

Report to the Faculty, Administration, Trustees, and Students of
New York University
New York, NY 10012

by
An Evaluation Team representing the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Prepared after study of the institution's self-study report
and a visit to the campus on April 21-24, 2004

This report represents the views of the evaluation team as interpreted by the Chair; it goes directly to the institution before being considered by the Commission. It is a confidential document prepared as an educational service for the benefit of the institution. All comments in the report are made in good faith, in an effort to assist New York University. This report is based solely on an educational evaluation of the institution and of the manner in which it appears to be carrying out its educational objectives.

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AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

President: John Sexton

Chief Academic Officer: David McLaughlin, Provost

Chair of the Board of Trustees: Martin Lipton

I. Context and Nature of the Visit:

Peer review on-site evaluation for the reaffirmation of accreditation of New York University.

The institution grants Associate's, Bachelor's, Certificate, Master's, Doctorate, and first Professional degrees.

There are no branch campuses.

Additional locations are La Pietra in Florence, Italy; Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, NY; College of Staten Island in Staten Island, NY; and NYU at St. Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, NY.

NYU offers one distance learning program in Master of Science in Management and Systems.

NYU's contractual arrangements and consortia include the Trium (Stern School of Business with the London School of Economics and Political Science), the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium (the Graduate School of Arts and Science with Columbia, Fordham, CUNY-Graduate Center, Princeton, Rutgers-New Brunswick, SUNY-Stony Brook, New School University, teachers College-Columbia), library consortium (with Cooper Union, New School University, Mannes College of Music, New York School of Interior Design, Parsons School of Design), and affiliation agreements with numerous hospitals for programs in medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, and other areas.

NYU used the selected topics model for the 2004 self-study.

II. Affirmation of continued compliance with Eligibility Requirements

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews, the team affirms that the institution continues to meet eligibility requirements 1-7.

III. Compliance with federal requirements; issues relative to state regulatory or other accrediting agency requirements.

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews, the team affirms that the institution's Title IV cohort default rate is within federal limits.

IV. Compliance with Accreditation Standards

A. Peer review commentary

NYU is the largest private university in the United States, with approximately 19,000 undergraduates (in eight schools), in addition to a wide-range of distinguished graduate and professional school programs. 173 years old, it recently has engineered a significant transformation of its undergraduate programs. This transformation has been both in size (full-time undergraduate enrollment grew by approximately 45% between 1992 and 2003), residential nature (the Self-Study describes it as a transformation "from a commuter school into one that is largely residential"), and, even more remarkably, in quality (1222 to 1348 in terms of re-centered SATs and 3.29 to 3.77 in terms of GPA). At the same time, there has been a significant increase in retention (whether fourth-year cohort retention or six-year graduation rates, increases of approximately 10% over the decade to numbers that are now pushing 80%)—although these aggregate data sometimes mask significantly different stories across the various schools (such as the even higher student body quality in CAS and Stern). As the Final Report of the Presidential Transition Team

noted in 2002: “NYU is a completely different institution than it was twenty years ago and quite different than it was only ten years ago.”

Not surprisingly, given this dramatic reconfiguration of undergraduate education since the time of NYU’s last reaccreditation, NYU has chosen, as the focus of its 2004 Self-Study, a report on undergraduate education (including, prominently, academic affairs and student affairs). The Self-Study, appropriately, looks with considerable satisfaction at the dramatic improvements that have occurred during this period, while recognizing, with an honest degree of candor appropriate for an academic institution, a number of challenges this transformation has produced, and with which the institution is now grappling. Particularly when placed alongside the equally impressive Final Report of the Presidential Transition Team from 2002, the Self-Study provides a coherent and responsible blueprint of the major issues, as well as opportunities, facing NYU as well as at least a preliminary outline of possible ways to address them in the years to come. It is our hope that the observations of our site visit team can assist NYU, its administration, and other constituencies, as NYU approaches these issues that are the natural outgrowth of the changes at NYU, as well as its history and location.

By all accounts, NYU is in good hands. There was a high degree of enthusiasm for the leadership and vision of the President and Provost and the team that they have assembled. It was also clear that, in an institution as large and complex as NYU, a great degree of its ability to work as well and cohesively as it does, is due to a collegiality and commitment of the deans and other academic leaders to the overall success of the institution as a whole. These are strong resources as NYU addresses the issues and opportunities identified in the Self-Study and in the Presidential Transition Report, several of which we would like to highlight and perhaps amplify here.

First, as this growth (in size and quality) of the undergraduate program has occurred, it has naturally grown within existing structures and programs. NYU has, for many years, enjoyed a number of distinguished professional schools—several of which (such as law and medicine) that, while having no formal undergraduate component and hence not a direct focus of the Self-Study, nonetheless are important in the prominence and opportunities of NYU. Other distinguished professional schools, and in particular Stern and Tisch, have long had large undergraduate programs that have a coherence and “fit” with their graduate level professional programs as well. It is clear that these schools have shared in the remarkable strengthening of undergraduates noted in the Self-Study.

As noted at the start, there has been an unambiguous transformation, overall, in undergraduate program size, student body quality, and residential character. This has created an unusual mixture of school-centric features (e.g., curricula, including majors, research, and general education) and university-wide features (e.g., residential life issues that span all eight schools). It has also led to some concerns about possible overlap and redundancies (the Self-Study notes, among these, “[c]ommunications studies at Steinhardt and journalism and mass communication in CAS are cases in point, as are the separate performing arts programs in Steinhardt and Tisch or the overlap between the music departments of CAS and Steinhardt”), as well as concerns about transfer students and the ways in which they may “fit” into each school’s mission and philosophy. We believe that, both as a matter of NYU’s own mission, as well as the reality of its need (like any academic institution) to focus its available resources in a coherent and articulated fashion, that NYU is correct to look at these possible overlaps and redundancies following its period of remarkable growth and transformation.

As NYU addresses these issues, it might beneficially acknowledge that, as it has matured into a national, full-service institution of remarkable breadth and depth—and recognizing the rich panoply of professional schools that NYU enjoys (both with and without formal undergraduate educational components)—increasingly its intellectual “core” will be identified with FAS, both in terms of its undergraduate program (CAS) and its departments. The recent creation at NYU of the Provost’s office is an important step, we

believe, in providing an academically-focused center to the various efforts of the individual schools in undergraduate education and life and a recognition that it is more than a collection of separate schools. We believe that those important steps could be enhanced by the recognition that, as a national university, NYU should have an intellectual core that defines its ultimate mission, and around which the other schools can be structured and rationalized. Twenty years ago, perhaps, NYU was not yet ready for such a “center.” As the Final Report of the Presidential Transition Team recognizes, however, the recent advances in the quality of its students and programs (and, although the Self-Study focuses less on this—faculty and department quality that have been enhanced by a commitment to excellence in hiring) permits FAS to perform that function now, as it does at most distinguished national universities. We encourage NYU to acknowledge this systematically as it works its way through the issues raised by its remarkable transformation.

Doing so, in our view, may bring a useful focus to many of NYU’s diverse initiatives that its Self-Study highlights. Among the benefits we see might include the following. (a) Many of NYU’s professional schools already acknowledge the importance of CAS, and CAS is clearly aware of the strengths that the existence of these professional schools bring to its programs and students. This provides an opportunity to forge an unusually strong set of relationships between CAS and the professional schools, to the benefit of both. (b) Emphasizing the intellectual core provided to a modern national university by FAS can establish a focus for articulating the mission, opportunities, and future of various programs throughout NYU, most particularly in GSP and Gallatin, both of which have important relationships with CAS. This includes the role of transfer students, which plays a particularly prominent role in CAS and, as the Self-Study acknowledges, needs to be brought into realignment with the changes in student composition, quality, and retention brought about by the successes of recent years. (c) This concept of an intellectual core within a diverse institution may provide a lens through which the relationship of residential life initiatives (including dormitory issues) to educational and programmatic issues can be articulated. In part, this is because the impact of residential life initiatives is likely to be most profoundly felt by CAS students, who do not otherwise have a strong school-based identity around which to build a sense of “community.” And in part it is because as NYU looks to residential life as a way of building bridges between curricular and co- and extra-curricular initiatives, the shared residential experience also provides NYU, within existing structures, with a possible opportunity to build a clear “NYU” identity that spans schools. (d) Without prejudging the appropriate outcome, we note that there are the beginnings of some discussions about a possible consideration of a common (if minimal) set of courses that, taken in the first year, would provide shared experiences, centered on the liberal arts tradition, that span all of the schools offering undergraduate education. We encourage these discussions to continue, as they clearly focus on both the idea of NYU-wide identity for all undergraduates as well as a recognition (shared, we believe, by all of the schools) that, at the undergraduate level, even professionally-trained students are well-served by a coherent liberal arts commitment as well.

