New York University

Self-Study Report
on
Undergraduate Education
for the
Middle States Commission
on Higher Education

March 1, 2004
# New York University

**Middle States Association Self-Study**

**Undergraduate Education at NYU**

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Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Eligibility Certification Statement

New York University is seeking:

(Name of Institution)
(Check one)  ☑ Reaffirmation of Accreditation  ☐ Initial Accreditation

The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets all established eligibility requirements of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

☐ If applicable, exceptions are noted in the attached memorandum.

Dec. 10, 2003
(Date)

Dec. 10, 2003
(Date)
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION SELF-STUDY
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AT NYU

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New York University has focused its decennial Middle States Association self-study on undergraduate education. Given current national concern about the role of undergraduate education in research universities, this seemed an appropriate time for reflection on what is an essential element of our academic enterprise. A Steering Committee comprised of faculty, deans, administrators, and students was responsible for overseeing preparation of the self-study. Two other committees were formed to consult in this effort: the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee and the Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee, which conducted most of their studies in the fall 2002 and spring 2003 terms. A succession of drafts of the report was reviewed by members of NYU’s faculty, student body, and administration between February 2003 and January 2004. The final version, which reflects this extensive process of consultation, consists of one volume of narrative and one volume of appendices. Additional relevant documents, such as the University’s and the schools’ outcomes assessment plans, are also being provided to the Middle States Evaluation Team.

Prologue

NYU is, first and foremost, a research university. With strong professional schools, the unparalleled resources of New York City, and global aspirations, its goal is to provide its undergraduates with a distinctive educational experience of the highest quality. After outlining how undergraduate education is organized at NYU through eight different schools, the self-study recounts the progress of the past decade, in which the student body has increased dramatically in size and quality, as a result of the greater selectivity made possible by a much broader applicant pool. At the same time, the University has been transformed from a commuter school into one that is largely residential. Significant investments in faculty, financial aid, and program enhancements have led to major improvements in undergraduate academic and student life. That challenges remain is indicated by the finding that NYU remains below other prominent private and many public research institutions in the United States with regard to retention and six year graduation rates. The recently formed Analytical Planning Group has begun to study the causes of attrition, NYU’s various programs for special categories of students, and faculty composition and deployment within its schools. The results of these studies will inform ongoing assessment and planning. Meanwhile, without prejudging the outcome, but making use of what is already known, the present self-study examines the undergraduate experience at NYU under the three principal categories of enrollment and financial aid, academic affairs, and student affairs, with a final section on alumni relations.
Enrollment and Financial Aid

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions services all the schools except the College of Dentistry (which offers two undergraduate degree programs) and the McGhee Division (which offers adult degree programs) of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS). Given the nearly three-fold increase in the number of applications over the last decade (from 13,591 in 1993 to 33,097 in 2003), the report recommends exploring ways of providing Admissions with the resources needed to make an increasingly nuanced assessment of each applicant. It remains a challenge to communicate to applicants the distinguishing features of the individual schools and, if need be, to move certain students to the applicant pool of a school that is a better “fit.” Compared with peer and target institutions, NYU takes in many more external transfer students; their quality varies and their large numbers can work against community-building efforts on campus. Also, the large number of internal transfers (from one NYU school to another) can present challenges if they reflect dissatisfaction or result in dislocations in the exporting or importing school. The relation between financial aid policies and the yield on admitted students and their retention is now the subject of closer analysis, but the self-study finds it already clear that financial aid strategies should be reexamined and that fundraising for scholarships be a top priority.

Academic Affairs

Introduction. The academic affairs part of the self-study, which relies heavily on the work of the Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Academic Affairs and its subcommittees, examines the academic experience of NYU’s undergraduates under 12 topics.

General Education. The report reviews the various general education requirements at NYU, ranging from the distributional models at the College of Dentistry, the Ehrenkranz School of Social Work, the McGhee Division of SCPS, and the Tisch School of the Arts to the more prescribed programs of the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, the General Studies Program of SCPS, and the Morse Academic Plan (MAP) of the College of Arts and Science (CAS). The MAP, adopted to varying degrees also by the Steinhardt School of Education, the Stern School of Business, and the Cinema Studies Program at Tisch, represents the most ambitious effort of the past decade to provide a common, coherent, and challenging general education for the majority of NYU’s undergraduates. In its fullest form (in CAS) the MAP includes expository writing, foreign language, and courses in humanities, social science, quantitative reasoning, and natural science. With courses that are specifically designed for nonmajors, the MAP has greater coherence than a distributional requirement; in addition, MAP courses are taught only by tenured or tenure-track faculty and all are enhanced by small recitation or laboratory sections. The Academic Affairs Committee’s finding that the goals of the MAP are not always fully understood or articulated by its various constituencies is probably true of the other general education models at NYU as well. Other challenges include improving specific courses, capitalizing further on NYU’s intellectual diversity, aligning general education more closely with departmental resources and intellectual agenda, dealing with TA shortages, and increasing the connections between general education and other aspects of the curriculum. Finally, given NYU’s intellectual diversity, the question remains to what extent there should be a common platform for all undergraduate schools.
The Major. Along with a general education that provides breadth of perspectives and foundational skills, NYU’s schools also ensure that all students achieve significant depth in at least one discipline or area through completion of a major. The more than 140 discrete undergraduate majors at NYU differ greatly from one another, sometimes even within a school. The self-study necessarily restricts itself to identifying several challenges that cross programs, departments, and schools. One challenge is to continue efforts to build connections between the major and general education curricula. Another is to use learning outcomes assessment plans to ensure that majors remain intellectually current and challenging, are structured with sufficient verticality, and provide for a meaningful capstone experience. Apparent redundancies involving programs in different schools are being studied to determine whether they make curricular and financial sense. Finally, some schools’ generous policies on the number of transfer credits accepted toward their degree are being reconsidered.

Undergraduate Research. In keeping with its research mission, NYU strives, whenever possible, to include undergraduates in the production of knowledge. Given its intellectual diversity, one of NYU’s strengths, research on the part of undergraduates necessarily varies widely in nature, context, and extent within as well as across NYU’s schools. The report describes the substantial progress in promoting undergraduate research that has been made over the past decade. The primary challenge is to encourage and enable even more students to become directly involved in research activities and to create more incentives and reduce disincentives for faculty to mentor undergraduates, including those from underrepresented groups. To enhance participation, schools should also develop clearinghouses for information on available opportunities and establish or increase financial support for student research projects.

Experiential Learning. The University is committed to connecting with the community in formal and informal ways that include a broad spectrum of internships and public service activities. The report mentions some of the challenges raised by the extraordinary array of practical, experiential learning opportunities available to students in New York City. One is for the schools to embed service learning, which has tended to be largely a co-curricular activity, into a broader range of courses. Another, more pressing challenge is to find ways to help students take fuller advantage of attractive internship opportunities when external providers require that they receive academic credit.

Interrelations of Schools and Individualized Study. The report finds that the variety of intellectual styles, philosophical methods, and practical orientations of the eight undergraduate schools is a great strength of NYU. Of course, this diversity can set up a certain tension between the desire to maintain the mission and spirit of each school and the development of a strong sense of community University-wide. One manifestation of this is the difficulty that some students report in seeking access to offerings of other schools. Relations between the schools take the form mainly of cross-registration in individual courses, cross-school majors and minors, dual-degree programs, and internal transfers. The report recommends ensuring that no undue barriers impede such activities. It also recommends exploring ways to expand opportunities for individualized study, to allow non-Gallatin students, too, to receive the benefits of access to appropriate individually tailored majors.
**Study Abroad.** As part of its global mission, NYU aims to give as many of its students as possible, regardless of major, opportunities to study abroad, whether in its own programs or at a university with which it has an exchange agreement. An ongoing challenge at each NYU site abroad is to get faculty more directly involved in ensuring across-the-board quality, developing programs, and providing thematic foci for the curriculum. Financial issues include offering departments replacement funds for full-time faculty temporarily lost to teaching in programs abroad, and devising strategies for increasing fall enrollments at sites abroad to balance the distribution of the student body more equitably between the fall and spring semesters.

**Academic Advising, Mentoring, and Support Services.** The different missions of the schools have led to a variety of approaches to the advising of undergraduates, including centralized advising centers, faculty mentors, and administrative staff advisers. School-based academic support programs are supplemented by an array of University-wide services for all students. Surveys suggest that many students feel that they do not have enough access to faculty as advisers and mentors. Since efforts to promote faculty mentoring must start in the classroom, where personal relationships can be built on intellectual interests, it is important to assign full-time faculty to classes wherever appropriate. At the same time, ways should also be found to increase faculty involvement in the more formal advising structure as well as in co-curricular programs where students live and study.

**Libraries.** The Library’s ongoing program of assessment and communication with users aims to identify and respond to their needs, improve services to diverse groups, and build communities of users. Providing undergraduates instruction in research skills at the right points of their intellectual development is a continuing challenge. A newer challenge is to make students more aware of the enormously expanded electronic resources and, even more importantly, how to use them discriminatingly. At the same time that web-based services need further development, the physical spaces of Bobst Library need a renovation that reflects the undergraduate populations and their varied modes of study, research, and social interaction.

**Technology.** The report cites some of the notably expanded and upgraded services that NYU’s Information Technology Services has provided the academic community. But the rapid development and availability of new technology has also created a variety of challenges: accommodating growth in the faculty’s use of such basic technology as Blackboard without multiplying support resources at the same rate; improving the design and delivery of education and awareness programs for students; making the Student Information System more flexible and user-friendly; and continuing to create and support more technology-enhanced classrooms, while expediting the delivery of equipment to underequipped rooms.

**Academic Space.** This section of the self-study, dealing with the availability, appropriateness, and physical condition of classrooms, depends heavily on the findings and recommendations of the University Presidential Transition Team (March 2002). Large increases in the numbers of students and of courses have led to shortages of adequate classroom space. Efforts to maximize the use of existing space are necessary, such as enforcing minimum enrollments in courses and requiring that, wherever possible, a modular class schedule, less popular hours, and Fridays be used for instruction. The system for matching rooms with course or instructor re
quirements and for supplying appropriate equipment to rooms also needs to be coordinated better across the University.

**Teaching.** The self-study affirms the importance of putting regular faculty in the undergraduate classroom wherever appropriate. Studies are underway at the University to examine the present and desirable teaching allocations. In addition, individual schools have been required to submit plans for assessing student learning outcomes and for using the results in planning and resource allocation. The report then focuses on the quality of teaching, which is supported, among other efforts, by the Center for Teaching Excellence and by University and school teaching awards. All schools at NYU also have methods for evaluating courses and instructors. A centralized evaluation process might increase the number of courses assessed and permit the pooling of experience and economies of scale. Further measures of teaching effectiveness that supplement student evaluations should also be devised and a formal mechanism for reviewing assessments and dealing with deficiencies should be developed.

**Diversity and Engagement.** NYU has a very diverse student body in terms of ethnicity, geographic origin, economic background, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation. The University is committed to promoting this diversity even further by increasing the proportion of students of color, perhaps by means of a revised financial aid strategy. Although the percentage of minorities and women on the faculty has also been rising, the faculty is not as diverse as the student body. The University must continue to explore not only more effective ways of recruiting a diverse faculty but also strategies for increasing the number of minority undergraduates interested in entering academic life. With increased diversity necessarily comes the challenge of integrating undergraduates’ academic and social experience, so that students and faculty can learn from people of different backgrounds. This goal can be addressed by developing incentives for greater faculty participation in advising and in co-curricular activities, and by increasing the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty in appropriate courses.

**Student Affairs**

**Introduction.** Several organizational changes and the Middle States self-study process have resulted in a renewed focus on student affairs at NYU. The efforts to improve undergraduate student life discussed in this section are guided by the principles noted in the Prologue—the primacy of the University’s academic mission, active partnership between the University and its students in all aspects of the learning process, the importance of diversity, and the extension of educational experiences beyond the classroom. This part of the self-study relies heavily on the work of the Committee on Undergraduate Student Affairs and its subcommittee. It explores issues under three topics.

**Diversity and Community.** The report examines the University’s efforts to enhance its academic mission through a wide range of extracurricular programs and services. It highlights the importance of providing opportunities for students to be involved in campus life outside the classroom, contextualizing these opportunities within a community-based framework, and meeting the special needs of particular student groups.

Several key items are discussed: a newly opened university center; student clubs, organizations, and activities; community service; and communication. Non-resident (commuter) and
transfer students are identified as meriting special consideration. A second subsection extends these issues to include the University’s role as a transition to employment or graduate and professional education and in maintaining ties to alumni.

The University’s size, decentralized nature, urban setting, and the diversity of its student body, faculty, and staff are sources of both strength and challenge in the process of building community. These considerations also contribute to other challenges—achieving and maintaining quality in the management and delivery of services, making community service more accessible and meaningful to students, articulating clear and consistent policies and procedures, meeting the demands of a constantly changing and increasingly important technological infrastructure, and overcoming barriers to an integrated community. Other challenges in this area include locating sufficient space for student needs, such as career services, and creating a culture of greater engagement among alumni.

Residential Life. As the University’s ability to house students has expanded, so has recognition that the residence hall environment offers opportunities beyond the classroom for learning and growth. The report focuses on the University’s efforts to nurture students’ social, intellectual, and personal development, and to promote a sense of community within the residence halls through a range of programmatic efforts. Key factors in this process include strong faculty presence and participation; proper selection, training, and deployment of resident assistants; use of peer educators to provide support; advising and mentoring; community space for gatherings; and thematic learning environments.

Major growth over the last decade has led to a large and varied housing system that presents substantial challenges with respect to housing selection and programming. Initiatives aimed at coordinating students’ intellectual and social lives must take into account differences in building size, configuration, location, and cost as well as needs that may differ according to students’ class year or other circumstances (e.g., transition to the university for freshmen and transfers, “sophomore slump,” expectations of certain residence hall amenities among upperclass students, varying levels of financial need).

Possible strategies that are considered include clustering students by class, building location, and selected areas within residence halls; a uniform pricing structure; and modifying the point/lottery system of selecting rooms and halls to help students make more informed choices. Recommendations include the expansion of three programs — a Faculty Fellow-in-Residence Program, a College Learning Center within Weinstein Hall, and an improved Resident Assistant Training Program — and the creation of several assessment initiatives.

Mental Health and Behavioral Issues. The report recognizes that mental health and behavioral issues can impede efforts to support the University’s academic mission and improve the quality of student life. Helping students to cope with these problems and minimize risks associated with drug and alcohol use are important objectives. Issues discussed in relation to mental health include an increased use of counseling services by students, their arrival on campus with more severe problems requiring treatment, greater reliance upon medication to treat these problems, and a significant strain overall on mental health resources. Drug and alcohol use also is examined as a factor affecting student life. NYU’s location in a large urban environment may
increase the potential for students to be exposed to these problems. It is, therefore, of the highest importance for the University to maintain a sound and consistent philosophy about alcohol and drugs, appropriate practices as expressions of that philosophy, and maximum effort to mitigate negative environmental influences, particularly outside of the residence halls. The report discusses the role of related support services and programs, which combine prevention, education, and treatment under a wellness model to promote a safe and healthy living and learning environment.

Challenges in the area of mental health include gathering adequate information about our students and their problems; better training for faculty and staff about mental health problems and how to address them; inadequate numbers of staff and insufficient office space; finding ways to encourage students to use alternative mental health interventions such as small groups and peer education services; and improving health insurance coverage for students, especially with respect to mental health benefits and medications.

Challenges with respect to alcohol and drugs include better identification and understanding of these problems as affecting (and affected by) other aspects of undergraduate life; developing programs that address the needs of diverse student populations, particularly those who may be most at risk; enhancing training to incorporate new programs; and clarifying relevant policies and assuring that they are applied consistently. Recommendations include many programmatic and service improvements to address these issues.

