative Action/Diversity area. This is critical to advancing the University's ongoing commitment to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination, and its recognition that the University's educational mission is enhanced by policies promoting diversity, fairness and respect for all individuals.

Human Resources is in the process of preparing customer service guidelines and ongoing customer service training for the Division's employees. The customer service initiative will be explored once the new enterprise system, Workday™, is implemented. Additionally, the Division continually looks for opportunities to share human resources information with its stakeholders through its website. The website was recently redesigned and members of the Human Resources team have been trained in the software that is used for keeping the website up-to-date. It is expected that this will help the Division maintain an effective web presence.

*Assessment.* Human Resources needs are assessed based on the objectives set forth in the University's strategic plan. The goal is to ensure that HR is able to recruit top talent to the University, offer existing faculty and staff good reasons to stay, and provide high quality services to the campus community – students, faculty and staff. Based on its survey and recommendations, the Division makes ongoing structural and procedural changes to better serve the campus community.

Feedback, suggestions, and recommendations are elicited frequently that promote continuous improvement in the quality of services provided. The Human Resources Division interacts with and provides services to the entire campus community at all levels— faculty, staff, senior leadership, as well as bargaining agents (ex. AFT, CWA, IFPTE, PBA, etc.), therefore it is important to receive regular feedback from a wide variety of individuals, units, divisions, departments, and constituent groups (VI.C4.9).

The Division also regularly uses information obtained from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) and the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) for the purposes of benchmarking and salary surveys to remain competitive in the market place. Currently there is a need to assess the University's affirmative action and EEO initiatives. These needs are expected to be addressed with future studies.

As part of the ongoing cycle of assessment and improvement, HR is now moving to phase two in implementing key recommendations, including the resizing and cross-training of the payroll and benefits section (planning completed). This has led to the creation of a lead Compensation and Classification position that will ensure the University utilizes market salary data, and analyzes internal equity data, in determining salary ranges and offers to prospective candidates (VI.C5.4). Next steps include the assessment of recruitment and retention strategies, and finally conducting a 3-year retrospective of what has been accomplished in relation to the strategic plan, and mapping out where the division should be in 3-5 years with their policies and procedures (VI.C9.7)

*Sustainability.* The Human Resources Division with the support of the University has made significant strides in adding key operational positions to improve the quality of service to the campus community. This is particularly true in areas of compensation, position classification, talent acquisition, compliance, HRIS and organizational development.

In addition, the Division implemented a new enterprise system, Workday™, to manage its operations. Among the benefits of using Workday™ is the expectation that more robust data will help ensure that people resources are properly allocated to support the educational mission of the University. Data will also allow the Division to focus more time on serving as a strategic partner advancing the goals outlined in the strategic plan, and less time on processing paperwork. Data on recruitment and retention will also be extremely useful in tracking trends regarding human capital needs for the University. It would be

difficult to overstate the value of moving from a largely paper-based to a fully automated Human Capital Management system (VI.C4.9).

It should be noted that the Workday™ business model calls for new releases every six months. Human Resources will be continually reviewing and updating the way it does business as they adopt future functionality and changes.

## **Facilities**

*Planning.* The Division of University Facilities, Office of Capital Planning & Project Management is responsible for the development of the university master plan, capital project and space planning, and space management on a daily basis for all 252 acres, 69 buildings and approximately 4.4 million gross square feet. It is the mission of this office to support the University's recently adopted strategic plan for improving and/or supporting the campus learning, living and recreational spaces and programs. This office maintains the Facilities Capital Master Plan and the Capital Project Summary, which provides the summary for the past, present and future projects that align with the strategic plan and academic mission of the University. The office is engaged at the commencement of capital project planning, during implementation phases and as a critical component to the close-out procedures of each project. The process by which this office operates is detailed on the division's website. (VI.C4.3).

Additionally, a Project Initiation Procedure has been created to help colleges, departments, or other units to help plan and streamline their capital project requests. Once it is determined that a capital project is required, the requesting Division/College with the appropriate approvals can choose to advance this project in one of two formats. The first is more immediate via the an ad-hoc capital project request for budget appropriations where the granting approvals are gathered for review and presentation to senior leadership and President, or the second is via the annual University Budget call where projects are reviewed and prioritized through cabinet/council meetings in consultation with the Senior Leadership and the President (VI.C2.4).

*Accountability.* The Division of University Facilities delivers services to the University community in the areas of Capital Planning & Project Management, Environmental Health & Safety, Fire Safety, the Maintenance & Engineering trades, Building Services, and the Logistical Support operations of Parking, Transportation and Fleet (Automotive) services. The division lists on its webpage a staff directory, various department responsibilities and all necessary forms as well as portals to provide feedback regarding services.

In November 2014, the University entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA), which provides both parties with procedures for the permitting and approval of the construction and rehabilitation of buildings and structures by Montclair State pursuant to the State Uniform Construction Code. Encompassed within the MOU are provisions for plan filing, plan review, construction permits, inspections, change orders, emergency work, Certificates of Occupancy, and violation notices and orders (VI.C5.19).

Within the Division, the Office of Environmental Safety & Sustainability develops, establishes and administers the University's policies and procedures for campus environmental compliance, health and safety. This ensures the University's compliance with all federal, state and local laws, regulatory guidelines and industry standards relating to the environment, health and safety. This office administers the Environmental Health and Safety Management System (EHS-MS) including the Hazard Communication, Community Right to Know and Hazardous Materials Management programs. It coordinates the Chemical Hygiene and Radiation Safety Programs with the College of Science and Mathematics (VI.C2.15).