The issue of FAS as an intellectual core goes beyond these issues. NYU also should consider the need to build the resources to allow FAS to respond appropriately to undergraduate education (particularly including an increasing emphasis on undergraduate research), graduate education and faculty research, and the unique demands placed on FAS in terms of providing services—mostly courses—to the other undergraduate schools. Without considering that latter role, FAS’s size (529 tenure and tenure-track excluding the Institute of Fine Arts and Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences), is—at best—marginally adequate given its own student population (undergraduate and graduate). When the ancillary demands of responding to undergraduate interests and requirements in the other schools are added to the mix as well, it is clear that, without an expansion in FAS’s faculty size, it will not be able to achieve the full promise of its intellectual role, nor meet the needs of the recent excellence of the undergraduates. Importantly, the distance between rhetoric and reality with respect to undergraduate education and its centrality cannot be closed without a commitment to dedicate a significant portion of any incremental resources to undergraduate education.

Three other overarching observations, in our view, arise out of the Self-Study that are not easily placed into the discussion of a particular standard. First, given the growth and transformation in recent years, and the number of issues that this has spawned—as articulated in the Self-Study—it seems to us that NYU’s planning and response plate is relatively full. Other than as they relate to clearly identified priorities, we believe that the recent articulation by NYU to look to a “pause” in its student growth is wise. As fully recognized in the Self-Study and in the Final Report of the Presidential Transition Team, the institution needs to come up with authentic answers to the interesting, important, and oftentimes complex issues that have been identified as arising out of NYU’s recent growth and successes. While it may continue to need to “infill” on faculty (particularly, as noted above, in FAS) and infrastructure (such as IT systems), these issues are distinct from a growth in the student population at the current time, even if only in the most prosaic sense that in the short-run they involve a focus on expenditures rather than revenues.

Second, NYU is of and a part of New York City. Unlike many other urban universities (Columbia in Morningside Heights as an example) that have their own defined “campus,” NYU’s campus is the streets of New York City, and Greenwich Village in particular. This creates both particular challenges—thinking of “community” and “residential life,” for example—that are distinct for NYU, as well as particular opportunities—not just engagement with the urban environment but a shared living “space” between students and faculty that most residential campuses cannot enjoy. As NYU continues its evolution to a national (and international) university (seen, for example, in the decline in its percentage of undergraduates who come from New York City—from nearly half in the early 1990s to approximately one-quarter today), it is clear that these roots within New York City are not just an inevitable reality, but one of NYU’s significant opportunities.

Third, we would like to emphasize the significance to NYU of continuing to emphasize new, permanent, resources that go beyond its historically tuition-driven focus. As stated in the 2002 “Report of the Student Enrollment, Financial Aid & Housing Committee to the Presidential Transition Team,” there is “a triangle of potentially incompatible and inherently interrelated conditions: number of undergraduate students enrolled, quality, and income produced. At NYU all of the schools are heavily tuition dependent, more than 90% in some cases.”

Whatever might have been true of an institution focused on several strong professional schools, as NYU now has expanded its undergraduate programs, and has improved the quality of its student and faculty alike, it is clear that NYU’s resources are thinly-stretched, and academic issues frequently are discussed side-by-side with revenue-generating issues. NYU has accomplished a great deal for an institution whose operating budget depends overwhelmingly on tuition receipts, and it should take pride in that. Given the University’s current quality and its ambitions to improve, however, it is essential that it continues its already-vigorous efforts to grow its endowment and alumni support, and increase the support of the greater NYU community. It will of course remain heavily reliant on tuition, but we would urge NYU not to accept this as the only avenue to pursue in working out its “triangle” between numbers, quality, and income produced. Sustainability and quality-based decisions require that NYU have the resources for the long-run to compete successfully with the institutions NYU now appropriately identifies as its peers. It is appropriate to note not only the challenges (a relatively low alumni base of support and a relatively thin per-student endowment), but also the opportunities, that include the significant financial support to NYU provided by its Board, as well as the potential that NYU has within New York City as it assumes, much as the City itself, a national and indeed international role.

B. Standards addressed substantively within the Selected Topics

Standard 8: Admissions

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

Over the past decade, there have been substantial changes in NYU's undergraduate admissions and enrollment. These changes clearly called for a rethinking of admissions and financial aid policies and practices. NYU's recently revitalized Admissions and Financial Aid office provides an impressive backbone of support to the University's new position among elite private institutions. The new Director/Associate Provost has made impressive strides in advancing admissions processes, in rethinking financial aid criteria and operations, in closing the significant gap between demonstrated student need and NYU aid packages, and in understanding overlap issues between NYU and the schools with which NYU now realistically competes for students. Only fifteen months into her position, the Associate Provost appears to have established close and productive working relationships with deans and directors across the University's schools, relationships that have allowed significant progress in both policies and processes.

The substantial change in the number and quality of applications to most NYU programs has diminished the importance of merit-based aid in attracting and retaining students. While NYU acknowledges its inability to meet demonstrated need for its enrolling and continuing students, the recent shift to an emphasis on need-based aid is commendable. The substantial reduction for AY 03-04 in the average financial aid gap is especially impressive and seems likely to strengthen NYU's competitive position, helping it to maintain both excellence and accessibility.

Equally impressive is the new strategic use of the admissions process to advance the University's goal of developing an enhanced sense of community by specifically assessing the depth of applicant's involvements during their secondary years. Redefinition and reordering of admissions criteria, while potentially controversial, appear to have won nearly universal acceptance across the University's schools, and the Associate Provost's careful plan for outcome assessments will allow tracking of the impact these changes have over time. It is clear that the role of the Analytic Planning group will continue to be especially critical in tracking the impact of recent changes.

The Admissions and Financial Aid office has clearly benefited from the University's willingness to allocate substantial monies to permit "emergency" response to continuing students adversely impacted by tuition increases.

The team wishes to note, however, that administrators at Tisch remain concerned about "gapping" in financial aid packaging. Financial aid had been seen as a device used in recruitment, and that perception remains at Tisch. With its preeminent position and its high admissions yield rates, Tisch administrators continue to believe that they do not receive a proportionate share of merit awards. Tisch faculty and staff believe that the aid policies are a deterrent to students' full involvement and professional development, and that gapping in the packaging of aid awards also significantly impacts diversity, not simply racial or ethnic diversity, but diversity of family income and orientation. Tisch administrators regard this impact as significant: diversity of backgrounds and viewpoints is especially important, they believe, to ensuring that the school's offerings and programs fully reflect the society of which it is a part. Tisch faculty and staff comments did not reflect awareness of recent changes in financial aid practices, which give promise over time of markedly alleviating the current problems created by gapping for Tisch students.

Suggestions for improvement

The self-study recognizes some limitations in current technology, which impact the admissions and financial aid operations. Given the large number of applications that must be reviewed, a substantial investment in technology is essential.

As the University contemplates a new capital campaign, priority attention should continue to be directed to aid funds, particularly for need-based aid (an issue that takes on greater importance for some schools, such as the Ehrenkranz School of Social Work and the McGhee Division of SCPS, than for others).

While not the province of the Admissions and Financial Aid Office, NYU has ongoing issues related to internal transfer criteria. The self-study particularly recognizes issues related to the transfer of students from GSP to the other schools. As the institution becomes more competitive, it should consider changing the criteria for internal transfer so that they are more consistent with criteria for admission of external transfer candidates.

It is not clear that the recruitment messages are consistent with programs that NYU offers. Several students with whom the team spoke pointed out that Admissions touts all of the wonderful activities available in New York City, but fails to note how expensive it will be to take advantage of them. As NYU establishes clearer educational goals and priorities, Admissions approaches will need corresponding adjustment.