**Alumni Relations**

The University increasingly views alumni status as part of a continuum that begins with the recruitment/admission process and evolves throughout a student’s career, so that alumni relations are the culmination of the goal of building and sustaining the NYU community. Improving the quality of undergraduate student life strengthens the foundation for alumni relations by creating institutional loyalty. The section on alumni relations describes the range of activities and programs offered by the Office for University Development and Alumni Relations (UDAR) to communicate with alumni and to engage them in the life of the University through events at Washington Square and in different regions around the country.

Historically low levels of alumni participation and annual giving at NYU are in part a legacy of the days when many of the now older alumni attended the University as commuters or part-time students, and others attended as professional students. These students had less time and opportunity to develop connections to NYU. The primary challenge today is to develop programs and an infrastructure that encourage and support the practice of giving back to the University. Additional challenges include building connections to the significant number of alumni who live in other areas of the United States and abroad; increasing coordination between UDAR and other offices of the University, particularly with the Division of Student Affairs, in order to improve relations with students and alumni; and expanding efforts to involve parents of students in the life of the University community.
Conclusion

The self-study concludes with a recognition of the actions needed to continue the substantial progress that undergraduate education has made at New York University in recent years: a continuing and candid evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, far-sighted planning for the future, and, above all, wise judgments on difficult and complex issues.
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION SELF-STUDY

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AT NYU

I. PROLOGUE

1. Mission and Guiding Principles

Since its founding in 1831 New York University has been intended as a place of special opportunity, a center of higher learning that provides “useful knowledge” to all talented and motivated individuals regardless of national origin, religious beliefs, and social background. Today, NYU stands as the largest private university in the United States and a major center for research and undergraduate, graduate, and professional education. With the recent transition to a new President, we have begun to write a new chapter in the University’s story. In doing so, we aim to continue the trajectory we have established and to rise to the next level—seeking to place NYU among those few institutions (as President Sexton has defined them) “that execute their core mission with such manifest excellence that they become the models others emulate.” (See Appendix A for President Sexton’s installation address.) The mission of New York University is

   to be an international center of scholarship, teaching and research defined by a culture of academic excellence and innovation. That mission involves retaining and attracting outstanding faculty, encouraging them to create programs that draw the best students, having students learn from faculty who are leaders in their fields, and shaping an intellectually rich environment for faculty and students inside and outside the classroom. In reaching for excellence NYU seeks to take academic and cultural advantage of its location in New York City and to embrace diversity among faculty, staff and students to ensure the widest possible range of perspectives, including international perspectives, in the educational experience.

In this decennial self-study the University has decided to focus on undergraduate education. Several years ago the Boyer Commission criticized research universities for their neglect of undergraduate education.1 New York University, however, has been focusing increasing attention on undergraduate education, not merely for obvious financial reasons (since we are heavily dependent on tuition revenues) but also, and more importantly, because undergraduate

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1 The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, created in 1995 under the auspices of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, issued its widely cited report, entitled Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America’s Research Universities, in 1998. A follow-up report, Reinventing Undergraduate Education: Three Years after the Boyer Report, appeared in 2001. The interest generated by the Boyer Commission report led to the establishment of the Reinvention Center, which focuses on undergraduate education at research universities.
education is central to NYU’s mission. Indeed, undergraduate education at NYU is designed to take advantage of special aspects of our institutional and urban environment:

- First and foremost, as a research university, NYU is in a position to bring knowledge creation to bear on instruction. Teaching is regularly done by those who make discoveries or new interpretations, and undergraduates are themselves encouraged to do research under faculty supervision.

- NYU has strong graduate and professional schools, and this makes possible creative linkages between the liberal arts and the professions. These linkages include joint programs and other cross-school initiatives. In addition, there are synergies between graduate and undergraduate education that enable graduate students to participate in appropriate ways in undergraduate instruction and thereby develop as apprentice faculty.

- We are located in one of the world’s most vibrant cities, and this offers unmatched possibilities for making connections with the world of action. Not only internships, which have become a defining experience for many NYU students, but also curriculum and research experiences often can take advantage of our location.

- NYU is committed, more than most universities, to global education. This commitment is reflected in curricula at home as well as in our programs and exchanges abroad.

As we seek to make the most of this environment, we will be guided in this endeavor by a set of core principles, chief among which is our sense of the University as a community activated by the life of the mind. In such a community faculty recognize their duty to the enterprise of learning, scholarship, and teaching and see learning as a collaborative partnership in which students are not passive recipients of information but active participants in the production of knowledge. Members of this community also transcend traditional boundaries—whether boundaries between disciplines, between departments and schools, or between the University and New York City, whose resources are an extension of the classroom and campus. They appreciate, too, the importance of diversity, valuing the benefits of interacting with people whose backgrounds and identities differ from their own. In addition, our approach values not only the cognitive and intellectual growth of our students but also their personal, social, and moral development. Our vision of undergraduate education is a capacious one: it should encourage and enable students to actualize their personal potential, provide them with a platform on which to build professional lives, and prepare them for responsible citizenship. A final characteristic of the community NYU envisions is a willingness to take stock of itself, to change, and to accept the challenges inherent in its pursuit of progress. In this spirit, we embrace the opportunity afforded by the Middle States self-evaluation process as a way to move forward.
2. Organization of Undergraduate Education

Within this intellectually rich and distinctive environment, undergraduate education is organized in eight different schools, listed below in the order of their founding:

The **College of Arts and Science (CAS)**, founded in 1832, is the largest undergraduate division of the University (around 6,500 students). It has responsibility for providing liberal arts courses for students in the other schools. In addition, it provides University-wide academic services, such as the Writing Center, the College Learning Center, NYU Speaking Freely (a language coaching program), coordination of external scholarship competitions, and the majority of courses at NYU’s sites abroad. Awarding the B.A. or B.S. degree, CAS offers more than 75 majors, joint and accelerated programs with NYU’s professional schools, and a dual degree program (B.S./B.E.) with the Stevens Institute of Technology.

The **College of Dentistry**, founded in 1865, is principally a post-baccalaureate professional school. But it enrolls approximately 130 undergraduates in its associate in applied science and B.S. degrees. Graduates with the A.A.S. specialize in dental hygiene and many continue on for the B.S. in dental health education; students may also begin in the B.S. program as freshmen or transfer into it from other programs.

The **Steinhardt School of Education** was founded in 1890 as the School of Pedagogy, the first of its kind in the United States. By the middle of the 20th century, the school had grown to include a number of professions, including undergraduate programs in education, applied psychology, health, communications, art, music, and the arts professions, as well as the Division of Nursing, which had been founded in 1933 as a separate school. Steinhardt enrolls 2,400 undergraduates in its various programs and awards the B.S. or B.M. degree.

The **Leonard N. Stern School of Business**, founded in 1900 as the School of Commerce, Accounts, and Finance, is one of the oldest business schools in the country and the first to award the B.S. in this field. The school was joined by a graduate school in 1916 and renamed the Leonard N. Stern School of Business in 1988. The Undergraduate College enrolls around 2,200 students, who major in accounting, economics (with CAS), finance, information systems, international business, management and organizational behavior, marketing, or statistics and actuarial science, with concentrations also available in operations management, as well as entertainment, media, and technology.

The **School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS)** was founded in 1934 and includes three undergraduate divisions. The General Studies Program (GSP), a two year program which offers associate degrees in liberal arts, is a portal to the other undergraduate divisions of the University; the Paul McGhee Division for adults is a program offering B.A., B.S., and associate degrees in liberal arts as well as in professional stud

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2 Elsewhere in this self-study it is more convenient to list the schools in alphabetical order. Most of these schools also offer graduate or professional degrees.

3 Students do not apply directly to GSP but instead are referred to it by the NYU school to which they have applied.
ies; finally, the Preston Robert Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management also offers B.S. degrees. These three SCPS programs together enroll about 1,400 traditional and 2,100 nontraditional undergraduates; they maintain self-contained core curricula, though GSP students take electives in the other schools.

The Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work was founded in 1953 and named in honor of its longtime dean in 1994. Mainly a graduate school, it enrolls a total of around 100 undergraduates. Because of the extensive professional training they receive, B.S. candidates are able to earn a master’s degree with only one additional year of study. Most Ehrenkranz graduates go on to graduate work in related fields.

The Tisch School of the Arts, founded in 1965 as the School of the Arts, enrolls around 2,800 undergraduate students preparing for careers in the performing arts with majors in dance, drama, film and television, photography, dramatic writing, and recorded music, leading to the B.F.A. It also has two academic departments, Cinema Studies and Performance Studies, the former of which offers an undergraduate major, leading to the B.A. Students in undergraduate drama take advantage of New York’s professional facilities by enrolling in some of its leading acting studios.

The Gallatin School of Individualized Study was founded in 1972 as an alternative liberal arts program, offering the B.A. degree, and became a school in 1995. Today Gallatin enrolls slightly over 1,000 undergraduate liberal arts students. They work closely with faculty advisers to compose individualized concentrations that draw on course work in other undergraduate schools at NYU, Gallatin seminars, independent study with faculty, and internships. The main thrust of the Gallatin seminar curriculum is a multidisciplinary approach to knowledge that incorporates the study of great books and the history of ideas in light of contemporary scholarship and problems.

The number and variety of schools can provide genuine advantages to the academic community, but the differences in mission and the academic culture of the schools can create tensions. The challenge is to preserve the identities of the schools while creating an all-University environment that promotes connections between and among the schools.

3. Progress and Challenges over the Past Decade

Since the last Middle States self-study, NYU has made extraordinary progress in strengthening its undergraduate programs. Arguably the most dramatic index of this is the improvement in the quality of the student body. In the past decade all-University freshman applications grew by 144%, from 13,591 (in 1993) to 33,097 (in 2003):
As the number of applications increased, the quality of the applicant pool also rose dramatically; the result is that the combined the average SAT scores (even when recentered) of students who paid deposits rose 126 points, from 1222 to 1348:

Similarly, the high school grade point average of students who paid deposits jumped from 3.29 to 3.77:

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4 In 1995 the College Board “recentered” SAT scores to compensate for a long-term decline in scores; the process involved replacing the 1941 reference group with the 1990 reference group and had the effect of raising the average scores, especially on the verbal part of the test. When the recentering occurred, the College Board supplied statistical formulas on the basis of which institutions could retrospectively recalculate scores prior to 1995 in order to permit comparisons with later scores. The scores in the ten year statistics for NYU provided here are all recentered.
Our acceptance rate has fallen sharply, from 53% in 1993 to 26% in 2003, putting NYU among the fifteen or so most selective institutions in the country:

Finally, the yield (enrolled students as a percentage of accepted students) rose, from 36% in 1993 to 46% in 2003:
As the quality of the student body has improved dramatically, a number of other major
transformations have taken place. The University has been transformed from a commuter
school into one that is largely residential: we now house roughly twice as many students as we
did a decade ago (in fall 2003 some 10,523 of our 18,836 undergraduates, excluding those
studying abroad, lived on campus). Also, while becoming residential, NYU has changed from a
regional into a national (and increasingly international) university in terms of the origins of stu-
dents (and faculty). Finally, with quality on the rise, total undergraduate enrollment, including
NYU sites abroad, grew by 27.5% from 1992 to 2003, from 15,303 to 19,506 (full-time enroll-
ment grew by 44.8%, from 12,238 to 17,718), and the revenues that this growth provided were
used by a heavily tuition-dependent University to fund aggressive faculty recruitment, under-
graduate and graduate financial aid, various research agenda, and program enhancements,
among many other initiatives. These significant investments in quality resulted in major im-
provements in undergraduate academic and student life.

Despite the dramatic improvements, we cannot afford to be complacent. NYU’s reten-
tion and graduation rates have shown, and are projected to continue to show, improvement and
are similar to those of some other prominent private and public research universities, but they
are well below those of many peer and target institutions. NYU’s six year baccalaureate
graduation rate for the 1996 freshman cohort was 78%. Representative examples of six year
graduation rates for the 1996 cohorts were 94% at Georgetown University, 93% at Northwestern
University, 92% at Columbia University, 89% at the University of Chicago, 85% at UCLA,
84% at the University of Michigan, 82% at Carnegie Mellon University, 81% at the University
of Rochester and at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and 76% at Case Western
Reserve University and at the University of Southern California. Among these and other peer
institutions, there is a negative correlation between size of incoming cohort and graduation rate.
It is therefore a promising sign that NYU has experienced larger incoming cohorts while realiz-
ing an increase in graduation rates.

Table 1 below shows the aggregate, all-University fall-to-fall retention and graduation
rates for the first-time, full-time, baccalaureate-seeking cohorts entering NYU in summer/fall
1993 through those entering in summer/fall 2003. This table does not include students entering
the General Studies Program as they are considered associate degree-seeking students despite their initial application to a four year program and intent to pursue the bachelor’s degree.

Table 1. NYU Retention and Graduation Rates

All Undergraduates (Full-time, First-time, Baccalaureate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall and Summer</th>
<th>Entering Class</th>
<th>Retention…</th>
<th>Graduation…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To 2nd Fall</td>
<td>To 3rd Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2,279</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>2,492</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>79.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2,506</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>2,624</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2,766</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2,825</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>3,039</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>3,116</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,297</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3,312</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3,357</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research

Not surprisingly, the retention and graduation rates for the individual schools have varied considerably. The six year graduation rate for the 1996 Stern freshman cohort, for example, was 90.0%, while that for the 1996 Steinhart cohort was 75.8%. Appendix B shows the rates of retention and graduation for each of the undergraduate schools, including more recent year-to-year improvements. 5

Since retention and graduation rates are typically used as a measure of students’ satisfaction with their university experience, it was clear to the new administration of NYU that it needed to understand the causes of attrition and, more broadly, to take stock of the progress over the past decade and the challenges that confront it. To that end, during the year-long presiden

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5 For purposes of this self-study, we do not count as attrition those students who transfer from one school of NYU to another. In many cases such transfers reflect a further development of students’ interests and the ability of a diverse institution like NYU to accommodate them. The subject of internal transfers is not discussed here but is considered below, in the section on the interrelation of schools.
tial transition, a specially formed University Presidential Transition Team was created that was chaired by Professor Norman Dorsen, who also chairs the steering committee of the Middle States Association self-study. The Transition Team examined a variety of issues facing the University, including academic priorities, faculty housing, academic space, and student enrollment, financial aid, and housing (its report is set out in Appendix C).

As we tried to understand the reasons for attrition and also come to grips with the issues mentioned above during the transition period and afterward, it was clear that NYU suffered from the absence of an office of institutional research (an earlier office was eliminated in the early 1970s when the University faced a budget crisis). There was little collection of standardized data at the University level in areas other than enrollment management; there was some data collection in the various schools but not enough, and no cross-school sharing of data. In addition, there were no traditions of ongoing self-assessment and evaluation, and the University was hampered by a lack of modern information systems. Thus, as an early step for President Sexton’s new administration, which placed new emphasis on ongoing self-assessment, evaluation, and constant improvement in all areas, a central Analytical Planning Group was created. This group permits us to share information with other institutions as well as among schools of NYU.

4. The Analytical Planning Group

Vice Presidents for Planning and for Fiscal Affairs joined the new administration in June 2002, and a new Analytical Planning Group consisting of two subgroups—Institutional Research and Program Evaluation, and Financial Analysis and Planning—was created to develop the University’s capabilities and activities in these areas. Three members of NYU’s existing administrative staff were combined with nine new positions and staff to develop and staff each of the two subgroups.