*Assessment.* In order to assess how the Division works internally and how it is staffed, a recent "Diversity Initiative" was undertaken in 2016. With the participation of 25 staff members, supervisors, and

managers, the Division conducted a thorough needs assessment, identified key issues that require attention (e.g. poor communication. Lack of accountability, respect), and generated a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to be implemented in AY 2017 (VI.C8.9)

Further, in order to assess and improve its services each fiscal year, University Facilities department heads review business practices and present recommendations, if needed, for service delivery improvements. This practice encourages innovation and constant improvement of the delivery of services to all constituents, internal and external, including mechanisms to review processes and practices to ensure that services provided by the unit are accessible, seamless and effective. The Division assesses its services to the campus community through the use of Service Level Agreements (SLA) with key campus customers. The use of Service Level Agreements is embedded within the Association of American Physical Plant Administrator's (APPA) Four Core Levels of Competency for educational facilities professionals and they are used within the Division to establish an agreement between the Division and its customers about what kinds of services are to be provided and the manner in which the services will be performed. The Division's management uses these SLA's to assess the adequacy of service and what, if anything, can be improved (VI.C9.6).

University Facilities hosts an online Service Comments portal through its webpage in order to give customers an opportunity to provide feedback on services provided. The information is stored and tracked and archived within the system and distributed to department managers, as appropriate. The information is used to effect improvements in both long-and short-term issues in maintenance, building services, parking and transportation services (VI.C9.6).

*Sustainability.* The University expects to continue its investment in capital facilities for fiscal year 2017 and beyond. The University is a consistent source of major capital investments, which has provided a significant stimulus through a difficult time for the construction industry. Major projects have been undertaken by the University over the past decade, including a mix of renovations, new construction, and campus expansions (VI.C6.8).

Recent major construction projects included the completion of two new academic buildings, the Center for Environmental and Life Sciences and The Feliciano School of Business. The Center for Environmental and Life Sciences building is expected to foster a new identity and hub of activity for the University's science programs. The Feliciano School of Business houses instructional spaces, administrative offices, conference and seminar rooms, departmental suites, group study rooms, a large common lobby, a trading floor simulator, an entrepreneurial center and a café. Both buildings exemplify the University's commitment to sustainable design and its intent to achieve a Silver LEED rating. Additionally, audio/visual and technology systems have been designed as an integral part of the buildings' infrastructure to help support the teaching curriculum. The Feliciano School of Business was enabled in part due to an anonymous \$20 million donation, the largest in the University's history. As President Dr. Susan Cole noted in her April 2015 address to the University community, "we have literally doubled our available academic facilities and increased our residential opportunities by 150%." This growth is anticipated to continue, with a significant volume of activity already on the books for upcoming years, including the completion of the School of Communication and Media, the renovation of Partridge Hall for the School of Nursing and the Graduate School (VI.C6.8).

Capital investments take the form not only of major projects producing new and upgraded facilities, but also investments in more basic facilities and equipment and in ongoing renewal and replacement. Each of these investments are significant from an economic impact standpoint and the University is not the only beneficiary of these capital projects. The total capital investments produce spillover impacts into the local economies as vendors ramp up their activities in response to this demand and as construction and other workers spend a portion of their earnings within the region and state economies. At the annualized level, Montclair State University capital investment from FY 2011-2015 generated about \$160 million in total output within the state of New Jersey, supporting more than 1,100 jobs and \$75 million in earnings. The bulk of this impact took place within Passaic and Essex counties (VI.C1.11).

Montclair State University's new environmentally friendly combined heating, cooling and power plant, which went online in 2013, currently provides the 250-acre campus with cost-effective and energy-efficient delivery of steam for heat, chilled water for air conditioning, and natural gas-fired generation of electricity through a new underground energy distribution system. Montclair State University and UMM Energy Partners, LLC formed a major public-private partnership to develop this combined heating, cooling, and power system for the campus ([VI.C6.6](#); [VI.C9.8](#), [VI.C9.9](#))

The United States Green Building Council, The Princeton Review Guide to 332 Campuses: 2014 Edition, and Sierra magazine's "Coolest Schools" included Montclair State in their rankings of America's greenest campuses. Green buildings are structures designed and constructed in a manner to reduce the impact on the environment and public health by efficient utilization of resources ([VI.C6.13](#)). In the last five years, Montclair State University has provided ten updates documenting its green initiatives. The Environmental Protection Agency has analyzed the submitted information and generated an environmental footprint for the organization. Due to the progressive green efforts of the organization, the University has managed to reduce its carbon footprint and saved an estimated \$13.6 million in operating expenses as of June 2014 ([VI.C6.14](#)).

On June 17, 2008, Montclair State University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) pledging to become an environmental steward by implementing a number of green initiatives that would reduce its carbon footprint and further improve our planet's environment. This partnership with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Montclair State University has resulted in reducing energy, water and solid waste production across campus operations. The University was the first educational institution in the nation to enter into a comprehensive green construction and operation Memorandum of Understanding with the Environmental Protection Agency ([VI.C6.9](#)).

Most major maintenance, repair, and building renewal projects are funded as deferred maintenance. These projects include roofing replacement, correction of structural defects, repair or replacement of installed utility and distribution systems, and other high-cost projects, which cannot be funded by the Facilities Management operating budget. If not an emergency, these projects, ranging in cost from several hundred to several million dollars, are placed in the Capital Renewal maintenance backlog ([VI.C6.10](#)).

Building evaluation surveys are completed for each building on a five-year rotational basis to identify and determine the capital needs that cannot be completed using operational funds. Requests are solicited from the Deans of the colleges and schools regarding needs and issues within their buildings. The requests are ranked and added to the backlog. The items are tracked from year to year until they are funded, either as stand-alone projects or in combination with other construction work ([VI.C6.10](#)).