Standard 12: General Education

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

An important and laudable goal of NYU's plans for the future is the development of a university-wide identity – one that is educational and intellectual as well as residential. Although NYU has made notable progress in the area of general education through improvements in the Morse Academic Plan, it appears that a consensus about the nature of a university-wide liberal arts core remains to be achieved. Absent such consensus, the MAP is used selectively by the different schools and does not yet provide a common educational and intellectual experience for all NYU undergraduates. Discourse is more about the parts of the MAP that are not used than about a shared foundational core that all schools jointly and equally advocate and on which they build their discrete programs. Lack of clarity about the MAP's educational purpose, noted in previous reviews of the program, appears to persist among students and faculty. This results in widely divergent perceptions in both groups about the educational value of the MAP and the emergence of soft distinctions in some areas between “disciplinary” and “pre-disciplinary” MAP courses. Additional piecemeal modifications to the MAP, which itself emerged when NYU was very different from what it has become, are not likely to address these systemic issues.

Suggestion for improvement

The progress in the MAP and the fresh focus on the development of a university-wide identity make now the right time for NYU to determine clearly the desirability and character of a minimal university-wide liberal arts core, a fundamental program that in key respects could define an NYU undergraduate education, regardless of school. Such a basic core naturally would reside in CAS and would allow different schools the freedom to enhance it to meet their focused educational needs. In conversation, students unambiguously expressed an identity as NYU students, in the broadest sense. A well-defined

minimal university-wide core, with clear educational purpose, could help give that emerging identity a stronger intellectual substance.

C. Standards addressed partially within the Selected Topics

Standard 1: Missions, Goals, and Objectives

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

There is much enthusiasm for the leadership and vision of the President and Provost and the team that they have assembled. It is clear that, in an institution as large and complex as NYU, a great degree of its ability to work as well and cohesively as it does, is due to a collegiality and commitment of the deans and other academic leaders to the overall success of the institution as a whole. The recent creation of the Provost's office is an important step in providing an academically focused center to the various efforts of the individual schools in undergraduate education and life and a recognition that it is more than a collection of separate schools. There seems to be a shared purpose – shared by the administration, faculty, staff, and students – in the ongoing activities of assessment and planning.

Suggestion for improvement

The University would benefit from the recognition that, as a national university, NYU should have an intellectual core that defines its ultimate mission, and to which all other schools within the University can be rationalized and structured around. The recent advances in the quality of its students and programs should permit FAS to perform that function, as it does at most distinguished national universities.

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

Academic planning

The Analytical Planning Group (“APG”) was created in the last two years to provide a comprehensive approach to data gathering and analysis. Its function is to provide the University with the quantitative institutional research basis for academic decision making at all levels within NYU. APG has its roots in course enrollment management within the Registrar's office but its new mandate properly embraces the entire University and its institutional programs. The evidence that the University has made this planning function a high priority is the permission they were given to hire eight new people during a hiring freeze.

APG already has developed a new Survey Cycle for reports, hired a “Report Czar,” and undertaken a comprehensive analysis of faculty deployment. Deans now receive an analysis of faculty-level teaching data. Data are available by school, by major, and by student entry status. APG is developing reports to support the University's new five- to seven-year review cycle of its academic programs. Enrollment Planning and Budget Planning, separate activities in the past, are now integrated under the new Provost and supported by APG.

As might be expected, the young APG has concentrated on developing its capabilities and organizing a rational schedule of standard academic planning reports while it produces the necessary reports. At the

same time, it is responding to the rather extraordinary number of requests for studies that have characterized the University under the leadership of its new President and that have accompanied the creation of the new post of Provost.

Suggestions for improvement: Academic planning

In addition to its role in providing analytical reports for decision making by department chairs, deans, and higher-level administrators, the APG has the opportunity and the responsibility to inform the faculty and faculty support staff in the academic units of findings useful to them in carrying out their fundamental academic program responsibilities. Public forums - "town hall meetings" - to present and discuss the results of the freshman survey or of the latest retention and graduation-rate report will attract the participation of faculty advisers, staff with advising responsibilities, and other persons interested in the topic being discussed.

Residence planning

NYU leadership has elected to focus on its residential environment to address the issues of community relationships, faculty engagement, interdisciplinary interaction and peer education. This is an ambitious undertaking for an institution that not long ago identified itself as a commuter school.

Suggestions for improvement: Residence planning

Our inquiry revealed no significant master planning for housing (though we had no meetings with staff from Housing Services nor the auxiliary component of the University). Considerable planning for undergraduate student housing is essential. The results of that planning will guide potentially very expensive residential renewal and educational activities, requiring detailed resource allocation sources and uses planning as well.

We suggest that NYU develop a mid- and long-range plan for housing that would provide a template for disposition and acquisition of various properties, and for renovations of existing buildings, identifying the amount and type of non-residential elements desired in each residence. The academic and student affairs staff should design the programmatic model desired for NYU's residential education program and then the "business" staff should develop a strategy for enabling that model through review of the physical housing options, financial strategies (that could involve creative private partnerships) and specific interventions for accomplishing those objectives. The current "fire fighting" approach to addressing these issues is inefficient and ineffective in enabling the kind of residential communities for which NYU is striving.

Standard 9: Student Support Services

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

The Student Affairs staff appears to provide strong central services. We observed thoughtful leadership and consistent approaches to serving students among the staff in health, student activities, commuter services, and residential education. Conditions for delivery of these services are mixed, though, with exceptional quality available for those units housed in the Kimmel Center. Career Services and Residential Education, conversely, are operating out of sub-standard office facilities.

Residential life

The challenges to developing a residential education program include:

- A potpourri of predominantly large buildings, some owned and some leased, mostly designed to provide sleeping accommodations for students and lacking common lounges, meeting rooms and other community support amenities useful (but not necessarily essential) to community building and program development.
- Geographical distribution of these buildings across significant acreage of lower Manhattan, precluding optimal relationships between classrooms, campus recreational facilities and 'home.'
- A housing assignment model that favors seniors over sophomores and ensures that sophomores will live at considerable distant from the 'core' NYU campus (to the extent that one can be defined).
- Minimal involvement by faculty through neophyte faculty resident and faculty associate programs.
- A confusing split in operational responsibilities with Residential Education provided through Student Affairs leadership but assignments and facility management 'owned' by the auxiliary side of NYU. This recent split in responsibilities has bifurcated attention to the residences in an unfortunate way and has resulted in discordant management of housing along often competing dimensions: revenue optimization versus educational achievement.

NYU has made some strides to address some of these limitations. Freshman clustering with living-learning options (Explorations) are a positive step, albeit a fairly small one. The newest faculty residents are deeply committed to enhancing faculty-student engagement in the residence halls and to supporting intellectual life among residents, but many more faculty will be needed to establish a meaningful program of faculty partnership in the co-curricular lives of students. Explorations may be the best example of an effective approach to interdisciplinary student engagement by class in the residential setting, but currently only serves approximately 15% of the first year population.

A successful first year program will immediately reveal inherent weaknesses in the sophomore year experience and, thus, reconsideration of the current lottery system is inevitable. The existence of a newly constituted task force to conduct such an examination is reassuring. However, each solution generates new challenges and should upperclass students be shuffled out to the furthest residences, NYU will face new challenges to retain their ongoing connections with the institution.

Students find the sophomore housing at Lafayette to be very good. A strong sense of community is building there, especially with the addition of more peer educators.

The students seem to appreciate the Explorations program. They applaud its extension to more options and urge moving into similar programming for sophomores (one group of sophomores did their own planning for next year, successfully finding a faculty mentor).

Suggestions for improvement: Residential life

There is a need for residence strategic planning in a way that crosscuts 'housing' and 'residential life.' In particular, there is a need to recognize that the academic and community-building interests of residential life need to be prioritized and guide those making plans for the physical facilities (see standard 2).

The faculty-in-residence program needs to be strongly supported by the University administration. The few currently in place are committed and excited by the opportunity, but the size of the program is inadequate. Faculty-in-residence also need to be allowed to develop thematic foci comparable to the Explorations program faculty.

Mental health

In light of the four deaths experienced this year, NYU has taken the issue of mental health quite seriously. It is difficult to imagine a college or university that has done as thorough a job of developing a set of interventions for addressing student mental health as NYU has done.

Suggestions for improvement: Mental health

The team has no specific suggestions for improvement.