Three topics now being studied by the group are relevant to this Middle States self-study. The first is retention and attrition. Why do some freshmen accepted at NYU enroll here, while others decide to go elsewhere? Why do some who enroll at NYU persist, while others leave without a degree? What happens to the students who leave NYU without a degree? In order to obtain comparative data in addressing such questions, NYU has joined university data exchanges and is participating in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. At the same time we have undertaken studies of our own community. A comprehensive survey cycle is being implemented to gain information about admitted students, current students, alumni, and parents. Thus, the Admissions Office has reintroduced the use of the nationally used Admitted Students Questionnaire, which was administered to all applicants in spring 2003. The Office of Institutional Research and Program Evaluation is introducing freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior surveys. The national survey CIRP Survey of Entering Freshmen was administered in three schools during AY 2002–2003; at least one school had participated annually in previous years. ACHA health surveys to track substance abuse and other behaviors have been introduced, and a survey was given to all freshmen in spring 2003 and will be given to freshman and sophomores in spring 2004. CAS administered exit surveys and personal interviews to graduating seniors late in the spring of 2002 and 2003. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research and Program Evaluation is now tracking students who leave NYU prior to graduating,
using information from the National Student Clearinghouse Database. That office and the Associate Provost for Admissions and Financial Aid has begun to examine the relation between NYU’s financial aid policies and student retention by investigating the following questions: Does the need gap grow as students progress through their academic careers? Does the link between aid and persistence change over the course of students’ careers? Does it vary by school and student characteristics (e.g., family income level, initial needs gap)? Finally, a preliminary analysis of retention and graduation patterns at the Steinhardt School of Education shows that six year graduation rates have increased over time (though differing considerably from department to department) and are positively correlated with high school GPA and SAT scores.

A second area under review is the array of programs NYU has for special categories of students. The initial focus is on (i) opportunity programs for underrepresented minorities and for disadvantaged students (e.g., the Higher Education Opportunity Program and the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program; (ii) the academic programs for Scholars who are awarded large merit-based financial aid packages; and (iii) the General Studies Program at the School of Continuing and Professional Studies. This review is contributing to the study of NYU’s financial aid policies (mentioned above), focusing in particular on how financial aid policies—while effective in attracting excellent students—may themselves be contributing to attrition. It is also aiding the work of the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, who is focusing on student engagement and diversity issues.

Finally, the Analytical Planning Group initiated in summer 2002 an intensive study of faculty composition and deployment within each of NYU’s schools (except Law, Medicine, and Dentistry). Using 2002–2003 data, the group is investigating what proportion of faculty ranks are filled by part-time faculty, what percentage and type of courses are taught by part-time faculty, and what other duties these faculty perform (e.g., advising, tutoring, supervising field work, grading). In addition, the team will attempt to link student-level information with faculty deployment data to examine the relationship between courses taught by full- and part-time faculty and student attrition. Finally, more intensive reviews of specific schools and programs have also begun. Thus, during the spring 2003 semester the Steinhardt School of Education began a comprehensive review in preparation for a new dean, who has now been appointed.

While we do not want to prejudge the findings of these studies, which will inform our continuing assessment and planning, several factors appear to stand out as influences on NYU’s retention patterns: size and organizational complexity of the institution (not surprisingly, as noted above, our graduation rates more closely resemble those of large public research institutions than those of smaller private ones); the quality of the overall residential experience and the sense of “community” on campus; the level of students’ access to and engagement with full-time faculty; and the degree to which students’ financial aid needs are being met. Accordingly, the present self-study examines undergraduate education at NYU under the following headings: Enrollment and Financial Aid (Section II, below), Academic Affairs (III), Students Affairs (IV), and Alumni Relations (V). In each section, we summarize the current status of the issue, identify challenges, and make recommendations for action or further study. We have not prioritized the recommendations or assigned responsibility for implementing them. Similarly, although many of the recommendations involve expenditures of money, we have not costed them out or set priorities.
5. Organization of the Self-Study

The President assigned overall responsibility for the self-study to Stokes Professor of Law and Counselor to the President Norman Dorsen, who served as chair of the Steering Committee. Assistant Chancellor Barnett Hamberger was named coordinator for this effort. After consulting with Professor Dorsen and Mr. Hamberger, President Sexton appointed a Steering Committee composed of faculty, deans, administrators, and students to be responsible for overseeing preparation of the self-study (see Appendix D).

The Steering Committee formed two committees to consult on the self-study, reflecting the two major aspects of undergraduate education: the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee, chaired by Matthew Santirocco, Dean of the College of Arts and Science and Professor of Classics, and the Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee, co-chaired by Linda Mills, Vice Provost for University Life and Interdisciplinary Initiatives and Professor of Social Work, and Dean Santirocco, with Sharon Weinberg, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Professor of Quantitative Methods and Psychology, serving as Adviser to the Committee.

Provost David McLaughlin and Professor Dorsen appointed members of the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee. This body will continue to exist after the completion of the self-study in an advisory role to the Provost. The Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee grew out of a Dean’s Working Group on Student Affairs, established during the presidential transition and to which additional members were added. It too will continue to function after completion of the self-study. The composition of these committees may be found in Appendices E and F.

In addition to members of the three committees, many other members of the University community contributed to the self-study, and the Steering Committee is grateful to them. At the beginning of the process, Professor Dorsen sent an e-mail to the University community seeking comments on the major issues and inviting topics to be considered. As the process proceeded, assistance and feedback on the self-study was sought and received from a wide range of individuals and groups (see Appendix G).

Particular thanks are due to the outstanding work of Otto Sonntag, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Arts and Science, and Robert Ruggiero, Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs, who assisted in preparing successive drafts of the report, and to Allan Corns, who served as Research Analyst for the Self-Study, Elizabeth Jacques, Administrative Aide, Office of Academic Program Review, and Sally Sanderlin, Associate Dean for Administration, College of Arts and Science.

A complete timetable on the work of the self-study is attached as Appendix H.
II.  ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL AID

Overview

Over the past decade, NYU has achieved a significant improvement in the quality of its applicants, becoming one of the most selective universities in the country. The Prologue provides illustrations of the dramatic improvement in the number and quality of applicants, the reduction of the accept rate, and the increase in the yield rate during this period. On the other hand, NYU still faces challenges. We look first at our efforts to recruit students through admissions and financial aid policies and procedures and then turn to the main focus of this Middle States self-study, which looks at undergraduate academic affairs and student affairs, large areas that bear on the overall quality of the educational experience we provide.

Current State

With the exception of the associate’s and bachelor’s programs in the College of Dentistry and in the McGhee Division of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS), undergraduate admissions and financial aid are coordinated at the University level under a new Associate Provost for Admissions and Financial Aid. Enrollment targets and strategies are formulated in consultation with each school, which has some say in how its entering class is selected and how financial aid is distributed. Standards and requirements for admissions and levels of financial aid therefore differ throughout the University.

NYU’s admissions process resembles that of peer and target institutions. Prospective students are identified as early as the tenth grade from purchased national lists that are selected on the basis of academic and geographic criteria. Students initially receive letters and emails from NYU, and in the eleventh grade they receive publications, including a general prospectus about the institution and a separate publication for the school in which they are interested. In addition to print materials, the Admissions website (http://admissions.nyu.edu) provides the most current information and is updated regularly. Electronic communication is becoming more important in the recruitment and conversion process, and personalization of electronic communications is being upgraded and refined. Students can still fill out paper applications (which can be downloaded from the website) or apply electronically, and many visit the campus. While the University sponsors large open house events, there has been a shift lately in favor of ad hoc visits by prospective students and their parents; a majority of prospects visit the campus with families beginning the summer prior to the students’ senior year in high school. (An information session, campus tour, and the opportunity to meet with an admissions officer are components of these visits.) As part of its recruitment strategy, admissions counselors are assigned to geographic territories, traveling in these areas for high school visits, college fairs, and receptions hosted by NYU. Once students apply, their applications are reviewed by admissions counselors, who are organized into teams by school. Each team’s leader meets regularly with a representative of the school in order to review admissions criteria. The teams then apply these criteria in reading all applicant files as carefully as possible at least twice, given the large number of applications they receive and the limited staff and time available. Once students receive notification
of admission, special yield events are scheduled both on campus and in geographically significant areas of the country.

While admission to NYU is need-blind, financial aid is based on a combination of need and merit. Amounts of outright grants depend largely on financial aid rank, determined by SAT I and GPA. In addition, financial aid packages are provided to certain groups, such as finalists in the Intel Science Talent search, National Merit winners, and targeted members of underrepresented minorities.

One of the mainstays of the effort to attract high-quality students in most of the schools is the Scholars Program. This program, which enrolls the top 5–15% of each school’s entering class, provides a large scholarship, opportunities for international study and travel, special co-curricular, cultural, and social programming, and community service activities. Recently, the Scholar selection process has been refined to align the selection of Scholars more closely with the goals of the program, not all of which are strictly academic. So, for example, a student with outstanding academic credentials may still get a substantial scholarship but, on the basis of other characteristics, may not be selected for the Scholars Program.

As the average SAT scores of our incoming students have risen, so too has their average family income. This is consistent with national observations of a strong, positive correlation between SAT scores and family income. While this may lessen some students’ reliance on financial aid, many accepted students, including those from middle-class families, still have substantial financial need, especially during times of a weak economy. This is suggested by recent downtrends in yield for certain categories of accepted students. The yield of students in the different financial aid ranks has varied considerably, both within and across schools, as Appendix I shows for fall 2002 and fall 2003. How average family income and average need break down by students’ financial aid rank is shown in Appendices J and K.

As noted in the Prologue, between fall 1992 and fall 2003 the total undergraduate enrollment grew by 27.5% and full-time enrollment by 44.8%. Thanks to a wider and deeper applicant pool, this growth in the numbers of students has been accompanied by a rise in their quality and by a sharp increase in our selectivity. In recent years, the decision to accept more students was motivated by budgetary considerations and was facilitated by the great depth (in size and quality) of the applicant pool. It is unlikely, however, that our demographics or our infrastructure will permit a continuation of so drastic a rise in enrollment. Moreover, while the growing undergraduate enrollments have generated revenues that have financed the programs and resources that supported the University’s drive toward excellence, they have also created serious strains on its resources (discussed under Challenges).

NYU takes many transfer students. As the Report of the Student Enrollment, Financial Aid, and Housing Committee to the Presidential Transition Report found, some transfers clearly strengthen a school’s academic programs, but others are brought in to make up revenue lost because of attrition, to compensate for the NYU students who are studying abroad, or to produce incremental income. In addition to transfer students from other institutions, there are also substantial numbers of students who transfer from one school of NYU to another. Over the last five years the balance between external and internal transfers has shifted toward the latter. In fall
1998, not including Dentistry and the adult degree and diploma programs in SCPS, 58.6% of the 1,501 undergraduate transfers came from other institutions; in fall 2003 only 49.8% of 1,422 did. This trend reflects the slight decline in the total number of transfers and the steady rise in NYU’s overall undergraduate enrollments, which has increased the pool of potential internal transfers. The shift has been most dramatic in CAS, where external transfers accounted for 65.6% of all transfers in 1998 but for only 25.9% in 2003. The bulk of the internal transfers have been students from SCPS’s General Studies Program who move to one of the four year schools.

Challenges

Admissions Decisions. The dramatic increase in the size and quality of the applicant pool has made it more difficult for the Admissions staff to read all applications carefully. While many criteria are considered (such as strength of curriculum, reputation of school, personal essay, extracurricular activities, and letters of recommendation), there has been a tendency to privilege quantitative predictive indices such as SATs and high school GPAs. But other characteristics are increasingly important in differentiating applicants. A number of our competitor schools offer interviews, but the large number of applications NYU receives precludes that option at present. The only exceptions are SCPS’s General Studies Program (GSP), which requires an informational interview, and some departments at the Tisch School of the Arts and the Steinhardt School of Education that require auditions. To address the decisions issue, Admissions has redesigned the application form to capture more, and more detailed, information, and begun to read the applications in a more nuanced way.

Diversity of Schools. As noted above, among NYU’s great strengths are the number and diversity of its different undergraduate schools. With regard to admissions, it is important that the recruitment effort educate prospective applicants about the schools and that the admissions decision-making process take their differences into account to avoid mismatches between students and school and discourages students from attempting to use one school as a “default” point of entry with the intention of transferring later to another division of the University. To educate applicants about the distinguishing features of each school is particularly challenging, given the similarities and sometimes even redundancies between programs. (Redundancies, real and perceived, are discussed in the section on the Major in the Academic Affairs part of this self-study.) CAS and Gallatin, for example, are both liberal arts schools, though they differ greatly in mission, curriculum, and academic culture; similarly, Tisch and Steinhardt have arts programs that at least on the surface resemble each other. One admissions strategy that might help is to identify applicants who do not “fit” the school to which they have applied and to move them (with their permission) to the applicant pool of another school whose profile they more closely resemble. While such referrals are occasionally made, it is not routine practice except in the case of GSP, all of whose students are referred by another NYU school that does not initially admit them. As the University’s quality has risen, so too has the quality of GSP’s student body. This may be an appropriate time, therefore, to review the role and function of GSP in the University. It would also be helpful to review the criteria used for transferring out of GSP into one of the University’s four year schools. Currently, as long as a student maintains an overall GPA of 2.5 and a 2.0 in any courses taken in the original four year school, he or she is virtually guaranteed acceptance to that school.
**Technology.** While students may apply online, the data cannot be batch loaded into the Student Information System (SIS) and thus must be entered manually. Given the large number of applications, data entry has been restricted to only the most necessary data. But other information would be useful to admissions recruitment as well as development efforts. In addition, given the limitations of the current SIS, it has been difficult for Admissions to employ what data there is, whether for communication purposes, wait-list management, or financial aid analysis.

**Service.** The larger number of applications and the increase in the numbers of accepted students have strained both Admissions and Financial Aid staff who deal with the public. These are stressful topics for most families, and it is essential that continuing training be provided to staff in personal relations and technology and that they be adequately compensated.

**Financial Aid.** Insufficient financial aid funds to meet full need make it difficult to assure an opportunity to all admitted students and may also prevent NYU from meeting its diversity goal (see the section on diversity, above). The gap between student need and the amount NYU is able to provide in aid from all sources has increased, and this has been a factor in the decrease in the number of enrolled needy students, as measured by the percentage of students receiving federal Pell grants and New York State TAP awards (see Appendix L). In addition, although yield on accepted students has improved over the past five years (despite a slight decline from fall 2002 to fall 2003), it remains low and uneven in some financial aid ranks (rankings of an applicant’s academic credentials which affect the amount of scholarship to be awarded. See Appendix I). This suggests that the financial aid strategy needs to be closely reviewed on a University-wide and school-by-school basis. Finally, as we await a detailed analysis of the relation between financial aid and retention, students with need continue to be a concern. In spring 2003 the University began to adjust the financial aid packages of continuing students who are in need, but funds available for this purpose have been modest.

**Funding.** In addition to all other needs of NYU, endowed scholarships are critical. NYU is underendowed in comparison with peer and target institutions. Sufficient investment has to be made in admissions and financial aid so that the offices can carry out their role in admitting the strongest possible undergraduate class whose members will persist until graduation and will remain connected to NYU as satisfied alumni and future donors.

**Enrollment Management.** As the Report of the Student Enrollment, Financial Aid, and Housing Committee to the University Presidential Transition Team concluded in 2002, “Over-enrollment of freshmen and transfer students now threatens to undercut NYU’s impressive gains by adversely affecting the quality of the undergraduate experience at all levels. High numbers of undergraduates strain academic space and resources in the form of crowded classrooms, libraries, laboratories, elevators, and demands on faculty time.” Enrollment decisions have been made by the individual schools, sometimes driven by budgetary considerations; in the past, there has been little effort to review them on a University-wide basis and to anticipate how one school’s decision may affect the other schools.

**Transfers.** The sheer number of external transfers works against efforts to enhance the sense of community on campus. The large number of internal transfers can also be a challenge, if some of the movement stems from student dissatisfaction or if it produces dislocations in ei
ther the exporting or importing school. Stern recently decided, for example, to cut back drastically on the number of transfers it would accept from GSP; that has led to a sharp increase in the number of GSP transfers to CAS (360 in fall 2003 as compared to 146 in fall 2001). GSP transfers now constitute a disproportionate part of the CAS student body. In addition, preliminary studies suggest that their performance in CAS, where more than half of them now go, is significantly lower than that of transfers, internal or external, from four year programs. This may reflect the relatively low standards for transfer because GSP students are guaranteed acceptance to CAS if they have a GPA of 2.5, whereas the students from one of NYU’s four year schools are typically expected to have a 3.2 GPA.