While University Facilities does track and store all data on cost savings initiatives under its purview, the Division does not currently produce any reports that list those cost savings to the University. This is an endeavor that the Division will be heading towards in the near future ([VI.C9.6](#)).

### **Summary Statement**

Montclair State University meets all nine criteria of Standard VI. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the three Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard VI: Specifically requirement #8: The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs; requirement #10: Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments; and requirement #11: The institution has documented financial resources adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability.

This section on Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement is highlighted by four key findings:

1. *Planning.* The first theme to emerge from the evidence and analysis refers to the planning process for the University. The importance of planning cannot be overstated and relates to almost all of the criteria questions set forth in Standard VI. How the University plans for a sustainable future whether fiscally or through its infrastructure, affects all of its stakeholders – both internal and external. The evidence indicates that the University plans effectively and is process-driven. Priorities are not only driven by the strategic plan but also by current needs. Additionally, forms and procedures are readily available and there is open communication and discussion as plans are determined for the coming fiscal year.
2. *Accountability.* Accountability is the second theme to emerge from analysis of the evidence and relates to criterion five. The evidence shows that there is a well-defined decision-making process and clear assignment of responsibility and accountability at Montclair State University. On the University's webpage, there are links to organizational charts, policies and procedures manuals, academic and administrative calendars, which includes the budget calendar and Board of Trustees meetings, agendas and minutes. Additionally, the charters of the various Board of Trustees' committees are listed. There are also links to the University's strategic plan, the President's Annual Report, financial reports and all reports produced by the Office of Institutional Research, such as enrollment, admissions, University fact book, etc.

This section also discusses the role of internal audit, a department recently re-established at the University. Additionally, the incorporation of new enterprise systems, in the Finance and Treasury Division, is expected to streamline workflow and increase accountability. The Division of Human Resources also introduced, in July 2016, a new enterprise system, Workday™, which is expected to ease workflow and allow the campus community to keep information updated in real time. Lastly, the use of TracDat™ software has enabled all administrative divisions to track goals according to the strategic plan and current university objectives and report on the progress of those particular goals.

3. *Assessment.* The University has established a comprehensive, integrated and institution-wide assessment planning process that informs University planning. Assessment of institutional effectiveness plays a significant role in planning at Montclair State University. Within administrative divisions, assessment is a two-pronged process, comprised of assessment of strategic plan objectives as well as division specific objectives that are not directly tied to the strategic plan. The assessment process is used by all divisions, and procedures are consistent with TracDat™ software, which assists as a repository for storing the data collected, priorities and goals of divisions. The Committee on University Effectiveness leads assessment efforts and works closely with academic, administrative and student service divisions in order to generate and track necessary data to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of every administrative of the University in accordance with Middle States criteria.
4. *Sustainability.* Intensive planning, accountability and assessment all work toward a future of sustainability for the campus. There are many factors involved to achieve sustainability including being fiscally responsible, incorporating green initiatives, having enough human capital to provide quality and efficient services and upgrading technology.

### **Next Steps for Strategic Planning**

Analysis in this section of the Self-Study suggests that the University consider the following steps:

1. Staffing emerged as a common challenge among many of the administrative divisions. While the divisions are currently performing satisfactorily, the ability to sustain the progress and student growth of the University for continuous improvement will be addressed in the new strategic plan.
2. Training for the new enterprise systems is an ongoing need for current and new employees. This is to be expected, as the rollout of three major systems is challenging in a two-year period. Ongoing assessment is clearly indicated to continue to improve work-flow and time/cost savings. While assessment occurs and is well documented in every administrative division, the use of the

data is an emerging process. Goals include the need for more consistency and communication efforts among the administrative leadership and the division managers.

3. Institutional effectiveness depends on the efficient and effective delivery of services to all University constituents, and administrative units play an important part in making the institution effective. Good assessment practices and procedures are essential to institutional well-being, effectiveness, improvement, and innovation, particularly in an environment where public funding has remained flat and the University must rely heavily on outside sources of revenue. As all administrative units continue to engage in data collection, analysis, and interpretation, the communication of these results is still an emerging process and options continue to be discussed at the planning level.
4. As the University moves toward forming its next strategic plan, the University's assessment process will play a critical role in identifying future priorities, particularly with Montclair's new Carnegie-classified Research Doctoral designation.

# **STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION**



## STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

### Standard Statement

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

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

Montclair State University meets all five criteria and all sub-criteria of Standard VII. In addition, Montclair State University also meets the two Requirements of Affiliation for The Middle States Commission on Higher Education that map onto Standard VII. Specifically, requirement #12: governance structure and requirement #13: governing board and conflict of interest.

Evidence that demonstrates that Montclair State meets Standard VII and the related Requirements of Affiliation can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap through active links in the table presented below.

Standard and Criterion		Meet Criterion
<u>VII.C1</u>	Clearly articulated and transparent governance structure	✓
<u>VII.C2</u>	A legally constituted body that	
<u>VII.C2a</u>	Serves the public interest, ensures that stated mission and goals are met, has fiduciary responsibility and is ultimately accountable for the institution	✓
<u>VII.C2b</u>	Has sufficient independence and expertise to ensure the integrity of the institution	✓
<u>VII.C2c</u>	Ensures that the governing body nor its individuals interferes with the day-to-day operations of the institution	✓
<u>VII.C2d</u>	Oversees at the policy level the quality of programs, approval of degree programs and awarding degrees, establishes policies and procedures related to personnel and assures strong fiscal management	✓
<u>VII.C2e</u>	Plays a basic policy-making role in financial matters to insure integrity and strong financial measurement	✓
<u>VII.C2f</u>	Appoints and regularly evaluates the performance of the Chief Executive Officer	✓
<u>VII.C2g</u>	Is informed of good practice in board governance	✓
<u>VII.C2h</u>	Establishes and complies with conflict of interest policies	✓
<u>VII.C2i</u>	Supports the Chief Executive Officer in maintaining the autonomy of the institution	✓
<u>VII.C3</u>	A chief Executive Officer who	
<u>VII.C3a</u>	Is appointed by, evaluated by and reports to the governing body	✓
<u>VII.C3b</u>	Has appropriate credentials and experience consistent with the mission of the institution	✓
<u>VII.C3c</u>	Has authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position	✓