Advising

NYU provides undergraduate advisement through its schools, variously using single, double, and quadruple-tiered centralized and decentralized models, and involving faculty, staff, and (to a limited extent) peers in student advisement. Qualified professionals operate the schools' offices of advisement, and the schools have appropriate procedures and policies to address student advising needs.

In the undergraduate preprofessional programs, students' personal concerns about lifestyle and career choices are inextricably bound with academic choices. More broadly across the University, however, academic advisement is more narrowly defined, with only limited connection to residential and student life although pilot programs currently underway will to some extent bridge the gap between academic and student life issues. Advising arrangements across the University do not currently do justice to NYU's stature as an elite institution, nor do they serve either students or advisers optimally as students seek to take advantage of the full breadth of NYU's resources.

Students' expectations of their advisers seem relatively limited: students report consulting their advisers primarily for basic information or for requisite registration signatures. Advising loads vary widely, from over 200 in some Steinhardt programs, to a seemingly more reasonable 40-50 in one of Tisch's larger departments, to fewer than 10 in Dentistry's baccalaureate program. NYU as a whole appears not to have defined clearly its expectations of advisers, or to have articulated clearly the relationship between "advising" and the "mentoring" programs it is currently piloting in some residence halls and for students in some undergraduate programs. Each of the preprofessional schools reports assembling basic student information and adviser training materials for its own advising staff (whether professional advisers or faculty) and determining within the school how advisers will be assigned, what the format of advising meetings will be, and how and by whom advising will be overseen. (Thus, for example, advising for first year students in one of Tisch's largest programs is done in a group format, with students only exceptionally having access to individual advising meetings; in the other large program and in the smaller Tisch departments, students meet individually with advisers from the start.)

The assistant dean for advising in CAS directs a large staff of full-time professional advisers. In cooperation with the dean of freshman, advising services in CAS include a vast array of support programs for undergraduate students, including a successful and well-regarded summer orientation program, the PALS program that involves upperclassmen as peer advisers to freshman, and a voluntary faculty mentor program in which 230 members of the Arts and Sciences faculty were involved this year. Students in CAS seem generally pleased with the office of the assistant dean for advising.

Each division in SCPS operates its own distinct advisement program. We note the especially ambitious advisement program in GSP, in which each incoming student has an individual interview before he or she has even agreed to enroll into the program. This interview with a GSP adviser is intended to provide the students with more information about the 2-year program, and to establish a relationship between the school and the student through the advising office before the student even arrives on campus. Given the nature of the program (with each student eligible to move into another school at NYU after the completion of the 2-year GSP curriculum), advising is a particularly complex task. The GSP advisers must have a very good understanding of all 4-year undergraduate programs for which their students are eligible in order to properly advise them during their 2 years, and as they prepare their students for the appropriate transfer. They provide relevant information to their students using vehicles such as a weekly GSP newsletter and through frequently held information sessions.

In the McGhee Division, advising is done by a combination of professional advisers who may see several hundred students at each advisement period, faculty who usually advise 20-50 students, and part-time faculty who are paid extra for advising work.

Gallatin students are generally enthusiastic about their faculty advisers, who they characterize as “knowledgeable.” Likewise, Stern students find their professional advisers to be especially responsive and helpful.

Over the past few years, the Provost’s office has sponsored several ad hoc advising conferences, and a group of senior officers from the several schools meets at least once a term to discuss common issues and “best practices.” Representatives from the preprofessional programs report finding such meetings helpful. They also report, however, that outreach beyond top-level meetings has been difficult, and that several scheduled conferences, though providing useful information, have “preached to the converted.” Moving from top-level discussions to genuine assimilation and application of “best practices” is a problem even in small colleges. Difficulties are compounded by NYU’s size, by the structural diversity of advising arrangements across the schools, by the markedly differing nature of its undergraduate programs (and, thus, the different advising needs of its students), and by the widely varying backgrounds of those to whom NYU assigns advising responsibilities. It seems clear that more consistent and centralized attention to providing information, to clarifying at least minimal advising expectations, and to setting expectations against which to measure performance would support the individual schools and colleges in their efforts to improve advising however they elect to deliver advising services.

Suggestions for improvement: Advising

Because of the enormity and complexity of NYU’s undergraduate programs, we suggest that advisers university-wide meet more regularly to share information about programmatic changes in their schools and to discuss common problems that may have cross-school, or even university-wide, implications.

Technology to support advising should be reviewed and, where necessary, improved. The job of advisers is frequently made more difficult by an antiquated (and in the case of the Tisch Center for Hospitality, essentially non-existent) student information system. Students in Steinhardt report being unable to access degree progress audit information online, and some Tisch programs also lack access to online degree audit information. Advisers find it difficult to function without current information about the progress of their students. If students are to take appropriate responsibility for academic planning and are to participate appropriately in advising conversations, they as well as their advisers need this sort of basic information. We suggest that the University consider an upgrade to this system, and to make it equally functional in all divisions of the University.

One of the greatest hindrances to the system of student support services at the University is the inconsistent availability of up-to-date course descriptions, course prerequisite information (in the not infrequent cases where such prerequisites change), and course syllabi, especially for courses established since the printing of the 2-year course catalogues. Further, we note that on-line student course evaluations are available for CAS and Stern courses, but not elsewhere in the University. We suggest that the Office of the Provost impose a university-wide standard for updating and making uniformly available this critical course information. Links to ALBERT of detailed course descriptions and past syllabi would allow students and advisers to make more informed educational decisions.

The Office of the Provost should assess the issues associated with cross-school course registrations. The students are anxious to see an easing up of the restrictions on cross registrations, some of which are a result of a burdensome set of core and general education requirements in the home school, and some of which are associated with restrictions that the outside school places on the availability of courses to students from other schools. This comment, made by a student of the Stern School, was typical of those

we heard during our meetings: “I did not come to NYU to learn about finance. I came to learn about the world.” We believe that NYU students are looking for precisely the sort of education that NYU is able to offer. While enrolling in a specific school understandably carries consequences (including “boundary” consequences), there nonetheless seems to be occasional artificial and unnecessary barriers to taking courses outside of a school that lead to frustrations in terms of enabling the students to pursue their unique interests.

The University should consider the possibility of creating one “external adviser” in each school, who would have the responsibility to be fully informed in changes in other schools.

The University should review the effectiveness of allowing students to make unmonitored changes to their academic programs once they have achieved an adviser’s initial approval.

Diversity, engagement, and community

Nearly all the people with whom we met spoke highly of the pluralistic environment at NYU. Efforts in support of multiculturalism and equity seemed widely regarded though we also heard concerns, as expressed at many of our campuses, with the difficulty of encouraging substantial cross identity engagement particularly in social settings. Schools differ by various identity compositions, so diversity efforts vary by school.

Frequently, conversations regarding diversity migrated to conversations about community and communities at NYU. The strong identities associated with the individual schools contradict the notion of a singular NYU affiliation. Students noted the absence of any binding traditions or rituals that signify connections with the ‘parent’ entity and some older students recalled past campus-wide celebrations (e.g. Strawberry Festival) that served to engage students across the school divides and served, in place of sports teams or other symbols, to bond students with NYU at large.

Suggestions for improvement: Diversity, engagement, and community

We encourage the Provost to urge further self-reflection by each school on staffing patterns, curricular efforts and other means by which students representing various identities can interact with each other.

We suggest that NYU restore one or more of such campus-wide gatherings (recognizing the difficulty that will ensue in obtaining sufficient outdoor space to conduct any such events) and consider other options for class-wide or institution wide engagements. One example may be the establishment of a first year reading project such as is in place at Penn, Duke and many other institutions. Alternatively, a day dedicated to community service might offer the same appeal, and could include faculty. Founder’s Day on some campuses offers an opportunity for campus-wide celebration and might serve such a purpose at NYU. Clearly, whatever vehicle is chosen must be unique to the urban, distributed reality of the NYU “campus” but numerous options exist that may be effective. The key is to create some traditions that will span several generations of students and will serve as a beacon for cross-school student engagement and institutional affiliation.

Standard 10: Faculty

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

The institution’s instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

Suggestion for improvement

We suggest that the faculty of Arts and Sciences become more engaged in co-curricular planning and partnerships with Student Affairs, especially in the residence halls.