**Recommendations**

- **Admissions Decisions.** Explore ways of providing Admissions with the resources necessary to give that is more predictive. Consider using alumni or other University representatives to provide increasingly nuanced assessments of each applicant. Make further efforts to develop an index to interview top candidates.

- **Diversity of Schools.** Continue efforts to clarify the distinctions among the undergraduate schools. Give Admissions greater latitude to refer applicants to a more suitable school (if the applicants are willing and are likely to be acceptable to that school). Assure that the standards for GSP transfers to four year schools are commensurate with what is expected from transfers from other four year schools.

- **Technology.** Implement the upload of the online application as soon as it is feasible. In the meantime, ensure that Admissions has sufficient resources to allow for necessary data entry and analysis. Continue to explore and implement new technologies to assure personalized and timely communications with prospective and accepted students.

- **Service.** Ensure that adequately recruited, trained, and compensated staff are available during peak times to assist with the admissions and financial aid processes. Redesign the website to make it more informative. Explore purchasing available software to assist with communication with applicants.

- **Financial Aid.** Continue, on the basis of a more detailed analysis of recent patterns, to rethink financial aid policies to promote yield and retention by making financial aid more sensitive to need as well as merit. Consider adopting new formulas for determining financial aid rank. Make further financial aid increases available to continuing students on the basis of need.

- **Funding.** Make scholarship fundraising a top priority. Continue to work with the Parents Committee, Alumni Association, and other groups to increase the number of scholarships. Explore implementation of software that will allow simulations to determine the best use of available institutional aid funds.
• **Enrollment Management.** Reexamine enrollments to identify an optimal overall undergraduate size, and the balance of freshmen and transfers, in a manner that aligns resources, revenues, and student quality.

• **Transfers.** Study further how internal and external transfer students perform, compared with freshman admits, by school; where the numbers are great and where there is evidence of weakness, take steps to reduce the intake. Study GSP’s purpose and function in the University, its appropriate size, and the standards for transfer from GSP to each of the four year schools.
III. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the self-study relies heavily on the work of NYU’s Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Academic Affairs and its subcommittees. (For membership, see Appendix E.) This Committee was charged by the Provost and the University’s Middle States Steering Committee to explore the following topics:

**General Education:** Review the required liberal arts general education requirement for each of the undergraduate schools. Do these courses offer students the opportunity to “acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills”? The review will focus especially on the Morse Academic Plan (MAP), a general education core that the majority, though not all, of the undergraduate schools participate in to a greater or lesser extent.

**The Major:** Examine the general issues and cross-school challenges that arise from the variety of majors or concentrations offered in the different schools. Do they represent “a coherent program of study (not simply a collection of courses)” that leads to expected student learning? Do they recognize that “college-level learning from other institutions may facilitate a student’s progress without compromising an institution’s integrity or the quality of its degrees”? Examine whether “individual courses, programs, and sequences of study are dynamic and responsive to new research findings and modes of inquiry.” Is there a periodic examination of the “policies and procedures by which degree requirements are established and student performance evaluated”?

**Undergraduate Research:** Examine the extent to which undergraduates are engaged in research in each of the undergraduate schools, and propose ways to strengthen this creative activity. Since creativity and original work can take different forms in different fields, research in this instance is defined in its broadest context, encompassing artistic and professional activities as well as more traditional academic inquiry into the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

**Experiential Learning:** Examine the role that internships, public service learning, and community-based learning play in the education of undergraduates. How do these activities enrich the undergraduate academic experience? How can they be expanded and also integrated better into the curriculum? How specifically can our location in New York City provide us with unique opportunities and resources in these areas?

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7 Ibid., pp. 31–32.
Interrelation of Schools and Individualized Study: Examine the interrelationships among undergraduate programs at the different schools and their availability to students, as well as the role of individualized study in the undergraduate schools. Are students given appropriate opportunity to avail themselves of the range of curricular offerings at the University, through individual course registration, intra- and cross-school minors and second majors, and/or programs of individualized study? How well do the University’s programs serve those students whose academic interests do not fall within traditional majors? Are there structural impediments (e.g., balance of trade, poor advising) that hinder this sort of interschool activity and, if so, how can they be removed?

Study Abroad: Examine the role of study abroad (including international internships) in preparing undergraduates for membership in a global society. Do our study abroad opportunities expose our students to diversity beyond the campus, enrich their academic experience and their lives, and benefit the campus to which they return?

Academic Advising, Mentoring, and Support Services: Review the variety of academic advising options that exist in the schools and in all-University settings and recommend ways that existing programs can be improved. Do current systems of academic advising (by faculty/departments as well as by professional staff) and the academic support services our schools and the University provide meet the full range of student interests and needs, and assist in enabling “each student to achieve the institution’s goals for students”?

Libraries: Examine current library resources and the ways in which they support undergraduate education and the interaction of technological services.

Technology: Examine and make recommendations concerning the role of technology in supporting the academic enterprise. Are the University’s “learning [and technological] resources, facilities, . . . equipment, . . . services, and staff adequate to support” our undergraduate academic programs, and are they being used in an effective and efficient manner?

Academic Space: Examine and make recommendations regarding the availability of classrooms that are suitably configured, equipped, and maintained for effective teaching and learning.

Teaching Assessment and Improvement: Examine and make recommendations regarding the evaluation of courses and instructors and the processes for improving the quality of instruction in the various undergraduate schools.

Diversity and Engagement: Recommend ways to increase diversity and full engagement throughout the student body. We desire to have a student body on campus that is demographically diverse and for campus life to reflect that diversity.

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9 Ibid., pp. 33–34. See also pp. 8 and 31–32.
2. GENERAL EDUCATION

Overview

A general education that conveys essential skills of oral and written communication, of critical analysis, and of quantitative reasoning and that introduces students to a broad range of cultural and scientific knowledge is important for all students, regardless of their area of specialization or their professional aspirations. At NYU the form that general education takes varies from school to school, as one might expect. But one of the University’s most notable achievements in the past decade has been creation of an ambitious general education program, the Morse Academic Plan (MAP), for a great majority of undergraduates. This self-study will review the different models of general education at NYU. Since the MAP is central to the overall framework of undergraduate general education and serves the largest number of students, it will be discussed in greatest detail.

Current State

As noted above, several general education models coexist at NYU—a traditional distributional model, the special liberal arts requirement of the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, the core curriculum of the General Studies Program (GSP) at the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS), and the Morse Academic Plan (MAP). These different models reflect the academic diversity of our campus. The chart in Appendix M, comparing general education requirements across and within schools, illustrates this diversity. It shows as well that a basic intellectual platform is largely shared among most of the undergraduates from NYU: all the schools have an expository writing requirement, and up to three-quarters of the students in four year programs participate extensively in the humanities/social science component. But the schools vary greatly in their requirement of mathematics and natural science, and only two schools have a requirement in foreign languages. The different models are as follows:

The Distributional Model (Dentistry, Ehrenkranz, SCPS, and Tisch). A distributional model is the most common sort of general education requirement in the United States. Until recently it was also the most prevalent model at NYU. At present, however, some version of a distributional persists only in the College of Dentistry, the Ehrenkranz School of Social Work, two divisions of SCPS (McGhee and Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management), and the Tisch School of the Arts. The number and definition of the areas to be fulfilled, as well as the number of required courses in each and overall, vary from school to school. In most Tisch programs, for instance, the required distribution is at least 8 credits in each of the following areas: expository writing, humanities, and social science and/or natural science. By contrast, the McGhee Division has a distributional that includes the areas of writing and critical thinking; quantitative reasoning; global perspectives; historical perspectives; scientific issues; and humanities and social sciences. Dental hygiene students take 8 credits in writing, 4 in oral communication, 8 in social science, and 17 in science—all supplied by SCPS—as well as 3 credits in ethics supplied by Dentistry’s own curriculum. Ehrenkranz students, to cite a final variation, must take 12 credits in humanities 16 in social science, in addition to introductory courses in writing, psychology, sociology, and human biology.
**The Gallatin Model.** Gallatin students complete 32 credits in a liberal arts core, including 8 credits in the humanities, 8 in the social sciences, and 4 in math or science, as well as a first year seminar and two terms of expository writing. The discussion-based, writing-intensive first year seminars introduce students to the goals, methods, and philosophy of interdisciplinary and individualized education, by focusing on a broad theme (e.g., creativity; law and order; or social construction of reality) and by incorporating great books and significant texts representing several disciplines, time periods, and cultures. Gallatin has sought to put writing at the center of the curriculum, starting with “Writing Seminar I,” which usually moves from personal and descriptive essays to critical essays, and “Writing Seminar II,” much of which is devoted to a long critical essay as well as a research paper.

**The General Studies Program’s Core Curriculum.** The two year General Studies Program (GSP) in SCPS leads to the associate of arts degree. Its core curriculum features three two-course sequences (Cultural Foundations, Social Foundations, and Prose Composition) designed to provide freshmen with a common and integrated experience, developing an understanding of the historical development of Western culture. A recent reform replaced the second year core sequences with two topics seminars—on modern cultures and modern society. Since the majority of GSP students eventually move on to CAS, steps have been taken over the last several years to enhance the articulation between GSP and the MAP, especially in the math/science area; thus GSP students who anticipate transferring to CAS will take “Quantitative Reasoning” and at least one science course while still in GSP.

**The Morse Academic Plan (MAP).** CAS, Steinhardt, and Stern, along with the Cinema Studies Program in Tisch, have adopted, to varying degrees, the MAP, the most extensive University-wide revision of NYU’s undergraduate curriculum in the last decade, representing the faculty’s best efforts to achieve a consensus behind a coherent general education at this research University. The MAP has four components. Two of them, Expository Writing and the foreign language requirement, were parts of the old distributional curriculum and were retained and incorporated into the MAP. The other two parts, Foundations of Contemporary Culture (hereafter FCC) and Foundations of Scientific Inquiry (hereafter FSI), were created to replace the old distributional in humanities, social sciences, and natural science.

Named after Samuel F. B. Morse, artist, scientist, inventor of the telegraph, and early faculty member at NYU, the MAP originated in CAS, which has the responsibility for providing liberal arts courses for its own students and for those of NYU’s other schools. The fruit of many years of discussion and study, this integrated general education curriculum was put in place in 1995. In its early phases the MAP received funding from the National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. In June 2000 the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation provided support to CAS for a national conference on “General Education in the Research University,” which was held at NYU and highlighted the MAP.

The MAP, particularly the two newer parts (FCC and FSI), seeks to expose all students to the modes and methods of humanistic and scientific inquiry; concentrate these foundational courses early in students’ college careers; ensure that students study with regular members of the faculty as part of their general education; enrich students’ educational experience with small-group workshop, laboratory, and recitation sections associated with all courses; maintain
central oversight of the curriculum in terms of academic goals, staffing, and scheduling; and implement programs of educational development for the graduate student preceptors. To achieve these goals and to ensure appropriate evolution (a lack of which was felt in the older distributional), the MAP has put in place a mechanism for rigorous assessment and a governance structure whereby faculty committees can implement improvements on the basis of assessments.

The MAP has been extensively evaluated since the piloting stage (1993–1995). The FCC and FSI have regularly carried out their own student course assessments, in addition to the CAS-wide evaluation of all courses. The program as a whole has also been the subject of a third year internal review and seventh year internal and external reviews (see Appendices N, O and P). Finally, many “town halls,” student focus groups, and ad hoc faculty committees have been devoted to the MAP. They have sparked lively, at times heated, debate among students and faculty about the role and shape of general education and whether the MAP as currently configured meets this ideal. While these conversations suggest that further improvements are needed, they also attest to the vitality of the intellectual discourse.

The FCC and FSI are administered independently of the academic departments by a faculty director, who reports to the CAS Dean. Since the MAP was not intended to be a static, fixed curriculum, responsibility for oversight and ongoing development of the FCC and FSI is vested in two faculty committees whose members work with the director and dean. In response to faculty and student concerns about its intellectual rationale and operational realities, the MAP has evolved considerably since its inception in 1995. Some of this evolution is described and assessed in the seventh year internal review of the MAP.

The following is a fuller description of each of the four parts of the MAP. Only CAS participates in all four parts; the other participants—Steinhardt, Stern, and Cinema Studies in Tisch—do so in varying degrees.

*Foundations of Contemporary Culture (FCC)* is a series of four coordinated requirements in the humanities and social sciences. For each requirement students can choose from a cluster of tracks or courses. These are offered in lectures, ordinarily of either 80 or 120 students, which only tenured or tenure-track faculty teach; each course also has a required weekly recitation, led by a graduate student preceptor. This format creates teaching teams of a faculty member and typically two or three graduate student instructors, and thus it also provides a well-defined occasion for faculty to mentor their preceptors in their educational development as teachers-in-training. FCC has been the subject of ongoing assessment, on the basis of which improvements have been made in the four requirements.

“Conversations of the West” is a great-books course. Students choose from four tracks, each combining texts from antiquity with works from a later period: the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, or the 19th century. It is the only one of the four FCC courses whose subject matter is wholly nondepartmental.
“World Cultures” is a cluster of courses on non-Western cultures. Students choose one such course, which considers the ways in which a given culture defines itself against internal and external alternatives. The courses draw on faculty from several disciplines.

“Societies and the Social Sciences” is a cluster of courses that explores a social concern or topic as a “case study” of the characteristic methods of one or more of the social sciences. The courses may be interdisciplinary or adopt a more unified methodological approach. As a result of assessment, the CAS faculty recently voted that CAS students can also satisfy the requirement by completing a major or minor in the social sciences or by completing one of a very few departmental courses approved for this purpose (i.e., a modified distributional). Similarly, Stern students have the option of taking either a “Societies” course or another liberal arts course.

“Expressive Culture” tracks explore the complexities of artistic expression by focusing on one of five media: sound, images, words, performance, or film. These courses make use, whenever possible, of the rich cultural resources of New York City. As with “Societies and the Social Sciences,” alternative ways of satisfying “Expressive Culture” were recently approved for CAS and Stern students.

Foundations of Scientific Inquiry (FSI) is a series of three coordinated courses in quantitative reasoning and the natural sciences designed to equip those who are not science or pre-health students with mathematical skills and an understanding of scientific investigation. Although originally conceived of as a “vertical” sequence, the courses soon became viewed as stand-alone courses that need not always be taken in order. In their original, team-taught, modular formats, the courses were found to be unsatisfactory. This led to an early switch to tracked (or “flavored”) offerings, which allow students and faculty to follow their own interests. Like FCC courses, FSI courses are delivered in medium-size lectures by faculty with weekly workshops or laboratories taught by graduate student preceptors. FSI has been the subject of ongoing assessment, on the basis of which improvements have been made in the three requirements, described below.

“Quantitative Reasoning” explores mathematical concepts in a variety of contexts in the natural or social sciences. The original, modular course, “QR: Mathematical Patterns in Nature,” proved problematic, not least because of the wide range of students’ mathematical preparation and aptitudes. The introduction of a proficiency test and of “flavored” offerings brought some improvements. Continued regular assessment led to further changes, included the piloting of a small-group format (two extended workshops per week, taught by a graduate student), alongside the traditional format (two large lectures taught by a faculty member and one workshop per week taught by a graduate student); the pilot was, on the whole, more successful, but staffing and space requirements made its full-scale expansion impractical. The requirement can be satisfied by approved AP calculus credit or completion of an approved course. Science majors and students in the prehealth and B.S./B.E. programs automatically satisfy the requirement.

“Natural Science I” explores the physical sciences. In its original format—a single, monolithic course with four modules, each taught by a different faculty member—the course proved unsuccessful, since students were uncertain about the direction of the course and uncomfortable with the shifting styles of the different teachers. “NS I” took on the more familiar one-instructor model and provided a variety of topical options; these reforms considerably improved
the course’s effectiveness. The “NS I” requirement may also be satisfied by approved AP credit, completion of a specific course or course sequence, a major in a science, or by completion of the prehealth or B.S./B.E. program.