<u>VII.C3d</u>	Has the assistance of a sufficient number of qualified administrators to enable the effective discharge of duties	✓
<u>VII.C4</u>	An administration demonstrating	
<u>VII.C4a</u>	A clearly documented organizational structure and clear lines of reporting	✓
<u>VII.C4b</u>	An appropriate size and with relevant experience to assist the Chief Executive Officer fulfill her role and responsibilities	✓
<u>VII.C4c</u>	Members with credentials and experience that is consistent with the institution's mission and their roles	✓
<u>VII.C4d</u>	Skills, time, assistance, technology and information systems required to perform their duties	✓
<u>VII.C4e</u>	Regular engagement with faculty and students to advance the goals and objectives of the institution	✓
<u>VII.C4f</u>	Systematic procedures for evaluating administrative units and use of assessment data to enhance operations	✓
<u>VII.C5</u>	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administrations	✓

The remainder of this section provides analysis of key issues concerning governance, leadership and administration that have been identified as priorities at Montclair State University. The section addresses explicitly two of Montclair State's goals: Connecting students with a successful tomorrow and meeting the challenges and opportunities on the way to tomorrow.

### **Introduction – Restatement of the standard that is specific to Montclair State University**

Montclair State University has robust governance, leadership and administrative structures and processes that allow it to support and advance its mission and goals. The success of these structures is evident in the remarkable ongoing growth and transformation of the institution. As a state-assisted institution, Montclair State University has maintained its autonomy focused on the primary mission of education, which in turn benefits the students and other constituencies it serves. These governance, leadership and administrative structures have been successful in building an institution that meets its mission and goals by providing students with opportunities to connect to a successful tomorrow and at the same time meeting the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow (VII.C1.8) (VII.C1.9).

The size and scope of the institution and its commitment to shared governance has resulted in a complex system of governance, leadership and administration. While the structures involve multiple layers of operation and accountability, the focus of all structures is to be effective and provide opportunities for students to achieve and be successful. In the previous analyses of compliance with Standards III – VI, the focus was on the effectiveness of units that are part of the larger administrative level. These units have the immediate and ultimate responsibility to lead the institution's strategic planning and daily operations in effective and transparent ways. The review and analysis that follows reflects on how this continual growth and transformation is changing the physical and relational landscape of the institution and focuses on these key areas:

- Complexity and transparency of roles, processes, and accountability in governance;
- Dynamics and value of participation and shared governance;
- Access to information and flow of communication.

### **Analysis of Key Issues Related to Meeting the Standard and Criteria**

#### **Complexity and Transparency of Roles, Processes, and Accountability in Governance**

Given the ongoing growth and transformation at Montclair State the individuals who provide leadership, guided by the administrative and governance structures, must be well-qualified. In addition, these

individuals must be responsive to the challenges and opportunities of the strategic plan and the constituents of the University (strategic plan –goal 5). While much of the governance structure is determined by state statute (VII.C1.10), the implementation of the required structure is defined locally. Specifically, the rules for appointment to the Board of Trustees (BOT) by the Governor of the State of New Jersey are transparent and specified by the state of New Jersey (VII.C2e.2) and clearly establishes BOT authority to appoint and review the work of the President. In so doing, the BOT ensures that the President has the appropriate credentials (VII.C3b.1), authority and autonomy to develop and implement institutional plans, staff the organization, and identify and allocate resources in order for the institution to meet advance its mission and goals.

The BOT includes highly accomplished representatives from diverse industries including banking, public utilities, real estate, construction, pharmaceuticals, independent business and the legal sector (VII.C3a.1); (VII.C3a.9). The BOT meets seven times a year, during which it fulfills its fiduciary obligations, engaging the President and university officers, providing oversight and issuing policy guidance. The meetings are publically advertised. The BOT publishes each meeting’s agenda in advance, has open attendance according to the Open Public Meetings Act, records all meeting proceedings, and maintains a comprehensive and updated website. (VII.C3a.2) The BOT follows state regulations for the annual assessment of the president’s performance (VII.C3a.5).

The mechanisms by which the President carries out her responsibilities are complex and require cooperation and collaboration among individuals and the various constituencies at the institution. The position descriptions are clearly specified in the faculty handbook (VII.C1.10) and the reporting structure is evident in the institution’s organizational chart (VII.C1.19).

Montclair State University values the participation of its members and supports the exercise of shared governance, evidence of which can be seen throughout the University. The most important and influential exercise of faculty governance occurs at the department level where programmatic and curricular matters related to the discipline originate and are developed by the faculty. All personnel actions require decisions by department faculty committees and Chairs. Once annual allocations of new faculty positions are made by the administration—in response to position requests from department faculty through the deans—departments produce the job descriptions, create search committees, review and select finalists for the positions. The selected finalists are recommended through the deans to the Provost who recommends to the President who issues final letters of contract. After the first two-year appointment, probationary faculty are reviewed and recommended for renewal (or not) annually by department faculty, the Chair, the Dean, the Provost and reappointed by the BOT upon recommendation of the President. All applications for tenure, in the sixth year of probation, go through the same protocol beginning with review of the department faculty and Chair, as do all applications for promotion to Associate and Professor ranks.