We suggest that any push to reduce the number of adjunct faculty in favor of more full-time appointments be considered on a school-by-school (if not department-by-department) basis. For example, Tisch is comfortable with its present use of adjunct faculty and, indeed, finds the strength adjuncts add to its programs indispensable. Most adjuncts do not seek full-time employment at NYU, and to push Tisch to reduce its adjunct faculty in favor of more full-time appointments would likely weaken the professional quality of its programs.

Teaching assessment

The assessment and evaluation of teaching at NYU takes many forms. The self-study provides an overview of the numerous efforts, processes and formats for this that can be found throughout the University. The methods range from student ratings of teaching, to faculty peer observation of teaching, to teaching portfolios. As the self-study points out, every school and department uses some method of assessing teaching. These methods vary, however, and there is no uniformity to this process university-wide.

Many segments of the University put substantial effort into this endeavor. In CAS, the Dean's office, distributes a college-wide student survey form. In addition to the college-wide instrument, some individual faculty members have developed student evaluation instruments for their own classes. In other cases, departments have developed peer observation processes. Gallatin appears to have a comprehensive teaching assessment process, using school-wide student rating, observation of untenured faculty members by senior faculty members, and teaching portfolios. Stern also has begun to consider use of teaching portfolios and requires faculty to participate in a teaching analysis and development program.

There are good reasons for the specifics of the assessment and evaluation of teaching to be determined at the school and department level. The teaching process varies in the disciplines, thus a good method of assessing teaching would also vary. Also important is that implementation of the University reward structure begins at the department level (e.g. decisions about tenure, promotion, merit pay, etc.), and in the end, it is essential that the assessment of teaching be linked to this reward structure.

However, the lack of coordination and an overarching university-wide framework in this area appears to have resulted in reduced effectiveness of the teaching assessment process. There are characteristics of good teaching that cross all disciplines, and there are general types of assessment procedures that potentially can be used in most, if not all, units. In some cases, there are economies of scale that can be realized through a more coordinated process. The current system in which each unit develops its own teaching assessment processes, with no coordination or attention to cross-cutting issues, reduces the probability that the information produced as a result of this process can be used in the aggregate to move the institution forward in its efforts to improve and enhance instruction. (We also note that the team's conversations with faculty gave us the sense that the Center for Teaching Excellence is seen as less helpful than the self-study report would lead one to believe.)

Suggestions for improvement: teaching assessment

Some units have moved beyond using teaching assessment results to evaluate individual faculty members. In Tisch, departments engage in department-wide reviews of teaching to inform instructional planning efforts. This more sophisticated use of teaching assessment results is one that other units should consider.

Commendably, a university-wide task force already has been formed on the evaluation of teaching. It is

recommended that this task force consider developing university-wide guidelines for the evaluation of teaching, and consider use of specific instruments university-wide when economies of scale and improved data processing and utilization can be realized.

The range of potential teaching evaluation methods is an important area of consideration for this task force, including the expansion of teaching evaluation methods to reduce reliance on student perceptions of teaching style and to include evaluation of course content and student learning. The Center for Teaching Excellence should be able to provide expertise on potential assessment approaches and instruments. It is important that the Center for Teaching Excellence be staffed adequately to work with schools and academic departments so that they can effectively adopt and implement relevant teaching evaluation procedures.

However, the issue of greatest importance concerning teaching assessment is the purpose of teaching assessment. How will the results of teaching assessment be used? The current situation with regard to use of teaching assessment information in the academic units is varied, and in some cases the information is put to little use. A very positive recent development at NYU is the approval of new NYU promotion and tenure guidelines. These set forth a "high standard of excellence and effectiveness in teaching in the context of a research university" as a prerequisite for tenure and promotion. Candidates will be required to submit a teaching portfolio as part of promotion and tenure materials.

The university-wide task force on the evaluation of teaching should consider additional ways that teaching assessment information should be used at the university to influence resource and reward decisions. This should drive the development and adoption of teaching assessment instruments. The results of teaching assessment can be used at the individual level for both teaching development and personnel decision purposes. Teaching effectiveness information also can be used at the academic unit level to guide decisions about unit resource allocation. Efforts to assess teaching should be directly linked to both purposes if those efforts are to yield fruitful results.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

College of Arts and Science

With more than 75 majors, CAS students have the opportunity to pursue a wide range of course offerings, interdisciplinary majors, double majors, and joint majors. Each major offers an honors track that involves undergraduate research. The School also supports research with the Dean's Undergraduate Research Fund and by hosting the Undergraduate Research Conference. Exit interviews have shown that CAS seniors often regard their independent research with a faculty supervisor as their most meaningful NYU experience. The team is generally impressed with the quality of the CAS curriculum and the enthusiasm of the CAS students.

Suggestions for improvement: College of Arts and Science

The team has no specific suggestions for improvement.

Gallatin School of Individualized Study

Gallatin students work with an adviser to define a special, individualized concentration. The Gallatin core requires writing, the great books, the history of ideas, the arts, and interdisciplinary studies. Graduating

seniors also are required to complete the Senior Colloquium, an oral examination in which the student discusses books on his or her approved book list and an essay that the student wrote for the Colloquium. The essay is designed to justify the choice of books and typically addresses a particular theme, generally associated with the student's area of concentration. Students must enroll in courses around the University to complete their coursework. The Gallatin students that the team met were quite pleased with the curriculum, the faculty, and the advisers.

Suggestions for improvement: Gallatin School of Individualized Study

It is unclear to the team how the University benefits by maintaining this as a distinct program fully outside of CAS. Because of the great number of courses that Gallatin students take in CAS (including courses to complete the individualized major, and electives), planning for faculty, space, advisement, etc. would be less complex if the Gallatin program were associated with CAS. This would also reduce the complications related to the large number of cross-school registrations, and the information problem that Gallatin students and advisers have when designing that part of the curriculum that falls outside of the School (see standard 9, section on advising). Finally, because students in CAS have expressed the desire to have the opportunity to pursue an individualized major, we believe that this program would be consistent with the CAS culture.

Stern School of Business

We find that the basic educational offerings of the Stern School of Business are congruent with its proposed mission. Stern revised its curriculum with great success several years ago. It moved from a layer cake model to an integrated four-year business-liberal arts curriculum. That curriculum stresses thinking skills and a broad perspective on business. For example, Stern uses its second term expository writing course to explain the myriad ways business connects with life. And, it has a three-year old honors program that invites strong interactions between students and faculty and permits students to take graduate courses. The Stern faculty gives this honors program very positive reviews.

Other successful dimensions of Stern include the participation of its most distinguished faculty in the teaching of undergraduates. Stern also is very well connected to the worlds of business and finance in New York City, permitting large numbers of undergraduates the opportunity for school-year and summer internships.

Stern classes are kept comparatively small; most of its largest classes have fewer than 80 students. Its few larger classes have sections no larger than 60.

Suggestions for improvement: Stern School of Business

Students should be able to double-major (with the second major in, for example, CAS) in order to provide them with curricular breadth that single business majors do not provide. This will require the establishment of more flexibility in their course schedules.

Steinhardt School of Education

We find that the basic educational offerings of the Steinhardt School of Education are congruent with its proposed mission, as we understand it. That mission is to provide their undergraduate students with a broad, capacious view of how society in the 21st century is educated. Toward this end, Steinhardt offers traditional teacher education programs with NYS certification as well as a wide variety of non-traditional programs (applied psychological studies, communications studies, dance education, educational theater, music, nursing, nutrition and food studies, professional studies, studio art and music). For example, the program in studio art teaches the student how artistic expression informs society.

We find coherence between Steinhardt's curriculum and co-curricular activities. Nearly all undergraduates take advantage of the opportunities to gain educational experiences in local, regional or

international settings. Many make use of New York City as a laboratory for research and artistic explorations, especially in the arts.

Steinhardt gets two to three times as many transfers in as out. Its six-year graduation rate, although low, is improving. Steinhardt's has introduced an honors program available to selected entering freshmen from across the school that enriches the basic academic program, particularly in the area of research. Almost ten percent (approximately 40 students) of each entering class are in the program for their entire undergraduate career. In addition, the Dean's Research Travel Colloquium is open to all who make the dean's list in the sophomore year, which adds another 40-45 students to Steinhardt's undergraduate research program. Newly available to undergraduates is the Dean's Student Research Grant. All students in Steinhardt's research programs conduct original scholarship and are required to make peer presentations of their research.