“Natural Science II” explores the biological world. Its history is similar to that of “NS I,” and this requirement, too, can be satisfied in a number of alternative ways. It tends to retain a suggestion of the former verticality of FSI by assuming that students have been exposed to a college-level science course before starting “NS II,” even if that course is usually “NS I.”

*Expository Writing.* Subscribing to the principle that writing can always be improved, all the undergraduate schools require their students to take courses in expository writing. The Expository Writing Program (EWP), which reports directly to the Dean of CAS, provides the required writing courses for students in CAS, Stern, Steinhardt, Tisch, and Ehrenkranz. Students in Gallatin and SCPS and those in the HEOP/STEP/C-STEP\(^{10}\) program have their own versions of a two-semester sequence of expository writing. For international students EWP provides a separate series of writing courses.

Since 1993 EWP has implemented a number of important changes (see Appendix Q for details). Having in the preceding years taken steps to make the first-semester foundational writing course more rigorous, EWP in fall 2001 introduced “Writing the Essay,” an intensive course that essentially combined the work of the old requirement in a one-semester course. The various schools use “Writing the Essay” in different ways.

For the vast majority of CAS students, “Writing the Essay” is the only required writing course. A new version of it targeted to science students was piloted in the fall 2003 semester. Given initial evaluations indicating that the focus on science has helped students to improve their writing, efforts to develop a version of “Writing the Essay” for social science students have been initiated. Students in Stern, Steinhardt, and Ehrenkranz are required to take a second writing course, closely aligned with the disciplinary work and missions of those schools. These courses focus on discipline- or profession-related readings and, in the case of Stern, lectures by invited speakers. Tisch students take a special version of “Writing the Essay” that is integrated with a plenary lecture, “Art and the World.” Then, in the second semester, they take “The World through Art,” in the Tisch Department of Art and Public Policy, which combines the advanced college essay taught by EWP faculty (who are largely Tisch graduate students) with lectures given by Tisch faculty. This sequence now constitutes the “Tisch Core Curriculum” and has proven to be an integrative experience for freshmen across the Tisch undergraduate programs.

*Foreign Language.* The study of foreign languages, ancient or modern, is an important element of general education. At many levels, language study prepares an individual to function effectively in a global environment by improving students’ cultural as well as linguistic competence. Many students from all eight undergraduate schools take credit-bearing language courses, which CAS provides. But only two schools (CAS and Steinhardt) require language

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\(^{10}\) The Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) is a state-funded financial aid and academic support program enabling economically and academically disadvantaged New York State students to attend private institutions of higher learning. The related STEP and C-STEP programs assist underrepresented minority students who are interested in science, technology, health, business, legal, and public service careers.
study (and their requirements differ).\textsuperscript{11} There is a wide disparity in foreign language enrollment among the schools. For example, while over 25% of CAS students were registered for an elementary or intermediate level foreign language course in fall 2003, the percentage of students in the other undergraduate schools registered in such courses ranged from zero to 16% (See Appendix R). Over the last decade CAS has added Modern Greek, Modern Irish, Swahili, Hindi, Cantonese, Tagalog, and Urdu to the languages that it teaches. Beyond that, an exchange agreement with Columbia University begun in 1998 has substantially expanded the range of languages that NYU students can study.\textsuperscript{12}

In addition to credit-bearing courses, all undergraduates have access to a distinctive and successful program called NYU Speaking Freely. Created in 1995 by CAS, which also administers it, this program brings no-cost, noncredit, extracurricular language coaching into residence halls, lounges, the College Learning Center, and other campus locations; it also makes extensive use of the city’s linguistic communities and international activities and events. The immense popularity of this program, which now offers coaching at several levels in more than 15 languages, tends to contradict the conventional wisdom that young Americans have little interest in studying foreign languages, especially if they are taught creatively and connected to tangible goals like international study (Santirocco 1999). Enrollments rose from some 700 (in 9 languages) in 1996–1997 to nearly 3,800 (in 17 languages) in 2003–2004. (For enrollments in NYU Speaking Freely language courses, see Appendix S.)

Challenges

\textit{Goals of General Education.} The members of the seventh year MAP external review team found in 2002–2003 that its goals were “not clearly or consistently understood or articulated by the MAP’s various constituencies.” That quite a few students and faculty seem unclear about the goals of general education in a diverse environment is probably true of the other general education models at NYU as well. Gathering a consensus and making the program’s requirements obvious and operations transparent is an ongoing and important challenge.

\textit{Improving Specific Courses.} Student and faculty assessments suggest that the absence of a 20th-century track in “Conversations of the West” is a shortcoming. In foreign-language courses the challenge is to make appropriate use of new technologies that widen the range of instructional and learning methods; language programs might well be able to learn from the experiences of noncredit SCPS and NYU Speaking Freely classes. “Quantitative Reasoning” has continued to be the most problematical MAP course, and full agreement on its learning goals remains elusive. Recent efforts to improve it include (i) the introduction of medium-size classes on the application of mathematics and mathematical reasoning to real-world problems, (ii) the development of a screening test that places some students in a version of “QR” that provides

\textsuperscript{11}CAS students are required to attain or demonstrate proficiency in a language through the second semester of the intermediate level. Steinhardt students in some programs are required to take 8 credits of foreign language; those in other programs are required to take 4 credits; and those in Music Business have no language requirement at all.

\textsuperscript{12}Under this consortial arrangement NYU students could in 2003–2004 enroll in Armenian, Bengali, Finnish, Hausa, Hungarian, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Sanskrit, Swedish, Tamil, Modern Tibetan, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Wolof, and Zulu at Columbia. Columbia students could enroll in Akkadian, Ancient Egyptian, Aramaic, Cantonese, Tagalog, and Turkish at NYU.
extra help with basic skills, and (iii) the hiring of an academic coordinator for “QR” who is an expert in mathematics education.

**Capitalizing on Intellectual Diversity.** General education at NYU should be understood as providing some commonality and coherence in the context of the diversity of missions among the eight schools. The MAP faculty, coming almost exclusively from FAS, are inclined to assume that the students in their classes are from CAS rather than anticipating the diversity. A related problem, reported by some teachers in the MAP, flows from the different interests and professional orientations of students in MAP courses. If some faculty believe that students from the different schools are of different “quality” and “training,” does that mean they do not bring the same interests to the classroom experience? For example, the MAP staff has noticed that Stern School students prefer to enroll in the later periods of ConWest, which they view as more relevant to business students. Some faculty focus on differences, including what they assume to be different levels of ability, and perhaps expect students to perform differently, even though data on grade performance suggest that the differences are actually very small. A final challenge in this area is to find ways of bringing distinguished faculty from NYU’s professional schools into the MAP.

**Engaging Faculty.** In a research university there are inherent tensions in the interaction between departments and undergraduate general education because departmental resources and the interests and specialties of faculty are sometimes at odds with the needs of general education. As the MAP review indicates, the size of the faculty has been challenged by the scope of the MAP. The faculty–student ratio in CAS (1:12), let alone in NYU generally, is not as strong as at some comparable universities, and this has put a strain on those who have the skills to teach in the MAP areas. The burdens of contributing faculty to the MAP have not fallen equally on all departments, some of which have expressed concern that their commitments to MAP may be draining their ability to provide adequate courses for their majors or graduate students. Adjustments in requirements and more effective planning with departments have somewhat reduced this problem.

**TA Staffing Shortages.** Shortages of teaching assistants have developed in various parts of the MAP, as a result of increasing undergraduate enrollments at NYU, as well as the recent Financial Aid Reform in the Graduate School of Arts and Science, which, in some cases, decreased the size of graduate programs. This is especially true in areas such as FCC’s “World Cultures,” where preceptors must be experts in very specific cultures. EWP, too, has experienced a sharp decline in the number of Ph.D. students who apply to teach in the program.

**Articulation between General Education and Other Aspects of the Curriculum.** Students and faculty alike have on occasion expressed concern that the general education courses tend to be a dead end, not leading naturally to other curricular areas, such as majors or minors. For example, the sort of writing taught in EWP courses has been called remote from the kind that students encounter in their later academic and professional careers. A challenge here is to continue to integrate and to strengthen the writing in disciplinary courses. Foreign language in

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13 The Financial Aid Reform gave all Ph.D. students four or five years of aid (McCracken Fellowships), but reduced the number of graduate students admitted, and also the number of graduate students available to teach during their first four or five years of study because of a minimum two year fellowship guarantee.
struction, too, has often taken a narrow approach that gives little attention to applying language skills in courses outside the program. Similarly, students have sometimes searched in vain for a course in which they could follow up an interest awakened in an FSI “Natural Science” course. The commitment to a core requirement as large as the overall FCC and FSI has also been perceived by some faculty and students as an unnecessary obstacle to students’ moving through specific programs and majors. Finally, the substantial increase in the quality and academic preparation of the student body has increased the need for more flexibility in courses. Thus, recent revisions in the FCC and FSI requirements in CAS and Stern have provided more choice in the second year courses in “Expressive Culture” and “Society and the Social Sciences.”

Placement and Proficiency. The treatment of Advanced Placement credits, specifically whether they should satisfy general education requirements, varies across and within schools. AP credit, for example, can satisfy FSI requirements but not FCC requirements, and can satisfy foreign-language requirements but not expository writing requirements. The reasons for these different policies are not always clear or persuasive to students.

Assessment. The external reviewers of the MAP observed that while there has been extensive evaluation of individual courses by students, there has been less evaluation of the overall program. Similarly, in EWP regular evaluation has measured students’ satisfaction with the writing courses and their perception that the courses have improved their writing. But, as the directors of EWP have indicated, the best measure would assess the program’s work over time: can students do the writing they are asked to do in other classes, after their EWP classes are finished?

Recommendations

The seventh year review of the MAP included a review by a distinguished team of educators from comparable educational institutions. On the basis of their report and NYU’s internal experience, we make certain recommendations.

• Goals of General Education. Promote a discussion regarding the goals of general education as a University-wide phenomenon. Given the diversity of models of general education at NYU, explore the possibility of devising a common platform (e.g., in mathematics and foreign languages) for all of the undergraduate schools. Consider the desirability of instituting a foreign language requirement in schools that do not already have one.

• Improving Specific Courses. Develop a 20th-century track for “Conversations of the West.” Develop a consistent and precise definition of the learning goals of “Quantitative Reasoning.” Explore different modalities of language instruction, including those that make use of technology, to address different learning styles.

• Capitalizing on Intellectual Diversity. Explore ways of getting more faculty outside of FAS to participate in the FCC and FSI. At the same time, improve faculty development to enable faculty to adjust to the special demands of teaching general education courses across a range of interests and perceived abilities.
- **Engaging Faculty.** Align MAP and departmental resources and agenda more closely — e.g., by encouraging the MAP steering committees to identify departmental courses that could fulfill FCC and FSI requirements and by authorizing more faculty lines in areas of the MAP where departmental resources are thin, contingent on departments’ committing to contribute to the MAP.

- **TA Staffing Shortages.** Reevaluate the need for TAs in all FCC and FSI courses, especially if departmental alternative courses are approved.

- **Articulation.** Sustain efforts to achieve a greater integration between EWP and the required MAP courses, especially “Conversations of the West.” Continue to have EWP work with individual CAS departments to develop writing-intensive courses in the disciplines. Explore linkages between foreign-language programs and related non-language classes, such as the MAP’s “World Cultures.” Create departmental science courses that are designed for nonmajors and build on MAP science courses.

- **Placement and Proficiency.** Explore the possibility of instituting a proficiency test that precedes “Writing the Essay.” (The College Board will be adding a writing section to the SAT test starting in 2005.) Pursue the development of more fine-tuned ways of determining placement and of assessing outcomes in language study.

- **Assessment.** Undertake a thorough and ongoing outcomes assessment of the MAP as a whole. Do the same for EWP.

## 3. THE MAJOR

### Overview and Current State

Along with a general education that provides a breadth of perspectives and foundational skills, NYU’s undergraduate schools also ensure that all students achieve significant depth in at least one discipline or area, through completion of a major. The combination of general education and major requirements in almost all cases comes to fewer than the 128 credits required for the bachelor’s degree, which leaves students room to take electives or a minor in those schools that offer them. In some schools, students can take advantage of minors in selected subjects, some of which are offered only as minors and others are available as cross-school second majors and minors. The great majority of minors are offered by the College of Arts and Science, but these are available to students in most of the other schools (see Section 6 on the interrelationship of schools).

The over 140 different undergraduate majors offered at the University encompass such a broad range that even a general survey is best done school by school (see Appendix T). Two of the schools offer only one major each; at the other extreme, one school offers some 75 majors. The internal process for creating new majors or for modifying or terminating existing ones differs from school to school, but each involves departmental as well as schoolwide faculty and administration approval.

**College of Arts and Science (CAS).** CAS offers over 75 majors, ranging from Africana studies to urban design. The B.A. is offered in all except neural science, which offers the B.S.
The B.S. degree is also an alternative to the B.A., for students who complete additional science courses, in the departments of chemistry and physics and as part of the B.S./B.E. program with Stevens Institute of Technology. Requirements for the major vary widely; the average range falls within 32 to 40 credits. But several interdisciplinary majors require additional coursework, and some departments are revising their majors to make them more challenging. All majors offer an honors track that involves research. Students are required to declare a major by the time they complete 64 credits. Increasingly, students are electing to pursue a second major; 257 (15.1%) of the CAS graduates in 2002–2003 completed a double major. Joint majors bring together two related disciplines (e.g., anthropology and linguistics, or mathematics and economics; for a full list, see Appendix T).

**College of Dentistry.** Of the 78 credits for the A.A.S. in dental hygiene, 51 relate directly to the major. Students in the B.S. curriculum in dental health education can take up to 101 credits related to the major, including fieldwork and research opportunities, and they may pursue an area of concentration, such as education, research, and health research.

**Ehrenkranz School of Social Work.** The B.S. in social work combines liberal arts and social work education in equal proportions. The 64 credits in social work include two required introductory courses; all but 8 of the remaining 56 credits are in required courses. The highly structured major curriculum is designed to (i) cover the content areas relevant to social work values, knowledge, and practice and (ii) merge classroom study and field practice (the latter consisting of 17 credits).

**Gallatin School of Individualized Study.** Since Gallatin students officially major in "individualized study," they do not take traditional majors, but work with an adviser to define a special concentration. Along with Gallatin’s required Interdisciplinary Seminars, arts workshops, advanced writing seminars, and community-based learning courses, students also enroll in courses around the University. In fall 2003, to ensure that students formulate an intellectually coherent concentration in a timely manner, Gallatin instituted as a new degree requirement a two- to three-page “Intellectual Autobiography and Plan of Concentration,” which must be approved by the student’s primary adviser before the student completes his or her 81st credit.

**School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS).** The McGhee Division of SCPS offers the B.A. with majors in either social sciences or humanities. Within each, students select a concentration (e.g., anthropology or fine arts), which typically requires 36 course credits, plus a 4-credit graduation project, several specified general education distributional courses, and two methods and theory courses. The B.S. majors are professionally oriented and require between 64 and 85 credits. The two majors in the B.S. degrees given by the Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management similarly entail 68 credits in professional studies. McGhee also offers associate in applied science degrees with specializations in a number of business and health areas.

**Steinhardt School of Education.** All students must declare a major on entry to Steinhardt. Steinhardt offers majors not only in education but also in health, nursing, communications, and the arts professions. In requirements and structure, they fall into three main categories. (i) Those that lead to certification or licensure (teacher education; nursing; speech
pathology) must ensure that they meet external guidelines; in addition to completing a liberal arts concentration of up to 60 credits, including the MAP or a general education distribution, students in these programs typically combine methods courses with a professional core and clinical observation and/or field experience. (ii) Those in art and music entail much skill building, often in private lessons; in this respect they resemble training at conservatories. (iii) Communication studies, which offers three areas of concentration, resembles a CAS major.