Grassroots engagement and leadership are encouraged by democratic selection of:

- academic department heads with approval and appointment by the President
- membership on faculty and staff councils and committees (e.g. curriculum, retention, personnel)
- membership on the University Senate;
- an inclusive approach to establishing membership on search committees for leadership positions on both the academic and administrative side at the University (HR process). In searches for new deans, for example, the search committee members are predominately faculty and professional staff of the college or school;
- the election by their peers of two students (one voting and one non-voting) and one faculty representative to provide constituent representation to the BOT;

The implementation of shared governance is a complex and dynamic undertaking with input from the governance structures in departments, schools, colleges, the Graduate Council, the University Senate and the Student Government Association (SGA). In addition, most of the University’s employees are

represented by unions who engage in collective bargaining in regard to negotiable terms and conditions of employment.

As noted above, the administrative structure is locally defined and evolves to meet needs of the institution as it undergoes growth and transformation. For example, as a result of both standardized and internal assessments of student retention and graduation rates and the general education program, the administration determined the need to develop a position to focus on and improve these areas. Consequently, an Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education position was created. The portfolio of responsibilities for this position includes assessment and analysis of general education and persistence to graduation. The effectiveness of this new position continues to be assessed but reports have resulted in some newly implemented initiatives (VII.C5.2).

Another example of the effects of grassroots effort can be seen in the increasingly influential role assumed by the Graduate Council (GC), the members of which are elected by the faculty. Seeing a need for a strong advisory body, the GC makes curriculum and policy recommendation (VII.C1.11) to The Graduate School (TGS) and the Provost. The GC has three subcommittees (curriculum, policy, and doctoral), and the responsibilities of these committees is to review and make recommendations about new graduate programs and revisions to existing programs and develop and recommend general graduate admissions guidelines and guidelines for admission to specific graduate programs. In addition, the GC is particularly active in guiding the development and maintenance of a Graduate Policy Manual. (VII.C1.17) The manual, which became effective September 2016 represents a joint initiative between TGS and the CG. The GC is charged with among other duties to review the manual through the academic year and participate in the revision of the manual, which is published by the TGS prior to the start of each academic year.

While continuing to operate successfully and with considerable efficiency, Montclair State's Governance, Leadership and Administrative structures are challenged particularly in light of the growth in the size and diversity of the student body. The growth in enrollment of students and numbers of personnel, the increased footprint and complexity of the physical structures of the university have placed increased demands, some temporary and some more long term on these administrative structures. During this time of widespread institutional growth, the university has been hampered by its outdated computer software for management and retrieval of data. The currently ongoing replacement of these systems, the ERP transformation known as OneMontclair, will yield improved access to data to guide decisions and allow the institution to respond to challenges and opportunities. The necessarily aggressive implementation of these systems has challenged an already occupied faculty, staff and administrators. Along with these internal issues, the increased complexity of and requirements for adherence to federal compliance guidelines have added additional challenges as they have to every institution.

### **Dynamics of Participation and Shared Governance**

The governance of Montclair State University is a complex undertaking that involves, faculty, librarians, students, staff, administrators, the President and the Board of Trustees. Examination of the publicly available BOT minutes reveals that meetings are held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and there is an agenda that gives opportunities for representatives of various University constituencies to provide a report to the BOT (VII.C3a.4). Shared governance takes place at the department and school/college levels as reflected in the election of department chairs by department faculty with approval from the President, election of faculty members to serve on a wide range of committees including personnel and hiring committees, and election of the members of the University Senate. The University Senate (US) exists to discuss and make recommendations to the administration on matters of interest to the broader campus community. In addition to elected faculty and staff members, the Provost, all vice presidents and all academic deans sit on the Senate ex officio.

The University Senate of Montclair State University provides *“a forum for faculty, administrators, librarians, administrative professionals, professional staff, clinical and instructional specialists and*

*students to discuss and recommend policy on academic, administrative and student affairs issues to the Administration”*(excerpt from the Constitution of the Senate). The Senate’s recommendations are advisory to the Provost and the President. Details about the University Senate roles and responsibilities can be seen at their website ([VII.C1.12](#)).

The Student Government Association (SGA) is a long-standing entity at Montclair State. It is a not-for-profit corporation that is independent of Montclair State University. Its purpose is to serve students and enhance student life. All undergraduate students who pay fees are part of the SGA and so are eligible for the services provided by the SGA. Details of the rights and responsibilities of the SGA are described on their website ([VII.C1.14](#)). As part of their responsibility in the institution, the SGA manages the election of the student representative to the Board of Trustees (BOT). In addition to the role of students on the BOT, the SGA President or designee serves on committees and councils throughout the university.

In addition to the formalized structures of the University Senate and the Student Government Association, most individuals involved in shared governance seek student opinion and participation and make a regular practice of seeking student input and advice during open discussion sections throughout the year. The President has monthly meetings with the SGA and BOT Student representatives. Further, the President and the Provost meet with the University Senate Executive Committee on a semi-monthly basis (the Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life on a monthly basis, the executive Council on a weekly basis, the Deans of the Colleges/Schools on a monthly basis, the faculty from each school/college once a year, academic departments on a rotating basis ([VII.C4e.3](#)). And finally the Committee for University Effectiveness (CUE) meets regularly under the direction of the Provost to consider matters that cross the boundaries of specific individual level or unit level responsibility and are relevant to ongoing institutional assessment and improvement within the processes of institutional accreditation. While 69% of faculty indicate that the administration is open about its policies (compared to 56% of faculty at other institutions in the comparison group) ([VII.C4e.3](#)) with increased complexity, the institution recognizes a continuous need to map the flow of communication and information to ensure all constituencies remain informed on issues that impact the community.