The Strategic Assessment Committee has been established to examine the complexities within Schools and redundancies across them. The committee will enable Steinhardt to address the cases in which its majors overlap with others schools, in particular Tisch and CAS.

Suggestions for improvement: Steinhardt School of Education

Steinhardt should continue to work through its assessment committee to eliminate redundancies in order to better optimize its financial resources and decrease confusion for students, faculty and advisers. We suggest that the committee examine the curriculum in light of its mission.

Steinhardt should reassess the number of credit units it requires, especially in its teacher certification programs, to fulfill the major. This number seems excessive, and limits the ability of students to choose how to broaden their education.

General Studies Program

The two-year General Studies Program leading to the A.A. credential is a highly unusual program in a prestigious research university. It has provided a "second-chance" opportunity for students without the credentials required to qualify for admission to a four-year degree program at NYU to enter the University. The GSP students benefit from a program of general education (predominantly in small classes) under the guidance of faculty advisers who often get to know the students in class as well as in their advising role. The GSP students appear to be drawn primarily from New York City, in contrast to the general undergraduate population which is about one-quarter local, and many of them share the aggressive, street-smart savvy that can support their determination to succeed in their academic pursuits. While the advising appears to be good, the students do encounter significant difficulties in getting the prerequisite courses for the four-year degree program they wish to enter after completion of their General Studies program.

NYU requires GSP students to have a passing average in their two-year program to qualify for transfer to a four-year degree program and requires these transferred students to fulfill the regular degree requirements of the academic programs they complete. We find, however, that the threshold for admission to a degree program is quite low. For example, a transfer into CAS requires a minimum grade of 2.0 in CAS courses and a 2.5 or somewhat lower overall GPA. With such low standards, the acceptance rate into these degree programs is much higher than would be expected for acceptance of these students at the level of an incoming junior at universities of comparable national stature - or even at universities a full tier below NYU. The GSP students admitted to the four-year programs appear to have about the same six-year graduation rates as the regular students in the schools. The data supplied for the Middle States review does not profile the class rank of the students who graduate after entering the programs through the GSP program against the class rank of the students who gained regular admission to the same programs.

NYU operates the General Studies Program, at least in part, because of a commitment to the community. The University also benefits from the tuition revenue from this program. Because GSP is a two-year program, the student profiles of the GSP students do not lower the profiles for the four-year degree programs - a public relations plus. But the presence of the GSP students in courses in the other schools does lower the profile of the students taking these courses - something that must affect the quality of these educational offerings in some way, even if it isn't very visible publicly.

Suggestion for improvement: General Studies Program

The General Studies Program is part of NYU's history and of its commitment to the City. But at this time in the University's development, NYU has to reconsider and rationalize its academic programs and its entrance standards for all of its courses and programs. Certainly the quality of all of its undergraduate students is a paramount factor in the University's continued quest for overall excellence in undergraduate education.

McGhee Division: Undergraduate Degrees for Adults

This division enrolls 1700 students with 26 full-time faculty and 220 part-time faculty. An evening school, the average age of the students is 30 years, with almost all working full-time. 60 percent are female. Out of 128 credits for graduation, students are allowed to transfer in 64 credits.

McGhee offers a series of educational options, including new programs in Technical Writing (B.A.) and Public Administration (B.A.) In addition, students may major in the social sciences and humanities. Bachelor of Science degrees are offered in fields such as Healthcare Management and Information Systems Management. Associates degrees are awarded in fields such as Dental Hygiene, Information Systems Management, and Health Administration.

Each student must complete a capstone experience, which involves courses in methods and theory. Most do research projects, though a few elect to do internships. Capstone courses are generally supervised by regular faculty who teach 2/3 or 3/3 loads.

Suggestion for improvement: McGhee Division

Given the nature of McGhee's programs, professional part-time faculty are highly valued. Nevertheless, the curriculum is stretched as they offer 15 degree programs with multiple concentrations. We suggest that the School implement a strategic planning process before more programs are initiated, or others are eliminated.

Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work

On the NYU main campus, the School of Social Work houses an undergraduate (B.S.) program of approximately 100 full-time students. This program has an adequate number of students to be viable, and also a committed director and adviser system.

This program relies heavily on CAS courses, with an additional 64 credits in the social work major (including 8 credits in the pre-Social Work major). Using CAS courses, students focus on writing, sociology, and psychology. No quantitative reasoning skills are required and only one course in science (human biology). There is a heavy reliance on adjunct faculty who are professionals in the field.

Most students go on for either an MSW or into other graduate programs.

The Director of the undergraduate program is clearly outstanding and committed to her students who are from the least affluent families of NYU's undergraduate population.

Suggestions for improvement: Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work

The team has no specific suggestions for improvement.

School of Dentistry baccalaureate program in Dental Health Education

The baccalaureate program in Dental Health Education in the School of Dentistry has a carefully-articulated general education program, a major program that builds on its general education requirements while accommodating students who transfer into the baccalaureate program from certificate or associate/certificate programs, and opportunities for students to engage in, or develop a concentration in, research. The overriding issues about the viability of this program are, however, serious ones.

The program faces significant challenges. It currently enrolls nine students, eight of whom are female. Three of the nine are part-time. It draws primarily from individuals who are graduates of dental hygiene programs. Although these students complete many of their courses on the Washington Square campus, the personal circumstances and the part-time status of these students run counter to the current trend to a residential, increasingly full-time campus. Most students in the program are beyond traditional undergraduate age; many are employed professionally; and about half are graduates of non-NYU hygiene programs and thus enter the baccalaureate program as transfers.

The school's program coordinator is clearly committed, vibrant, highly professional, and eager to sustain the program as a viable one. She describes herself as under "constant" pressure to build enrollments, and forced to devise marketing strategies to that end. For example, she has been pressured to offer significant core program courses online – a move attractive to her students but clearly one that compromises development of any sense of community within the school. The current status of dental education baccalaureate graduates likely handicaps her efforts; as we understand it, the dental profession has yet to develop a clear practice model for those trained beyond certificate programs (now widely available at the community college level), and though some recent proposals will broaden options somewhat, the role of the baccalaureate graduate remains remarkably undefined. That the NYU program has a relatively short "history" within the University and has had multiple homes seems also likely to impact its uncertain role and what its coordinator sees as an uncertain future.

Suggestion for improvement: School of Dentistry baccalaureate program in Dental Health Education

The team is not positioned to judge the professional quality of the program; we do, however, suggest that the University consider whether the program can be sustained absent increased enrollments and a clearer professional role for its graduates.

Tisch School of the Arts:

Tisch is in the enviable position of having been for several years among the preeminent programs nationally in its several undergraduate fields – able to remain highly selective in its admissions, able closely to control admissions through its interview and audition processes, and able to command the allegiance of an accomplished and relatively stable group of professionals who serve as adjunct faculty to supplement the efforts of a nationally-recognized ladder faculty cohort. Tisch enjoys a yield rate of almost 70% each year, and attrition from its programs is remarkably low.

Tisch students draw on CAS for many of their arts and humanities courses and a significant number pursue double majors (most notably in English and in psychology). The School prides itself on ensuring that active (and interactive and collaborative) learning characterizes all its courses. Over the past several years, it has refined the "Tisch core," consisting of required work in writing with a focus on the arts, followed by "The World Through Art," a course combining plenary lectures by senior faculty, with a small-group component functioning essentially as a freshman seminar required of all students in the School. The course serves several functions: it builds community among students from Tisch's varied majors (which students declare at entrance); it models collaborative and interactive learning expected of

students throughout the undergraduate program; it exposes students to the interplay of policy and practice issues; it exposes them to senior faculty across the range of Tisch's disciplines. Tisch's aim is to produce educated artists, broadly conceived; their structures and their curricular arrangements further that goal. Faculty and staff describe themselves as concerned that Tisch students develop their own individual artistic "voice," and as pleased that the School does not produce an identifiable "Tisch product" in any field of artistic endeavor.

Suggestion for improvement: Tisch School of the Arts

Tisch expects to continue to develop its World Through Art program, and may find that similarly integrative seminars for upper-level students would broaden students' perspective at a point in their professional development when they have acquired greater context and understanding and thus might especially benefit from such an experience.