**Stern School of Business.** At Stern every major is “anchored” by a course in the business core curriculum (see Appendix U). A student majoring in finance, for example, takes the 4-point finance core course and at least four 3-point advanced courses in that department, for a total of 16 points. Students often complete more than the required four additional courses in their majors, but may not take more than 18 points of advanced coursework within any single department. The exception to this is accounting, where students who seek to become Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) may take more points. Many students double major within Stern.

**Tisch School of the Arts.** All students enter Tisch with a major already declared, although in some departments they can later decide on special concentrations (e.g., animation in the film department or stage managing in undergraduate drama). The curriculum in the major can range from a set sequence, which all students take, to a core of required courses with additional options available so that a student can design a specialty within a major. These options differ from department to department, depending upon the nature of the major, the number of course hours needed, the configuration of the course of study, etc. These decisions determine as well the interrelation of the major and the required liberal arts courses.

**Challenges**

The challenges that individual majors in the different schools face are more appropriately addressed in program reviews of individual departments. But we highlight several challenges that cross school boundaries.

**Apparent Redundancy.** There are several instances where a major or concentration in one school appears to overlap considerably with that in another school. Communications 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. Such overlaps may be evidence of complementary programs and thus represent strength in a diverse institution; alternatively, they may be evidence of duplication. Redundancy, real or perceived, creates confusion among prospective and current students and sometimes even among advisers. There are also potentially significant budgetary implications for such organization. In addition, redundancy raises questions about intellectual coherence, and duplication suggests a vision of a university that consists of isolated ventures that do not fully connect with the larger enterprise. The Provost’s Office in fall 2003 created three University-wide task forces to study apparent overlaps in the areas of music, art and communications.

**Articulation with General Education.** At times the goal of having students complete their general education courses in the first two years competes with another worthy goal, namely
allowing students to explore or begin majors early on. In the professional schools students tend
to start their majors in the first semester, at the same time that general education courses are
taken. Even in other schools, where general education courses are taken in the first two years
and the bulk of major courses in the final two years, many majors start in the first year, because
students are eager to move into them and also because the sequential structure of the curricula
requires an early start. In some cases it is appropriate for general education courses to do dou-
ble duty—i.e., to fulfill requirements not only in general education but also in the major. A
more substantial challenge for major programs is to have their curricula, especially at the intro-
ductive level, build on the skills that students have presumably developed in their general edu-
cation courses. In SCPS’s McGhee Division, for example, specified courses in the liberal arts
core are regarded as foundational and must be taken before concentration courses. Similarly,
enhanced articulation between the MAP and the disciplinary work of the major was one of the
goals of CAS’s “Sophomore Colloquia on the Disciplines” project, which led to six new or
modified courses that featured an inquiry-based approach to the major.

**Intellectual Challenge.** Quite apart from its articulation with general education, a major
can be challenging in other respects. In an environment of rapid change in ideas and technol-
ogy, in which knowledge grows exponentially and the structures of disciplines and professions
change, it must be asked periodically whether the curricula of the majors have kept up with de-
velopments in the discipline, field, or profession. Another issue is the optimal number of
courses or credits in an undergraduate major. Most of the Stern majors, for instance, stipulate
that no more than 25% of a student’s total credits be in the major; in CAS a number of depart-
ments are raising the number of required courses; and in Tisch’s conservatory programs students
may (but are not required to) take up to 75% of their credits in the major. External factors can
enter into the calculation—e.g., state regulations stipulating that liberal arts courses must make
up at least three-quarters of the requirements for the B.A. degree, one-half for the B.S., and one-
quarter for the B.F.A. Similarly, professional accrediting association standards affect majors
leading to licensure. In the case of journalism, for example, an outside accrediting body sets a
limit on the number of credits (36) that students may take in the major. A final challenge is to
ensure that the structure of a major makes intellectual and practical sense. Is the major essen-
tially a random collection of courses, or are courses sequenced so that students can build on
prior knowledge and skills? Is there a senior capstone experience for all students, not just for
those in honors tracks (which entail completion of a thesis or other substantial project)?

**Transfer Credits.** In all the undergraduate schools transfer students account for a sizable
percentage of the population (e.g., in CAS in recent years more than one-fourth of the matricu-
lated students originally entered as transfers). In most of the schools, incoming transfers are
awarded up to 80 credits from prior institutions. This policy raises several problems beyond the
fact that it is not in keeping with that of our peer and target institutions, all of which require stu-
dents to complete at least half of the required credits in their school. Although departments and
programs typically have the authority to decide whether and to what extent earlier work is appli-
cable toward their major, this generous transfer policy also makes it difficult to incorporate such
work into students’ major curricula without seriously compromising the integrity of the majors.
In addition, the variety of academic experiences that transfer students bring with them can lead
to difficulties in building on a common base of knowledge and skills in upper-level courses.
Finally, in some of the longer, more sequential majors it is all but impossible to complete the
requirements in a mere three semesters. For these reasons, the McGhee Division of SCPS accepts no more than 64 credits for any combination of transfer, AP, and experiential-learning credits. The Steinhardt faculty recently reduced the maximum number of transfer credits from 96 to 72, and the Gallatin faculty reduced its maximum from 80 to 72.

Managing Enrollments. As at many other institutions, an uneven distribution of majors prevails in some of the schools. In those in which students declare their major at the time of admission (the professional schools, for example), it is possible to manage the distribution. In CAS, however, where students are not admitted on the basis of intended major, the number of declared majors at any time can range from a handful to more than 600. For the smallest programs the challenge is to find ways to get enough students into the major in order to provide a critical mass for upper-level courses; strategies might start with targeted admissions recruitment but would also involve attracting students once they are here. Some large programs, by contrast, have felt their resources to be so severely strained that they search for ways to reduce the numbers of majors. Making the major curriculum more rigorous would be an appropriate means to that end (though in economics, e.g., it resulted in more majors). The alternative of setting an artificially high entrance gate has not been accepted.

Recommendations

- **Apparent Redundancy.** Continue to study apparent redundancies involving majors or concentrations across schools to determine which make sense and should stay, which should be eliminated, and which programs might become interschool majors.

- **Articulation with General Education.** Examine the curricula in the majors for ways of creating more productive connections with the general education curriculum.

- **Intellectual Challenge.** Encourage each department and program to use its learning outcomes assessment plans to ensure that its major is intellectually current, is structured with sufficient verticality, and provides for a meaningful capstone experience.

- **Transfer Credits.** Each school should consider whether to lower the maximum number of credits from other institutions that transfers may count toward their degree to 64 credits, the equivalent of two years’ work.

- **Managing Enrollments.** The admissions office, working closely with each school, should consider admissions strategies to identify and recruit prospective students to small majors and to match faculty resources with the number of students. Schools should consider the ways in which faculty in departments with few majors might help overburdened departments (e.g., sharing in the supervision of undergraduate research and honors projects) and explore the possibility of the consolidation of majors.

4. **UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH**

Overview

As a research institution, NYU attempts, whenever possible, to include undergraduates in the production of knowledge. The Boyer Commission (1998) distinguished learning based on
“information transmission” from that “based on discovery guided by mentoring” (p. 15). Research is the means by which that discovery is conducted, in intimate partnerships between students and teachers where undergraduates are mentored and where, in some cases, “undergraduates can become junior members of the research teams that now engage professors and graduate students” (Boyer 1998, p. 17). As part of our research mission, we aim to enhance the integration of faculty and graduate research with the learning experiences of undergraduates. We can do that by facilitating direct contact of students with active researchers in our faculty, and by empowering our students to conduct their own inquiries.

Research is the value added of undergraduate education at research universities in that it enables students to work one-on-one with faculty members (and, in some areas, also with highly trained postdoctoral fellows and graduate students). Quite apart from immediate practical benefits like strengthening of a student’s résumé and graduate or professional school applications, such experiences beyond classroom learning bring many intellectual benefits. They help students expand their understanding of a discipline. They also engender a productive mentoring experience, in which the faculty member often advises students not only on the research project but also on other academic, professional, and even personal issues. Undergraduate research encourages the development of analytic and communication skills that are useful in any profession. It also requires dedication and commitment, strong academic credentials and intense intellectual curiosity. Undergraduate research is much more than learning the methods and terminology of different disciplines; it is about understanding the research process, which includes identifying critical questions, carrying out literature reviews, questioning established knowledge, testing hypotheses, setting up experimental protocols, and developing powers of observation, perseverance, and patience. Finally, the independent inquiry fostered by the research process is the basis for lifelong learning.

At NYU we emphasize research opportunities in recruitment efforts, and we have had notable success in attracting students interested in these activities. Moreover, in exit interviews CAS seniors have often told us that their most meaningful experience was doing independent research with a faculty supervisor.

Current State

Research varies widely in nature, context, and extent both within and across undergraduate schools at NYU. It ranges from research requirements in individual credit-bearing courses through independent study courses and honors theses or projects. An approximate sense of the scope of undergraduate research in the various schools may be obtained from the chart in Appendix V, which is based on a survey answered by chairs or directors of undergraduate studies. Some of the specific technological resources relevant to research are summarized in Appendix W.

**College of Arts and Science (CAS).** Expanding the participation of undergraduates in research has been a top priority in CAS since the mid-1990s. Almost all CAS departments give credit for research, but only a few of the major curricula require a research methods course. At present about a third of the faculty members are engaged with undergraduate research. Much research by CAS undergraduates takes place in departmental honors programs. New honors
guidelines approved in 1998 stipulated (i) that to qualify students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.5, both overall and in the major; (ii) that an honors program should encompass at least a two-semester experience; (iii) that it should culminate in a senior thesis or project; and (iv) that at least 10% of every department’s graduating class should be candidates for honors. Since 1998 all students in the CAS Scholars Program (limited to those with highest academic achievement and a record of leadership and service to the community) have been required to follow the honors track in their major. Especially in the sciences, a considerable number of students who are not pursuing departmental honors also do significant research, some through independent studies. The Dean’s Undergraduate Research Fund (DURF), established in 1996, provides students in CAS with financial support for their projects. CAS also has an initiative to recruit Intel (formerly Westinghouse) Finalists (three are currently enrolled), who receive their own research funds. In addition to College-wide funding for research, several science departments offer special programs funded by the Beckman Foundation, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and the National Science Foundation. Finally, CAS sponsors an Undergraduate Research Conference; in spring 2003 a hundred students presented their work at this event. Student research is also published in the CAS journal *Inquiry*.

**College of Dentistry.** Candidates for the B.S. in dental health education take the required course “Introduction to Research Methods,” the goal of which is to provide both practical experience and a foundation for evaluating scientific information. Some B.S. students may choose a concentration in research which can involve a summer or year-round internship at the College of Dentistry in areas such as oral cancer, biomaterials, research, tissue engineering, oral infectious diseases, or chemosensation.

**Ehrenkranz School of Social Work.** All undergraduates are required to take the course “Social Work Research,” which develops skills required for small-scale studies and trains future practitioners to be intelligent consumers of research-based information. Engaging in research studies is used in most courses as a means of evaluating the most appropriate practice choices. In a senior-level required course, “Social Welfare Programs and Policies,” students do program evaluation in their field internship agencies. Students may also pursue individual research under faculty guidance by registering for “Independent Study.”

**School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS).** Research is a high priority in the four year degree programs at SCPS. The McGhee Division, for example, requires all students to complete 8 credits in methods and theory relevant to their area of concentration, and the required 4-credit “Senior Projects Seminar” is a capstone course that involves a research project or, less often, an internship experience. Students in the Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management are required to take a course in applied research in their field, as well as two internship courses.

**Steinhardt School of Education.** Five of eight surveyed departments require research methods courses for the major, but only three give credit for research. Students work with faculty on creative or research projects through independent study. Each major is currently creating honors programs involving some kind of advanced study, creative project, or research; it is anticipated that 8–10% of each graduating class will qualify for honors in their major. A few majors build a culminating research or creative project into the curriculum. For instance, for
applied psychological studies, about half of the 25 graduating seniors undertake a research project with a faculty member, and several present their findings at a departmental research conference each spring. In music and art, all graduating seniors work with faculty on a recital or exhibition of their work. Students who undertake independent research with a faculty member may apply for a Dean’s Grant for Undergraduate Research. In addition, students in the Steinhardt Scholars Programs conduct research or creative projects as part of their annual travel colloquia. Some programs award prizes to graduating seniors for undergraduate research.

**Stern School of Business.** Stern students can receive credit for research, but funding is not available to support it. Undergraduate research takes place primarily in the honors program, which is limited to 5% of a given class (about 20 students) across departments; only 10% of the faculty are involved in mentoring research projects (Stern’s goal is to have 15% of faculty involved). Selection into the honors program occurs during spring semester of the junior year and is based on academic performance, faculty recommendations, and an interview. The honors program has three components: (i) an advanced elective module composed of selected graduate courses from the M.B.A. curriculum; (ii) a year-long honors senior seminar; and (iii) a thesis/project based on independent research conducted under faculty supervision; no students are advised by non-NYU faculty. Students present their work at a seminar at the end of the year, and the best theses receive awards and are published in a student publication.

**Tisch School of the Arts.** About 13% of TSOA undergraduates are enrolled in departmental honors programs, which emphasize research. But all undergraduates (and faculty)—whether as actors, writers, filmmakers, photographers or dancers or as scholars of cinema studies—are involved in original creative projects, through regular course work and through independent study, and all departments give academic credit for research. The initial course work is discovery based and individually tailored, whether it is a studio experience with active professionals in dance, photography, and theater, or the project-based film exercises of sight and sound. Individual mentoring between faculty and students is central to this process, as is collaboration (e.g., student film crews rotate positions, ensemble approaches in dance and theater training, rehearsal, and performance). Students produce original work and critique one another’s work in class. In many cases, such as photography, documentary film, or scripts based on historical subjects, research of an archival or ethnographic nature is required. There are research methods courses in Art and Public Policy, Cinema Studies, Drama, and Film. Many of the studio courses help students explore and expand creative research. All departments fund student work in the form of performances, exhibitions, and films.

**Gallatin School of Individualized Study.** Gallatin students engage in research in a variety of forms and contexts. (i) A number of courses are designed to encourage research and project-oriented work, including arts workshops and seminars, as well as courses that use GIS software to study communities. (ii) Many students in the arts do advanced private study for credit at performing or visual arts studios in New York; students in other curricular areas do independent study with a faculty member, which culminates with a final project. (iii) All graduating seniors are required to complete a Senior Colloquium, a two-hour oral examination with three faculty members based on both a written rationale and a book list, compiled by the student in consultation with his or her adviser. The rationale takes the form of an essay in which students reflect on their education at NYU and Gallatin, discuss their concentration, and offer a
justification for the books and the main themes that they have chosen to discuss. For support of independent research, students can apply to the Dean’s Office for a small grant. Some funds are also available to faculty who have undergraduates as research assistants, but less than 5% of the faculty use such funds.

Challenges

**Increasing Student Participation.** Despite substantial success in promoting undergraduate research over the last decade, the overriding challenge in this area is to get more students directly involved in this activity. The ideal percentage of students doing research is by no means settled; in a survey of CAS directors of undergraduate studies, the replies to this question ranged from 5% to 100%. There is a broad consensus, however, that participation is not high enough, given the capability of our students and the fact that research is one of the most critical aspects of the undergraduate education that a research institution can provide.

**Increasing Faculty Participation.** Similarly, although views on the ideal percentage of faculty to be engaged with undergraduates in research also vary, the rate of engagement is lower than ideal. Only a small minority of departments or programs provide incentives for faculty to take undergraduates into their labs or to supervise students’ projects. Some of our faculty, mainly in the sciences, have pointed to the existence of disincentives—for example, the University’s high overhead requirements that have discouraged some faculty from applying to the National Science Foundation for grant supplements to support undergraduates (the so-called Research Experiences for Undergraduates, or REUs). Finally, in efforts to connect our students with faculty researchers, we have not adequately utilized our professional schools or always instituted quality control mechanisms.