An example that demonstrates the success of shared governance relates to the processes that are involved in review of current levels of tuition and the implementation of changes in tuition. Every April, the BOT meeting includes a Public Tuition Hearing portion. This affords the opportunity to administrators from the University’s Division on Budget and Planning to provide an updated report on financial aid programs and tuition-related matters and students are given the opportunity to provide their views on this matter in person or via email submissions. The BOT generally votes to approve the tuition rates for the following academic year during its July meeting, after the State of New Jersey budget is published and indicates the operating and fringe appropriations made to the University. The leadership and all constituents of the University are fully committed to Montclair State’s mission to provide affordable education to an expanding student body. As a result of this ongoing commitment witnessed in Open Meetings ([VII.C3a.4](#)), the University’s tuition increases have thus far been unavoidable and measured compared to those of other public institutions in the state. The institution’s goal, in harmony with its mission of access, has and continues to be to price the highest quality university education at the lower end of the range of public institutions in the state. This is a clear sign of the institution’s ability to be nimble and inventive in the face of the ongoing challenge of diminishing state funding.

The University also functions within a broader framework that includes seven unions, each accountable to different institutional members including full-time and adjunct faculty, staff, police and professional and technical engineers ([VII.C1.5](#), [VII.C1.18](#)).

In summary, shared governance is implemented at many levels in the institution through departmental, school and college committees, the University Senate, the Graduate Council, the Student Government Association, and a multitude of standing and ad-hoc committees and councils. These levels of shared governance interface to address personnel decisions, curriculum, academic computing, and university planning. Ultimately, the President and the BOT are accountable for the decisions made at the institution.

This process demonstrates that all stakeholders have a voice through their duly elected representatives and shared decisions can be reached that are responsive to the changing reality faced by Montclair State University. Shared governance can always of course be strengthened through open and effectively used communication channels when administration and faculty hold divergent views on issues (80% of faculty report that this is very/somewhat descriptive of Montclair compared to 71% at other institutions) (VII.C5.3).

### **Access to Information and Flow of Communication**

Shared governance is an organic process that is enabled by two components: first, that key constituents have access to information that enables them to participate effectively in institutional life and make appropriate decisions; and second, that there are effective and balanced flows of communication that allow participation and offer transparency in decision-making.

The OneMontclair Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) underscores how access to data is essential to decision-making at all levels of governance. The decision to embark on the OneMontclair Project was primarily the result of the inefficiencies experienced and expressed by University leadership, faculty, staff and students regarding the former administrative tools and practices that were in place for almost 30 years. The process by which the new systems were identified, vetted and chosen is another example of broad constituent involvement; while a professional team has been hired to oversee and conduct implementation, representatives of every sector, from students and custodians to the vice-presidents, were consulted to some degree at one time or another in defining these systems --- and continue to be consulted throughout the implementation. With the implementation and use of the new enterprise systems, the institution looks forward to improved access and use of data so that decisions, regardless of the level of governance, can be guided by information that is accurate and timely. The ability to provide platforms for communicating and obtaining and sharing data among constituencies will not only facilitate decision making, it will make the processes involved more transparent.

Recognizing the multiple channels through which individuals access information, Montclair State University takes advantage of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram as well as old-fashioned email to reach its constituents. In addition, the institution has instituted the use of the RAVE system to inform students, faculty and staff instantaneously about things such as weather closings, possible criminal activity on the campus, and notification of building or road closures.

When the institution recognized that communication with students should be enhanced to reflect the contemporary communication environment, an individual was hired to be the Director of Student Communication who developed HawkSync. The purpose of HawkSync is to help students learn about clubs and organizations, view upcoming programs being offered, explore their community and get them involved. In addition, the University also launched Red Hawk News, which succinctly summarizes key issues and information items that impact students in a daily email. This is accomplished through very appealing and targeted messages for students. These mechanisms have been effective as seen by student response data (VII.C5.4).

Constituents other than students have access to RAVE, receive Red Hawk News emails and other email distributed through dedicated lists. But these channels are primarily for distributing information to students.

Genuine success in shared governance models requires the effective use and balance of all communication channels so that there is broad outreach and communication with all constituents. As described earlier, Montclair State has effective means of delivering recommendations and advice from its constituents to the academic and administrative leaders who are accountable for the decisions made. Interview sessions with various campus leadership groups, such as the College and School administrative Councils in spring 2016, indicate that the flow of upward communication seems to be stronger than the flow of downward communication as decisions are made and implemented at the University. Similarly,

the HERI findings indicate that 54% of faculty believe that administrators consider faculty concerns when making policy decisions, compared to 62% at other institutions (VII.C5.3). As some faculty members suggested in the focus groups conducted (VII.C5.4) the University might consider communication strategies to further engage faculty and staff to enhance the effectiveness of shared governance.

### **Summary Statement**

An extensive analysis of relevant information indicates the governance, leadership, and the administrative structures at Montclair State University meet the criteria for MSCHE Standard VII accreditation. There is a clear administrative organizational structure that includes a legally constituted governing body that is substantially credentialed and a CEO that is autonomous and evaluated by the BOT according to State regulations. This review and analysis also indicate that MSU is in compliance with pertinent aspects of the Requirements of Affiliation including requirement #12: governance structure and requirement #13: governing board and conflict of interest.

The institution continues to develop in relation to the sufficient number of qualified administrators, adequate resources for administrators, regular engagement with faculty and students, and procedures for evaluating administrative units, and the assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration.