Libraries

In the past decade as NYU's Libraries have grown in both size and quality of collections, their cumulative index score among Association of Research Libraries has risen from 26th to 17th. The University has funded the Libraries, especially the collections budget, to keep pace with the dramatic growth in undergraduate enrollments and the diversity of programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. To date, the Libraries have not experienced the budgetary pressures that have caused other major research libraries in many wealthier institutions to cancel large numbers of research journals and reduce expenditures for scholarly monographs.

New leadership in the Libraries in the past five years has emphasized strategic planning, evaluation and assessment activities, the rapid development of electronic collections and services, and extensive collaboration with academic programs and Information Technology Services (ITS) – collaborations that have attracted both increased external support and internal visibility and have resulted in improved access to information resources and the development of digital library infrastructure and projects.

The Libraries have placed increased emphasis on outreach and services to undergraduates and are experiencing significant increases in demand for services such as term paper clinics and information literacy instruction. Librarians are collaborating closely with faculty on the nature of research assignments. Although there are no curricular requirements for information literacy or technology skills instruction, librarians and subject selectors work in close partnership with faculty in many of the schools to offer this vital instruction.

Results of the 2002 LibQual+ survey revealed that NYU faculty, undergraduates and graduates were less satisfied with NYU library services than their Association of Research Library counterparts and that services do not meet minimum user expectations. Many actions have already been taken and other plans are underway to implement changes in collections and services that should result in increased satisfaction from library users.

The Bobst Library, a showpiece of the University when it opened in 1973, shows the wear and tear of years of heavy use and is badly in need of renovation and infrastructure upgrading. Funding for the initial phase of renovation is available (\$14.8 million), but many additional millions must be allocated to renovate floors 2-10 of the library and create the type of collaborative learning environments and technology-rich spaces so vital to today's research universities.

Suggestion for improvement:

NYU has made significant progress in developing its Libraries in the past decade. Expanding strong research collections is an increasingly difficult economic challenge, especially in a time when sizable investments must also be made in digital library infrastructure. NYU is in a position of strength and

should build on its momentum to provide excellent traditional and electronic collections and services that meet the needs of its students and faculty.

ITS

ITS has made notable progress in the past several years in providing technology services to the academic community. New leadership has emphasized assistance to faculty in using technology to enhance teaching, support for digital multimedia, the launch of wireless computing services, web development, instructional support, the implementation of Blackboard, a web-based course management system and a host of high demand academic computing enhancements. These enhancements and new capabilities improve services. They also spur new and greater demands for additional technologies, new capabilities, and more training. ITS is challenged to respond to these needs and to the rising levels of demand. The recent adoption of a multiyear University financial plan and allocation of capital funds for information technology has allowed ITS to upgrade equipment, networks and systems and plan for the renewal of the Student Information System. But major funding issues remain.

The special demands of technological advances in the arts (especially in music, film and video production and in theater) pose special challenges. To be professionally competitive, students in the arts require exposure to cutting-edge technology; the technology is expensive, and providing it requires replacement of extant equipment well before the equipment has otherwise reached the end of its useful life.

Suggestions for improvement: ITS

Large investments will continue to be required to build ITS capacity to respond to the exponential growth in demands from all parts of the University, to exploit the transformative power of technology to enhance teaching and learning for undergraduate education, to develop common platforms that share vital information about course offerings and programs across schools, to provide cutting-edge technology in the competitive arts world, and to create technologically-enhanced classrooms for a first-rate research university,

Standard 13: Related educational activities

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

Additional location

The NYU Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work opened the Rockland Campus as an MSW program site in 1982, and has since received New York State approval as a branch campus (although it maintains its “additional location” designation with Middle States.) In 1999, the program moved from its original location at Dominican College in Orangeburg, NY to its present location at St. Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, NY. Enrollment varies from 70 to 78 students in a program with the same overall mission, goals and curriculum as in the Washington Square Campus. The Director’s deep knowledge of the School, its curriculum, and the needs of the students in the program, and established relationships with practitioners in agency settings, are of considerable benefit to the program.

The program has one full-time faculty member, and 19 part-time faculty members, several of whom carry dual responsibilities as classroom instructors and advisers. Most of the faculty are practitioners with strong backgrounds in clinical social work with a close working relationship with the School and with the students in the program.

The program is housed in small, but attractive offices convenient to campus classrooms and other facilities. The College Library is a warm and inviting facility. Technology available to both faculty and students appeared to be adequate, though there was not sufficient time to explore currency or variety of hardware and software options. Classrooms were clean and bright with basic media and technology available in each classroom.

Faculty were uniformly positive and enthusiastic about the leadership of the program and the School's excellent reputation. They praised the quality of the program, the strength of the curriculum, the importance of field placement experiences, and the small, personal setting of the program that allowed them to build and enjoy a strong sense of community with each other and with students.

The students with whom the team met all expressed great satisfaction with their educational and field placement experiences, with the quality of teaching and the engagement of faculty, the strength and variety of courses offered at the campus, and the responsiveness of the program administrator and faculty to student needs and opinions. Several students had taken classes at the Washington Square campus and supported the claim that there is no difference in the curricular offerings and that students have no difficulty changing the locus of their study if they wish. Program facilities were attractive and students felt that college staff was extremely helpful and available when they needed assistance.

Program administrators have developed a successful and highly regarded program. Although the program relies heavily on adjunct faculty who are professionals in their field to deliver the curriculum, they have created an academically rigorous program in which there are close personal bonds among faculty and students – a program in which students are challenged, nurtured, and engaged. Although most students do not take courses on the Washington Square campus, they expressed a strong sense of identity with and commitment to the University, an identity fostered by their pride in the quality of their program and their satisfaction with their academic experiences.

Suggestion for improvement: Additional location

Access to the recently implemented library and ITS services available on NYU Net, including Blackboard and electronic reserves, needs to be made seamless for Rockland campus students. Further, instruction in the effective use of Bobst library resources (print and electronic) and ITS services would be an important and beneficial addition to students' academic experience in the first semester of study. The library may also consider giving Rockland students priority in interlibrary loan and document delivery service for research requests that cannot be filled from NYU or affiliate collections.

Study abroad

The NYU center at La Pietra in Florence is unique in both beauty and potential. The University deserves tremendous credit for the care with which it has restored and maintained the facility.

Suggestions for improvement: Study abroad

As the facility matures, it may be advisable for the University to develop a clear educational and cultural mission statement for La Pietra. Its current administration, in which multiple administrative units manage discrete operations, may not prove optimal in developing the kind of faculty and departmental commitment that will help the facility thrive. Connections with CAS departments are not well developed, and significant educational potential is not being realized. Offerings in Italian for both GSP students and others are less than in other comparable programs, just 1.25 hours four days per week, and it may prove useful to review the nature of the Italian language program at La Pietra.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning at NYU has two components: internships and similar experiences (like practice teaching) arranged through academic departments, many of which earn academic credit; and internships and jobs arranged through the Office of Career Services.

Many of the internships arranged through the academic units are in long-established programs. But new internship programs are being established now, such as the one in Asian Studies. Common to these is a concern for the academic quality of the experience, faculty oversight of the individual opportunities, and faculty responsibility for evaluation of the results. Given NYU's location in New York City, it is not surprising that these opportunities span many different kinds of government agencies, health care providers, businesses, and non-profit and for-profit organizations. In some areas, like nursing and teaching, these experiential learning experiences are mandated by external agencies. In others, the academic unit has chosen to make an internship either a requirement or an elective and takes advantage of the many appropriate opportunities in the area.

The Office of Career Services facilitates about 7,000 (mostly) paid internships and short externships (about a week long) each year. The Office surveys students about these internships and about how they are related to their career goals. The Office also helps students find jobs (and sometimes the distinction between an "internship" and a "job" is thin.) The Office raises money privately to run seminars with outside speakers. Many students use these seminars as a springboard for subsequent networking.

Both components take care to see that the students are not exploited in these experiential learning opportunities.

It was surprising to learn that several of the nine persons who coordinate internships within their units were meeting for the first time at this Middle States accreditation visit. While many of the details differ from program to program, these people have common needs and face common problems.