**Information.** In most instances it is mutually beneficial for students and faculty if student research is related to that of a faculty mentor, but students have often indicated that they find it hard to learn what kinds of research opportunities exist in their areas of interest. For their part, faculty who wish to work with undergraduates often lack efficient means of making this widely known.

**Funding.** Especially outside of CAS, the opportunities for students to secure even modest funding for independent research projects are limited or nonexistent. Providing minority students more encouragement and support to do research is particularly important in helping to increase the diversity of the professoriate.

Recommendations

- **Increasing Student Participation.** Develop in each school specific, measurable goals for increased undergraduate participation in research, along with strategies for realizing the goals and outcome assessment plans.

- **Increase Faculty Participation.** Create or expand faculty incentives for mentoring undergraduates in research—e.g., by taking mentoring into account in faculty teaching loads. Reduce or eliminate disincentives, such as overhead requirements on REUs. Ex
plore ways of increasing opportunities for undergraduates to interact with experienced researchers at the professional schools.

- **Information.** Develop schoolwide databases, or web-based clearinghouses, for information on participating faculty and minimal standards of expectations for student performance as well as for faculty engagement.

- **Funding.** Establish or increase in each school funds that give students financial support for worthy research projects. Fundraising should target corporations and foundations as well as alumni and other individuals.

5. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Overview

Faculty, administration, and students are actively engaged in seeking ways to connect to the community in which the University is embedded—through experiential learning in the various forms discussed below. At present, some 4,000 students (3,000 of them undergraduates) are involved in some type of community service. (For a full discussion of community service, see the Student Affairs section of this self-study.) While it can be said that students learn generally by service, there are also more formal ways to build an academic component into these experiences. The broad spectrum of experiential learning includes internships, public service activities, and community-based learning experience. While each school offers somewhat different opportunities to its students (see Appendix X), all view the chance for engagement in the life of New York City and in specific professional areas as a powerful draw that helps to bring students to NYU, to keep them here, and to enrich their education. Experiential learning opportunities expose our students to new ways of understanding, engage them in relevant activities, and help them make connections between their courses and the workplace, community centers, schools, and hospitals. Finally, these experiences serve to make our students (and thus the University) a major resource to the City.

Current State

We have identified two types of field experience that currently make use of the surrounding community and help students connect theory with practice.

**Internships.** Internships are course, program, and/or career related activities that fall on a continuum from participant-observation activities such as apprenticing on a film-shoot to fully engaged activities such as contributing copy to a journal. When credit bearing, internships are generally department or course based and directly related to the field for which the student is preparing. Examples of such internships, which are unpaid and tend to draw on knowledge and skills developed in courses, include:

- student teaching for juniors and seniors in the Steinhardt School’s teacher education programs as well as fieldwork and internship opportunities, offered by all other Steinhardt programs in health, applied psychology, communications, and the arts;
• internships in city agencies taken by Metropolitan Studies students in the College of Arts and Science (CAS);
• field experience in the Ehrenkranz School of Social Work and in the College of Dentistry;
• the Internship Program in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study; and
• opportunities offered by virtually every department in the Tisch School of the Arts.

Other internships are paid and are often associated with the Office of Career Services. Such internships may be related to coursework and are almost always linked to students’ career aspirations. Students in all programs are aggressively seeking this type of internship, both for financial reasons and as a means of professional development.

Service Learning. Service learning typically deepens the linkage between academic and experiential learning. This linkage can be accomplished in several ways. Public service learning often involves course-based internships, such as those in the CAS Metropolitan Studies Program that have students work in legal aid; there can also be field experiences with pay, as for students who participate in America Reads and America Counts. Community-based learning can also involve course-based internships, as in Tisch’s interdisciplinary course “Urban Ensemble” or the community theater project of Steinhardt’s Educational Theater Program; but non-credit service-learning initiatives can be developed as well, such as the CAS Dean’s Service Honors Corps. The seven to ten courses per semester in Gallatin’s recently created Community Learning Initiative incorporate such methods and approaches as action research, the use of GIS software to turn census and neighborhood data into visually compelling maps, community organizing around issue-based campaigns, field studies such as oral history projects and urban ethnography, and collaborative work in the arts and media.

Challenges

The extraordinary array of experiential learning opportunities available to NYU students brings certain challenges, having to do primarily with the quality, assessment, and faculty oversight of credit-bearing internship experiences. Even when we cannot award credit, we must find a way to help students take advantage of attractive internship opportunities.

Integrating Service Learning into the Curriculum. Service learning is included in a few courses, but most often it is pursued by students who seek a mentor or who do it as a co-curricular activity. Students increasingly ask that service learning be an integral part of more courses. For example, a student group has approached members of the MAP staff to discuss the possibility of integrating service learning into certain MAP courses.

Quality of Experience and Academic Credit. Experiential learning is successful to the extent that the experiences are relevant to a student’s quest for understanding and enable the student to make connections between theory and practice. Frequently, however, students are doing work such, as copying, running errands, and setting up rooms, which does not require the skills and knowledge they are presumed to have developed as part of their course-related work. These tasks do not engage students in any meaningful capacity. Students are also sometimes
pressed by big companies (which wish to save money and manage risk) into attempting to se-
cure course credit for this type of activity, even when it is not related to their academic work and
is not credit-worthy. This appears to be the case particularly in the entertainment and media in-
dustries.

**Oversight and Assessment.** From faculty as well as student perspectives, careful and
supportive supervision is an essential part of a successful field experience. Oversight is required
in determining the appropriateness of an internship, public service learning, or community-
based learning opportunity; it is essential during any long-term learning experience, especially
one that receives academic credit. When related to coursework, internships are usually super-
vised and evaluated both formatively and summatively.\(^{14}\) Field-related experiences must also be
assessed to determine whether and to what extent students are able to articulate and apply what
they have learned (Ryan 1999) and whether the experience, particularly if credit-bearing, meets
the standards for academic courses. A degree of consistency in regard to oversight and assess-
ment across departments and schools is needed. In addition, the costs and requirements of pro-
viding oversight should be better understood and more uniform.\(^{15}\)

**Recommendations**

- **Integrating Service Learning into the Curriculum.** Explore in each school ways of
  embedding service learning into a broader range of courses.

- **Quality of Experience and Academic Credit.** Formulate in each school guidelines for
  what qualifies as a credit-bearing internship. Explore the possibility of creating 1 or 2
  point courses that would enable students to accept internships that are dependent on their
  receiving credit.

- **Oversight Committee.** Charge an all-University committee with examining and seeking
  solutions to issues of logistics, managing student expectations, and assuring and assess-
ing quality. Create in each school an online publication that sets forth the criteria and
  qualifications for internships and other field-related positions that the Oversight Com-
  mittee recommends.

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6. INTERRELATION OF SCHOOLS AND INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY

**Overview**

One of the great strengths of undergraduate education at NYU is the variety of intellec-
tual styles, philosophical methods, and practical orientations offered by the eight undergraduate
schools. While all are committed to a basic liberal arts education, the opportunities offered at

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\(^{14}\) *Formative assessment* is carried out during the instructional process for the purpose of improving teaching or
learning. In the case of internships it helps to determine such issues as whether a setting is appropriate or whether
students need extra support. *Summative assessment* is carried out at the end of an instructional unit or course of
study for the purpose of giving grades or otherwise certifying student proficiency.

\(^{15}\) As Ryan and Cassidy (1996) write, “Internships should be as rigorous and challenging as on-campus study” (p.
22), and they suggest the formation of an “all-college committee . . . to address administrative hurdles and to ensure
the program’s rigor.”
the Steinhardt School of Education, for example, differ dramatically from those at the Stern School of Business. Moreover, each school determines its own admissions criteria. Far from a one-size-fits-all model, NYU encourages applicants to select the school that reflects their short- and long-term aspirations. The relationships among undergraduate schools, therefore, must be viewed in this context of variety. As noted above, an inherent tension exists between the desire to maintain the mission and academic culture of each school and the desire of students to benefit widely from the offerings of other schools. However, as the report of the University Presidential Transition Team stated, a successful strategy for moving NYU into the forefront of 21st century American universities will recognize the importance of interdisciplinary and cross-school ventures and, “[i]n this light, we should also look to opportunities for academic synergies between units of the University” (p. 7).

Current State

At present the interrelations between programs of the different undergraduate schools take five main forms: 16

Individual Courses. The largest number of course registrations by students from other schools occurs in the College of Arts and Science (CAS). Most of these students, especially those in Stern, Steinhardt, the Tisch School of the Arts, and the Ehrenkranz School of Social Work, use CAS courses to fulfill their liberal arts requirements and electives. Because of the nature of their degree program, students in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study also take many courses at other schools. The chart in Appendix Y provides a breakdown of cross-college registration “points” (which form the basis for the “balance of trade,” since tuition revenues almost always follow points across school lines). It shows, for example, that during the fall 2003 semester by far the highest rate of cross-school enrollment on the part of CAS students was in Steinhardt classes (3,532 points). It shows, too, that Steinhardt students accounted for the largest single bloc of cross-school enrollment (14,211 points). The policies maintained by the different schools can require, permit, or inhibit students’ taking of cross-school courses and programs. Appendix Z provides a brief summary of these policies. No general pattern emerges from this information. Some schools, such as Ehrenkranz, Steinhardt, and Gallatin, encourage individual cross-school registration. Ehrenkranz, for instance, requires its students to complete a minimum of 64 points in the liberal arts, while neither Tisch nor Gallatin places structural limits on cross-school registration, with the exception of a 32-point maximum on Stern classes for Gallatin students. Other schools, such as CAS and the General Studies Program in the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS), have stricter maximums, to ensure that what are essentially liberal arts degrees do not overlap too closely with professional degrees.

Several years ago, the University implemented a system of modular course scheduling, believing that this would facilitate cross-school registration. This spring, the University Sen

16 Another option for students who desire a more flexible and nontraditional approach to their education is offered by interdisciplinary programs, including ethnic studies programs such as Africana studies and Asian/Pacific/ American studies; area studies programs like American studies and Latin American studies; and cognate programs such as gender and sexuality studies, law and society, and metropolitan studies. These programs are currently engaged in a joint effort to increase their interrelations in terms of resources, information, and long-range planning. Since the programs are housed primarily within CAS, they are not considered here in the context of the interrelation of schools.
ate’s Academic Affairs Committee will be examining modular scheduling and whether it has achieved the anticipated results, including cross-registration, and will look at other factors which may also affect the cross-registration process.

**Cross-school Majors and Minors.** Appendix Z also summarizes individual school policies regarding cross-school second majors and minors. (Because Gallatin students do not identify majors and minors, they are not included in these figures.) Again, no single pattern emerges. While students in Tisch and Ehrenkrantz, for example, are free to complete second majors in CAS, students in CAS and Stern are not permitted cross-school second majors. (Instead, CAS students have access to joint and dual degrees, as described below.) And while Steinhardt has no policy barring cross-school second majors, home-school and departmental requirements tend to make it difficult. The numbers of graduates who complete cross-school second majors reflect these policies. In academic year 2002–2003, only Tisch and Steinhardt had graduates with a second major outside of their home school, 49 and 23 students, respectively (see Appendix AA). When it comes to cross-school minors, the policies of the schools tend to be more flexible (see Appendix Z). With the exception of SCPS and Gallatin, all the schools permit both intra- and cross-school minors, albeit with some restrictions. Stern students, for example, may pursue any CAS minor, except in computer science or economics. By contrast, CAS students may minor in education, studio art, social work, pre-business studies, public policy (with the Wagner School of Public Service), and cinema studies. Overall, the graduates in the academic year 2002–2003 included 282 who completed a first minor in another school (see Appendix AA, which does not reflect second or third minors).

**Dual-Degree Programs.** Several of the undergraduate schools participate in dual-degree programs that enable students to get an undergraduate and a graduate degree in a shorter period of study. Steinhardt has a number of joint B.S./M.A. programs in Nursing, including Adult Care, Geriatrics, Mental Health, and Nursing Informatics, and other five year dual degree programs are in development. CAS offers a B.A./M.A. degree program with the Graduate School of Arts and Science, a B.A./D.D.S. program with the College of Dentistry, a B.A./M.D. program with the School of Medicine, a B.A./D.P.T. program with Steinhardt, and a B.A./M.P.A. program with Wagner. A B.S./B.E. program between CAS and Stevens Institute of Technology enables students to combine certain CAS and engineering majors. (A more extensive listing of these programs is included in Appendix BB.)

**Internal Transfers.** The interrelation of schools also includes student transfers. In fall 2003, over 700 students moved from one undergraduate school to another; this represents a substantial cross-school migration. The majority of these transfers were students moving from the two year General Studies Program (GSP) to one of the four year schools. In fall 2003, for instance, 360 of the 527 GSP transfers went to CAS, 26 to Stern, 64 to Steinhardt, and 47 to Gallatin (see Appendix CC). GSP, however, represents a special case in that students do not apply directly to this program, but are referred there by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions if their credentials are strong enough for admission to the University, but do not yet seem ready for one of the four year schools. After completing GSP and meeting prescribed standards, these students transfer to the four year school to which they originally applied. In addition, approximately 190 students transferred from one four year school to another.
Individualized Study. Students in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study are obliged to take the majority of their courses in other schools. Working closely with an academic adviser, Gallatin students create their own individualized programs of study that incorporate a variety of disciplines and methodologies. Students may, for example, select a combination of fields (e.g., fine arts and business; physics and philosophy) or a more thematic focus (e.g., the relationship between the individual and society; the politics of history; the question of empire). The students must augment coursework in Gallatin with classes from around the University.

Challenges

Individual Courses. The desire of each school to maintain its distinctive mission with concomitant standards, requirements, and procedures must balance its educational and logistical concerns, on the one hand, and openness to student interests, particularly as regards cross-school registration, on the other. A student from school X may lack the preparation and training to enroll in a class in school Y. Furthermore, each school faces a host of noncurricular issues—including space, faculty resources, and necessary preferences for majors versus nonmajors, among others—in determining whether courses will be open to cross-school registration and, if so, under what conditions and during what phase of the registration process. In general, the greater hindrance to cross-school registration tends to come not from the student’s school of origin but from the school in which he or she wishes to enroll. CAS is an exception: its courses are the most open to students in other schools, as long as they meet the prerequisites, but its own students can usually count no more than 16 credits from other schools toward their CAS degree. In any event, a recurring complaint among undergraduates centers on barriers, real or perceived, to courses at other schools, especially the more professional courses, or on the administrative and policy difficulty of enrolling in them.

Cross-school Majors and Minors. For CAS students an overriding issue is the reality that only a handful of minors involving courses in other schools are open to them. The challenge is to expand the available choices to encompass other minors that make intellectual sense and that respond to the interests and aspirations of CAS students; to that end, conversations are underway, for example, with Steinhardt in regard to a minor in nutrition.

Advising. Even when home-school policies and requirements permit cross-school majors or minors, students have told of difficulties in obtaining advising in another school, most often CAS. At the same time, advisers there have expressed frustration at the problems they encounter when they attempt to retrieve information from the Student Information System (not least, a list of majors or minors that includes students from other schools). Deans in both Stern and Tisch have indicated that their students would benefit from better information and advising in regard to liberal arts courses pertinent to their professional programs.

Internal Transfers. Because NYU’s undergraduate schools have different pedagogical approaches and maintain different criteria for admission (either directly or via internal transfers), interschool transfers deserves serious consideration for its effects on students and schools. Stern, for example, has designed a four year integrated core program with required courses sequenced from freshman to senior year; here students transferring in the sophomore or junior year are at a disadvantage because they have not had the preparation of the first year or two of
required courses, and their presence may complicate the teaching and scheduling of courses for juniors and seniors. A similar dynamic exists in other schools with a preprofessional orientation, and this raises the question whether transfer students, internal or external, especially those beyond the sophomore year, have an opportunity to receive the same quality of professional education as students who have spent all four years in the program.