This section on Standard VII: Governance, Leadership and Administration is highlighted by three key findings:

1. The University has clearly defined administrative structure and roles that have enabled measured and thoughtful growth. This administrative structure, and the ways that key members interact and define their responsibilities, is responsive to the evolving needs of the institution and continued assessment on how to best serve Montclair State University students, faculty, and staff.
2. Shared governance is evidenced at all levels of institutional operations and is operationalized through effective mechanisms that take into account local and state agreements.
3. Existing communication channels and the flow of communication across the operational units and administrative levels of the institution can be improved.

### **Next Steps for Strategic Planning**

The significant growth and transformation of the University since 2007 requires continued assessment and expansion of administrative structures and personnel to meet the increasing demands of students and personnel, as well as the complexity of the physical structures of the university.

The shared governance process demonstrates that all stakeholders have a voice through their duly elected representatives and shared decisions can be reached that are responsive to the changing reality faced by Montclair State University.

1. Shared governance can be strengthened through open and effectively used communication channels. Successful shared governance models require the effective use and balance of all communication channels so that there is broad outreach and communication with all constituents.
2. Montclair State has effective means of delivering recommendations and advice from its constituents to the academic and administrative leaders who are accountable for the decisions made. It is suggested that the University consider additional communication strategies to actively involve faculty and staff appropriately in decision-making while also keeping them informed of developments in order to further enhance overall engagement and the effectiveness of shared governance.

## CONCLUSION

Montclair State University meets each of the seven new accreditation standards and requirements of affiliation (articulated in the thirteenth edition of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards and Requirements of Affiliation). As a participant in the Collaborative Implementation Project (CIP), the University used a comprehensive model to study the effectiveness of the institution in meeting its mission and goals as it has been undergoing cycles of growth and transformation in all aspects of the institution.

This Self-Study provides an opportunity to critically examine Montclair State University's performance and progress as articulated in the intended outcomes identified in the introductory section of the Self-Study. The critical analyses conducted in the course of the past two years indicate that the institution meets the expectations for accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The University continues to function efficiently and effectively in serving a growing and diverse student population, making excellent use of its resources to support key strategic initiatives. The University has made great strides in enhancing its culture of assessment, making data-driven decisions integral to the evaluation and renewal of its academic and student support programs as well as the essential infrastructures that make University life functional (facilities, information technology, HR, finance and budgeting, etc.). The institution's commitment to creating a vibrant intellectual environment is clearly demonstrated in the care with which faculty, staff, and administrators are recruited and selected to support program growth, research endeavors, quality teaching, and student life. The analyses find strong support that the five goals of the strategic plan – connecting with a successful future, connecting people and ideas, connecting to place, connecting globally, and meeting challenges and opportunities have guided the institution well.

The focus of analyses and any recommendations in each section has been to set the foundation for addressing existing challenges and informing the development of the University's next strategic plan. While specific recommendations emerged that directly connect to individual MSCHE Standards, two broader recommendations are also outlined below. These recommendations will help the institution leverage the rich potential resulting from its growth and transformation to ensure continuous improvement in this next phase of the University.

### Recommendations for Institutional Improvement

#### Goals/Objectives: Streamline Assessment Activities and Reporting to Facilitate Strategic Planning and Institutional Improvement

Oversight	Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)	Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes
Provost's Office CUE Executive Council	Establish a Leadership Team with representatives from the Provost's Office, OIR, and other CUE members (representatives from Academic Affairs, Advancement, Budget and Planning, Facilities, Human Resources, Information Technology, Student Development & Campus Life, Treasury and Finance, Dean's Offices, Faculty, Staff)	Year 1: Create policies, procedures, and a reorganization of CUE to allow for a revitalized, substantive review of activities and new mechanisms whereby assessment results are reported by colleges and divisions.

**Goals/Objectives: Streamline Assessment Activities and Reporting to Facilitate Strategic Planning and Institutional Improvement**

<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)</b>	<b>Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes</b>
		Year 2: Fully implement CUE working group for quality improvement, coupled with reinforcement of current reporting requirements within divisions and academic units.
		Year 3: Implement internal and public dissemination of the summary findings of the CUE working group, along with full reporting on in-progress strategic plan efforts.
		Years 4-8: Ongoing review of assessment processes and procedures to ensure alignment with University mission, new strategic plan, and MSCHE standards

**Goals/Objectives: Enhance Internal Communication Across the Institution**

<b>Oversight</b>	<b>Allocated Resources (human, physical, technological, financial)</b>	<b>Timeline for Deliverables/Outcomes</b>
Provost's Office CUE Executive Council	University Communications Dean's Council Chair's Council Senate Faculty and Staff SDCL representatives	Year 1: Map existing University communication activities and available resources; develop a broad communication plan and clear objectives, protocols, and standard operating procedures for execution
		Year 2: Begin implementation of communication plan and continue assessment of required resources to execute appropriately
		Years 3-8: Survey institutional stakeholders for effectiveness and satisfaction with communications (addressing key issues of connection, flow of information, transparency, participation and collaboration) and make appropriate refinements to plan

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**Structure and Membership of the Working Groups and Compliance Committee**