Suggestions for improvement: Experiential learning:

The heads of the experiential learning programs, both in the academic units and in Career Services, would benefit by meeting together several times a semester to share their own "best practices," to share their approaches to solving problems common to these opportunities, and to support and publicize seminars, workshops, and other meetings of benefit to a broad range of students.

Experiential learning programs in the academic units require University support of various sorts, including staff, space, and money. Support is present already in a number of areas like teacher education, music, and nursing, but smaller academic programs often have to expend considerable faculty time initiating and maintaining such programs. We suggest the University reevaluate the disbursement of support across the units.

Standard 14: Assessment of student learning

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

The materials that the University compiled for this review make it clear that the multiple forms of assessment envisioned by the outcomes assessment process are very much a part of the educational environment of undergraduates. There is both a plan at the university level for the collection of appropriate data and a first identification at the level of many departments of the objectives of curricula

and of the variety of means by which student performance will be assessed. In the case of many courses and some departments, however, the identification of goals or objectives is not matched by the specification of how the means of assessing student learning will correlate with specific objectives. And that may be something that simply has to emerge through the continuing engagement of the faculty with the task of identifying their objectives as instructors.

Suggestion for improvement

Continuing development of the assessment processes at NYU will need to be supported at the departmental, college, and university levels in order to have a lasting effect. Choices will need to be made about what programs (such as experiential learning, study abroad, the Morse Academic Plan, etc.) should receive more intensive study in order to make better decisions about the use of resources. Everything cannot be assessed to the same degree all the time, and should not be. Natural resistance to the process among faculty will need to be overcome by giving them opportunities to learn that they can get something from their engagement with this task.

D. Standards for which the documentation review provided sufficient evidence, but covered by the Selected Topics as well

Standard 3: Missions, Goals, and Objectives

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

Academic space

NYU has identified, and is beginning to ameliorate, what it calls a crisis in the amount and availability of “adequate space,” which stems in part from an increase in undergraduate enrollments and a proliferation of classes in recent years and in part from suboptimal scheduling. NYU is identifying all teaching spaces, and its biggest task is to identify all proprietary space (classrooms, studios, and laboratories) under the control of individual departments and schools. This will enable the Registrar to determine how departments schedule and utilize classrooms, including the approximately 180 classrooms under the central administration’s control. The Registrar has identified a sophisticated space management software package that should assist his office with the inventory and optimization of academic space and in constructing a model that considers departmental preferences for class scheduling. Increased centralization of classroom scheduling will require the NYU senior administration to convince faculty that their most important teaching priorities are taken into consideration in the allocation model.

Some units within NYU have outgrown their space in spite of round-the-clock use. Space limitations at Tisch occasionally limit the School’s ability to respond to students’ project proposals. The School’s facilities are used virtually 24/7, and there is little room for expansion. While there has yet to be significant program limitation resulting from space constraints, Tisch administrators describe the situation as consistently worrisome. Imaginative use of rehearsal space in corridors and classrooms is laudable, but it has obvious limitations.

Suggestions for improvement: Academic space

The senior administration should gently assert its leadership by convincing scholars and departments to promote classes that meet in the now empty 8:00 a.m. time slot and on Fridays. In some cases, however, (e.g., Tisch) more efficient time-use of space will not solve the problem. Somehow, more and better academic and common use spaces will have to be found. This includes the need for a public gathering space larger than the 880-seat facility currently available for performance uses. One “crazy” suggestion is

to close Washington Place and create a “green corridor” between Washington Park and Broadway. Such a quiet zone could help create a sense of campus much the way Locust walk does so for Penn in West Philadelphia.

Development and alumni relations

The current administration has ushered in a sea-change in the areas of development and alumni relations, areas that had been overlooked or misaligned with the vision of institutional renewal. Priorities in earlier times overlooked alumni relations for NYU almost entirely, leaving it in the hands of the schools. Development efforts were also vigorous at the local level; at the level of the University, the efforts were directed toward the acquisition of major gifts rather than the nurturing of a larger number of donors of smaller amounts. In some ways, this area of the institution is emblematic of the overall refocusing of identities, processes, and organizational units that the current administration is trying to achieve.

While Alumni Relations has its own charge and agenda, that office seems to work very well in contributing to the development goals of the undergraduate schools. They convey real excitement about the progress they are making and the relevance of their objectives to the achievement of NYU’s vision of itself. Great strides have been made in just the past two years in engaging alumni, identifying alumni who have been “lost”, and bringing the excitement of the vision of NYU to alumni, parents, and potential students in regional meetings. The engagement of students with alumni through programs on campus has been invigorating to the alumni relations program and offered students a sense of connection to those who came before them and a model for how they might remain connected to NYU in the future. These efforts are thus consistent with the larger institutional objective of enhancing the sense of community at NYU.

The Vice President for Development and Alumni Affairs is leading an exciting central development process -- working with alumni relations to identify a broader segment of potential donors as well as making the effort to identify the major donors who will play a critical role in a future capital campaign. NYU is thinking about the variety of models that will be necessary to meet the diverse forms of identification with NYU that historically have mattered; and to develop a class identity that will pay off down the road.

Suggestions for improvement: Development and alumni relations

The team has no specific suggestions for improvement.

Standard 5: Administration

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

The University has created and filled the new post of Provost, hired a number of senior administrators, and generally reinvigorated the administrative team. NYU has a tradition of significant autonomy for its schools and the new initiatives have naturally led to a great increase in the number of meetings at the level of the deans and to much interchange of information at the decanal level between meetings. At the same time, it is apparent that the traditional autonomy of the schools continues to encourage less than optimum communication among those below the level of the deans who hold similar positions of responsibility in the schools for advising, internships, or planning.

There appears to be an absence of clear lines of authority in Student Affairs. Residential governance is split between Student Affairs and auxiliary management. The Counseling Center is co-managed as is the

new ‘Wellness’ unit in Student Health. Co-managers may not offer optimal management of services, though it can work under some conditions. Further, there seems to be overlap in responsibilities between the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Life. Despite their assertion that their positive working relationship transcends any governance confusion, the team encountered staff who noted their own misunderstanding of their role differences.

The NYU Senate is playing an active role in advancing the development of the academic programs of the University. The Senate is a multi-layered structure with a faculty-student-staff Senate and constituent councils of faculty senators, student senators, and staff senators together with committee structures at these levels. It is clear that at least some of these committees are playing significant roles in the ongoing improvements at NYU. But with the wave of task forces, ad hoc committees, and reviews initiated in the last two years, it isn’t always clear how well the continuing Senate and standing committee functions are operating or how these functions are being improved or restructured to meet the University’s needs in this era of rapid change.

Suggestion for improvement

Having reached a new level of distinction among American private research universities with its much improved undergraduate programs, the University now should consider a more formally structured approach to cross-college/school cooperation on issues of common concern (e.g., student advising).

The University should consider establishing crisp lines of oversight and accountability in Student Affairs management. A single point of leadership may help achieve long-term programmatic success, especially as NYU is sorting out critical service expectations and priorities.

Given the rapid changes at NYU, and an evolving role for the “center” as compared to the schools, it may be an appropriate occasion to examine the faculty senate, to see what kind of roles a university-wide faculty body can effectively play in terms of advice and recommendations on a variety of initiatives.

Standard 7: Institutional assessment

The institution meets this standard.

Summary of evidence and findings

Based on review of the self-study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

Making FAS central to the University in a way that it has not been previously, and focusing on undergraduate education as the means of promoting the quality that NYU expects to reflect, both require some rethinking of institutional patterns and culture. For example, undergraduates are encouraged to identify with schools, a consequence of the prior autonomy of the schools and of continuing admissions practices. The difficulty they often encounter in taking courses in other schools, and sometimes even learning what courses are available continues to support the school identification at a time when NYU is seeking to increase identification with the institution and not just the school. Students will think that they matter to NYU if they feel less impeded – that is, if the systems are designed to support their sense of belonging to a broader University and not simply to a college. To the degree that the institutional mission still focuses on the research university, first and foremost, as the standard by which it judges itself, there will be tension and sometimes adverse consequences with the objective of providing a first-class undergraduate education.

Suggestion for improvement

As a community of scholars, educators, and administrators, NYU would benefit from continuing to focus on the tension between the needs of a preeminent research university and a first-rate undergraduate institution.