<b>Standard 1: Mission &amp; Goals</b>	<p><u>Chair:</u> Brian Carolan, Associate Dean, The Graduate School</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Fred Bonato, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs  Catherine Bruno, Post Award Officer  Elizabeth Emery, Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures  Eden Kyse, Director, Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services  Stephanie Silvera, Associate Professor, Health and Nutrition Sciences  Shahla Wunderlich, Professor, Health and Nutrition Sciences</p>
<b>Standard II: Ethics and Integrity</b>	<p><u>Chairs:</u>  Ron Sharps, Associate Dean, College of the Arts  Dorothy Rogers, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Religious Studies</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Rashida Batte Bowden, Financial Aid Counselor  Mark Clatterbuck, Assistant Professor, Philosophy and Religion  Patrali Chatterjee, Professor, Marketing  Brian Edwards, Coordinator of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Center  Ram Misra, Professor, Information and Operations Management  Lynarkah Stephen, Director of Human Resources for University Facilities  Laying Wu, Electron Microscopy Specialist/Lab Director, College of Science and Mathematics</p>
<b>Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Experience</b>	<p><u>Chair:</u>  Suzanne McCotter, Interim Assistant Dean, College of Education and Human Services</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Michele Campagna, Executive Director, Center for Advising and Student Transitions  Melissa Harris, Program Administrator, College of Education and Human Services  Todd Kelshaw, Associate Professor, School of Communication and Media  Melinda Knight, Professor of English and Director of the Center for Writing Excellence  Ram Misra, Professor, Information and Operations Management  Elizabeth McPherson, Associate Professor, Theatre and Dance  Diana Thomas, Professor, Mathematical Sciences  Steve Tolman, Associate Director of Student Involvement, Center for Student Involvement</p>
<b>Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience</b>	<p><u>Chairs:</u>  Allyson Straker Banks, Associate Vice President for Student Academic Services  Jeffrey Indiveri-Gant, Director, Undergraduate Admissions</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Maureen Branca, Student Service Specialist, School of Business  Kathleen Hughes, Head of Cataloging Department, Library  Miriam Linver, Associate Professor, Family and Child Studies  Jordanna Maziarz, Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions  Tara Mellor, Assistant Director, Residence Life  Kelly O'Connor, Assistant Director of Campus Recreation Programs  Jillian Ploskonka, Assistant Director, Center for Leadership</p>

	<p>Denise Rodak, Coordinator of Veteran and Military Resources  Hamal Strayhorn, Assistant Director of Residence Life  Stephanie Sabaliauskas, Assistant Director of Sports Information and Promotions</p>
<b>Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment</b>	<p><u>Chairs:</u>  Irina Koroleva, Assistant Director of Assessment, Academic Affairs  Masela Obade, Assistant Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Research Analysis</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Carolyn Demefack, Senior Instructional Designer  Karen Goodman, Professor, School of Music  Matthew Gorrington, Associate Professor, Earth and Environmental Studies  Daniel Jean, Executive Director of EOF and Academic Development  Joann Pinto, Associate Professor, Accounting, Law, and Taxation  Maria Jose Garcia Vizcaino, Associate Professor, Spanish and Italian  Jennifer Holly Wells, Associate Director of First Year Writing  Kristin Scrabis-Fletcher, Assistant Professor, Exercise Science and Physical Education</p>
<b>Standard VI: Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement</b>	<p><u>Chair:</u>  Judith Lin Hunt, Dean, Library Services  Karen Ramsden, Research and Projects Specialist, Library Administration</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Zacrah Battle, College Administrator, College of the Arts  Shawn Connolly, Vice President for University Facilities  Yolanda Brandon, Director of Facilities Strategic Operations  Jon Rosenhein, Vice President for Finance, and Treasurer  David Josephson, Executive Director of Budget and Planning</p>
<b>Standard VII: Governance, Leadership and Administration</b>	<p><u>Chair:</u>  Ken Sumner, Professor, Psychology</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Katrina Bulkley, Professor, Educational Leadership  Margaree Coleman Carter, Dean of Students  Harry Haines, Professor, School of Communication and Media  Quinn Vega, Professor, Biology and Molecular Biology  Leslie Wilson, Professor, History  Zaman Zamanian, Associate Professor, Economics and Finance  Tara Morlando Zurlo, Director, Red Hawk Central</p>
<b>Compliance Committee</b>	<p><u>Chair:</u>  Steven Johnson, Director of Institutional Research</p> <p><u>Members:</u>  Shannon Gary, Dean of Students  Catherine Boscher-Murphy, Associate Director of Financial Aid  Barbara Ritola, Associate Director, Curriculum and Accreditation, Academic Affairs  Leslie Sutton-Smith, University Registrar  Yanling Sun, Director of Technology Training and Integration, Technology Training and Integration  Melissa Harris, Assessment and Accreditation Coordinator</p>

## APPENDICES A – G

### (Additional Documents as Identified in 2015 Guidelines for “Self Study: Creating a Useful Process and Report”)

Required documents can be reviewed by accessing the active links of the appendices presented in the table below:

Appendix A	<a href="#"><u>Annual Institutional Profile</u></a>
Appendix B	<a href="#"><u>Financial Documents</u></a>
Appendix C	Enrollment Data C1. <a href="#"><u>Actual Enrollment for the Current Year</u></a> C2. <a href="#"><u>Enrollment Data for Three Previous Years</u></a>
Appendix D	Projected Enrollment Data D1. <a href="#"><u>Projected Enrollment for Current Institutional Financial Plan</u></a> D2. <a href="#"><u>Projected Enrollment for Next Three Years</u></a>
Appendix E	Audited Financial Statements and Management Letters E1. <a href="#"><u>Fiscal Year 2014 Financial Statements &amp; Management Letter</u></a> E2. <a href="#"><u>Fiscal Year 2015 Financial Statements &amp; Management Letter</u></a>
Appendix F	Financial Information Submitted to IPEDS for the Last Three Years F1. <a href="#"><u>IPEDS Financials 2013-2014</u></a> F2. <a href="#"><u>IPEDS Financials 2014-2015</u></a> F3. <a href="#"><u>IPEDS Financials 2015-2016</u></a>
Appendix G	Essential Documents G1. <a href="#"><u>Montclair State University - Institutional Catalog</u></a> G2. <a href="#"><u>Montclair State University - Organizational Charts</u></a> G3. <a href="#"><u>Montclair State University - Faculty Handbook</u></a> G4. <a href="#"><u>Montclair State University - Student Handbook</u></a>