**Individualized Study.** Unlike students in many other liberal arts colleges, such as Harvard, Yale, and Columbia, CAS students do not have the option of completing a major of their own design rather than an existing one. Student satisfaction surveys and senior exit interviews have indicated that some CAS students are interested in doing this. CAS has therefore begun discussions on establishing a tailored major geared to a small number of strongly motivated students whose academic interests cannot be fully met by the existing second major and minor structure. Unlike Gallatin, where all students pursue an “individualized major” and enroll in courses across the University, CAS would limit its tailored major to a select group of honors students able to design a program that combines FAS courses and disciplines. A preliminary version of the CAS proposal is included as Appendix DD.

**Recommendations**

- **Individual Courses.** Review policies and procedures in each school to ensure that they impose no undue barriers to cross-school registration. Review the University’s policy governing the “balance of trade,” that is, whether any of the restrictions on interschool registration and internal transfers result from financial rather than academic considerations and, if so, make every effort to remove these disincentives to cross-school activity.

- **Cross-school Minors.** Continue to explore in CAS the possibility of creating additional minors in conjunction with other schools.

- **Advising.** Investigate ways to improve the advising of students who wish to take elective courses, majors, or minors in other schools. Have the Advisement Institute (see the section on advising, below) take the lead in this effort.

- **Internal Transfers.** Study the patterns of internal transfers, in particular what they imply about the exporting school and their effect on the importing school.

- **Individualized Study.** Explore ways to expand opportunities for individualized study, to ensure that non-Gallatin students—especially in CAS but in other schools as well—receive the benefits of access to appropriate individually tailored majors.

7. **STUDY ABROAD**

**Overview**

In a world linked by advances in information technology, travel, global competition, and political necessity, it is no longer possible to ignore the wider framework in which we conduct our lives. An educated person today must be sensitive to the differing cultural, economic, political, and social contexts in which life is experienced. While formal courses on international
subjects have been the traditional way of introducing students to other cultures, nothing is as meaningful or instructive as spending time abroad to gain cross-cultural understanding. In keeping with its mission to become one of the world’s leading global universities, NYU aims to afford as many students as possible opportunities to study abroad. At the same time, it seeks to promote engagement with the international community on campus by affording international students an opportunity to study at NYU and to share their histories and insights with our students.

Underlying all NYU’s efforts in global education is the desire to mainstream it, to make it accessible to as many students as possible, regardless of their major. As noted in our 1999 Middle States Periodic Review Report, this principle suggests, for example, that a French major can study in Morocco and a computer science major in Paris. It also means we must provide for the student who is not yet competent in the local language; we therefore offer courses taught in English, but require language study at all NYU-In sites (except London, where there is a required 2-credit acculturation course instead). In addition, to make study abroad a practical reality for all, we make financial aid fully portable and provide supplementary aid for certain categories of students (e.g., commuters, whose financial aid packages do not include funds for housing), as well as work abroad programs. Not least, full accessibility presupposes enough courses and enough curricular articulation that students can satisfy degree requirements with their courses abroad and, in turn, continue the language and cultural studies they pursued abroad once they return to New York. NYU students register at NYU-In sites through Albert or Torchtone (automated online and telephonic registration systems, respectively), as if the classes were at Washington Square. Their acceptance in the program is assured provided they have a GPA of 3.0 or better and there is adequate room.

Current State

At present, study abroad opportunities are being offered at the University, school, and departmental levels. At the University level, NYU programs abroad enable students to take a variety of courses at our centers in Florence, London, Madrid, Paris, and Prague.17 (See Appendix EE for the Report of the Office of Global Affairs.) Table 2 below shows the enrollment of NYU students in these programs by school since fall 2000. These figures do not include students from colleges and universities other than NYU who have enrolled in NYU programs at its sites abroad, or NYU General Studies Program (GSP) students who begin their study at La Pietra.

17 Two of these centers, Madrid and Paris, are administered by the Faculty of Arts and Science on behalf of the University. In fall 2004, NYU will open a new study abroad site in Accra, Ghana.
The number of summer enrollments of NYU students studying at NYU programs abroad has varied little since 1999, staying within the range of 330 to 370.

Study abroad opportunities are also available within individual NYU schools. The College of Arts and Science is at the core of summer programs in Athens, Berlin, Dublin, Havana, and Nanjing, as well as the five major University centers abroad. In addition to its IBEX (International Business Exchange) program, Stern affords its entire junior class the opportunity to travel abroad for a short period of time as part of its curriculum-driven International Study Project, which begins in the freshman year. Tisch enables its students to participate in programs in Dublin, London, Prague, and Cape Town during the academic year, and in summer 2003 offered programs at these sites as well as in Amsterdam, Athens, Florence, Havana, London, Paris, Sofia, and St. Petersburg. School of Continuing and Professional Studies mounts non-credit summer programs in Florence, Geneva, and Oxford. Gallatin offers summer graduate courses, sometimes open to undergraduates, in Florence, London, and Nîmes. An example of program-driven study abroad opportunities is Steinhardt’s summer program in Amsterdam in communication studies. Finally, the individual schools have in place policies on handling student requests to study abroad on a non-NYU program.

In addition to University and school-level programs abroad, NYU has an international exchange program that affords NYU students the opportunity to study at universities with which formal exchange agreements are in place. Table 3 below lists the current partner universities. Only a small number of NYU undergraduates have taken advantage of these exchange opportunities. Since academic year 1999–2000, total enrollments at these exchange sites have ranged from 6 to 23 per semester. The low level of participation in the exchanges is due to the limited number of available spots, the requirement of linguistic fluency, and the need for more ad hoc advisement and special arrangements (whereas our own study abroad sites articulate more naturally with our programs in New York).

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<td>Ehrenkranz School of Soc-</td>
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Source: Office of Global Affairs
Table 3. NYU Exchange Partner Universities, 2003–2004

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<tr>
<th>Amsterdam, the Netherlands</th>
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<tr>
<td>University of Amsterdam</td>
<td>European University Institute</td>
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<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>Seoul, Korea</td>
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<td>Humboldt University</td>
<td>Ewha Woman’s University (Coed)</td>
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<td>Freie University</td>
<td>Yonsei University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonn, Germany</td>
<td>Nagoya, Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Bonn</td>
<td>Nagoya University (NUPACE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bratislava, Slovakia</td>
<td>Santiago, Chile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comenius University</td>
<td>Pontifica Catholic University</td>
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<td>Copenhagen, Denmark</td>
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<td>Copenhagen University</td>
<td>University of Vienna</td>
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<td>Dublin, Ireland</td>
<td>Stockholm, Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinity College, Dublin</td>
<td>Stockholm University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egham, England</td>
<td>Mexico City, Mexico</td>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Holloway</td>
<td>National Autonomous University of Mexico</td>
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Source: Office of Global Affairs

The extracurricular language program NYU Speaking Freely (described in section 2, General Education, above) reinforces the University’s emphasis on global education by providing students with no-cost, noncredit coaching in a variety of languages. Most of the sections are led by native speakers who also introduce students to the cultures of the countries where those languages are spoken.

Challenges

**Academic Quality.** The major challenges that NYU faces in the area of international engagement are coordinating the Study Abroad curricula with the undergraduate programs of the various schools back in New York and assuring that standards of academic quality are consistent across all schools and sites. The Provost’s Office is now examining these issues as part of a broad review of our study abroad efforts. Other challenges include getting more faculty to promote Study Abroad among their students and encouraging faculty and administrators in the schools to participate more directly in curriculum design and review at the sites.

**Operational and Financial Issues.** The financial questions raised by NYU’s international engagement are complex, involving equitable distribution of tuition revenues from students from several schools; direct costs of operation borne by the Provost’s Office; the indirect costs of advising, curriculum planning, and student life administration that are borne variously by the schools and the Provost’s Office; and the costs of replacing (in New York) the occasional NYU faculty members who teach abroad. Another operational and financial challenge concerns the perennial imbalance between fall and spring semester enrollments, which makes planning—especially for housing, both at Washington Square and at the sites—particularly difficult. We are remedying this situation by exploring alternative models for arranging housing at the sites, enhancing curricular offerings there during the fall semester, and developing a “Spring in New York” program to attract students from other institutions to NYU in New York.
**Student Participation.** According to the 2002 All-University Student Satisfaction Survey,\(^{18}\) the number of students reporting participation in an NYU study abroad program has steadily increased but still remains at just under 10% (three times the rate indicated in the 1998 survey, the first time the question was asked). On the other hand, almost 50% of respondents said they planned to participate. To some extent these findings are not comparable, since virtually no freshmen (except a few in GSP) have had the opportunity to study abroad, though many may wish to. But that does not account for all the difference between plans and deeds. Not unrelated, perhaps, is the discovery that certain student constituencies are all but ruled out of the opportunity to study abroad. Various majors, especially those with many sequential requirements, allow students little time to take what amounts for them to a semester of electives. We have addressed this by putting laboratory science courses and an expanded roster of business courses at NYU in London. Even so, a science, prehealth, or business student may not wish to go to London, perhaps preferring another site. And, however willing, students may not be able to control their schedules to allow that freedom (students may be closed out of courses, may need prerequisites or required courses which are not always available, and so on).

**Site Curricula.** It is not possible to mount a full range of courses at all NYU-In sites. Site directors must strike a balance between offering enough general courses to attract sufficient enrollments to assure the site’s viability, while still highlighting the specific social, cultural, and faculty resources that make each site unique. This balance has resulted in a partial “thematizing” of site curricula—social sciences in Prague, English literature and preprofessional studies in London, history and humanities in Florence. This thematizing and balancing needs to be monitored and adjusted as necessary, a process in which faculty and departments must play key roles.

**Location.** A deficiency in the University-level programs, given our commitment to offering students truly global opportunities, is that all have been located in Europe, with the brief exception of that in Buenos Aires (which was suspended in spring 2002, after only three semesters, because of local conditions). The majority of our exchange agreements, too, have been with European universities, though it is in our exchanges (as in certain school-specific programs, e.g., a Tisch program in Cape Town and a CAS program in Nanjing) that other geographical areas are represented (e.g., the all-University exchanges in Seoul). In an effort to remedy the situation, the University is establishing a program in Ghana in fall 2004.

**Major Restrictions.** In an effort to ensure that their majors engage with their regular faculty, several CAS departments have proposed limiting the number of courses taken at NYU study abroad sites that students may count toward the major. The proposed restriction is grounds for concern because it appears to nullify the University’s larger policy of mainstreaming and encouraging study abroad, which includes treating courses in our programs abroad just like courses given here in New York.

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\(^{18}\) A survey conducted among freshmen and juniors in the second semester of even-numbered years and tabulated by the University’s Office for Institutional Research.
Recommendations

- **Academic Quality Control and Site Curricula.** Increase faculty involvement in study abroad by creating or reviving faculty committees charged with advising on curriculum development, thematizing NYU sites, encouraging more students in their respective disciplines to participate, and ensuring the quality of the programs offered at each.

- **Operational and Financial Issues.** Determine how best to compensate schools and departments for the services of their faculty who teach at the NYU-In Sites. Devise strategies for increasing fall enrollments at our sites abroad by attracting students not only from NYU but also from other institutions.

- **Student Participation.** Explore ways of increasing the number of students going abroad not only to NYU sites but also to our exchange sites. Ensure that programs at all NYU sites abroad engage American students with the international community.

- **Location.** Continue to explore ways of expanding the opportunities for study abroad outside of Europe.

- **Major Restrictions.** Clarify, at the University level, to what extent schools and departments may limit the applicability of study abroad courses to the major or minor.

8. ACADEMIC ADVISING, MENTORING, AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Overview

Academic advising and mentoring assist students with the development, implementation, and achievement of their educational plans. They are integral components of a successful undergraduate experience, and students and their families expect this level of support. Academic advising and orientation have been correlated with high levels of student satisfaction, academic achievement, and retention, particularly in the early stage of a student’s career (Pascarella and Terenzini 1991). In its discussion of what was necessary “for the University to cement a culture of academic excellence,” the report of the Transition Team noted the importance of “the sympathetic mentoring of students” (p. 7).

As noted in the Prologue, retention is a significant issue facing the University. The greatest attrition occurs after the first year, as at most colleges and universities. While this is a complex issue with many variables, student satisfaction with the level of advising and mentoring has been identified as a key variable nationwide (see *U.S. News and World Report* article, Appendix FF). Preliminary analysis by the University’s Office of Institutional Research supports this finding for NYU.

The literature on academic advising at different colleges and universities show that some institutions use faculty, some professional advisers, some para-professional and peer advisers, and some various combinations of these. At NYU there is a range of organizational models, varying from school to school and sometimes even within a school. While this variety is appro
appropriate, it can sometimes be confusing for students, many of whom report that their access to faculty is limited.

**Current State**

**Basic Academic Advising.** Schools across the University have developed advising strategies that fit each school’s mission (see Appendix GG), including both centralization and decentralization, and the use of faculty and administrative advisers. Thus, some professional schools, such as the Steinhardt School of Education, the Tisch School of the Arts, the Ehrenkranz School of Social Work, and the College of Dentistry, use department- or program-based advising, in which faculty members serve as advisers from the outset. The Stern School of Business relies on a combination of professional advisers, with advisers assigned by class, and departmental faculty advisers. At the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, a faculty adviser is assigned to every entering student, on the basis of the student’s main area(s) of interest; the adviser may be either a member of the Gallatin faculty, a member of the school’s roster of external advisers drawn from other NYU schools, or an adjunct. In the General Studies Program (GSP) of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, all full-time faculty are assigned approximately 25 freshman advisees, with the expectation that they will advise them for their first two years at NYU. The College of Arts and Science (CAS) assigns all students to a professional adviser who serves as the primary adviser for the first two years or until the student declares a major, at which point primary advising shifts to faculty in the major department. There are also programs such as the Faculty Mentor Program (discussed below) that offer access to faculty early in the students’ experience. In addition to the extensive school-based offerings, advising and mentoring occur in several locations at the all-University level, such as the Admissions Office for study abroad advising, CAS for advising for scholarships, and the division of Student Affairs.

The University’s Advisement Institute, connected with the Center for Teaching Excellence (see the section 12 teaching and assessment, below), brings together heads of advising from all schools for evaluating existing services and making recommendations for improvement. In addition to encouraging cooperation among schools, the institute has held forums for advisers on specific topics, has clarified existing policies and procedures through the development of a manual and a website, and has implemented training efforts for professional and faculty advisers.

**School-based Academic Support Programs.** Each school has also developed programs to assist students in the development and implementation of their educational plans—academic orientations, mentoring programs, and a wide variety of academic support programs. Examples include a new-student seminar taught during the first term for all incoming students at Steinhardt; GSP’s and Gallatin’s faculty advising model, which promotes the development of mentoring relationships; and CAS’s recently revised four-tier approach, which utilizes professional advisers, faculty mentors, faculty advisers, and peer advisers for different stages of the student’s academic career.

**University-wide Academic Support Programs.** An extensive array of academic support services is also available to students regardless of their school. These include the College Learning Center (based in a first year residence hall, it provides learning assistance to students...
across the University) and the Writing Center (administered by the Expository Writing Program, it offers support to any undergraduate or graduate student at the University). Additional academic support services are provided by the Bobst Library and Study Center, Information Technology Services, the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities, the Office of African American, Latino and Asian American Student Services, the Office of Career Services, the University Health Center, the University Counseling Service, and the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Student Services. Further information about advisement and academic support services is available at www.advisement.nyu.edu, with links to individual school and department websites.

**Curricular Mentoring.** Like many universities, NYU has paid increased attention to the first year experience, specifically to providing freshmen access to faculty. At NYU, the general education program (the Morse Academic Plan), a version of which serves most of the undergraduates at NYU, as discussed above, was designed to put only regular faculty in required core classes taken by freshmen and sophomores. Similarly, the Freshman Honors Seminars, administered by CAS, give students from all the undergraduate schools the opportunity to engage our best faculty during their first semester. More than 275 Freshman Honors Seminars have been offered since 1992; in fall 2003 alone, nearly 60 were offered, doubling the number of the preceding year.

**Informal Mentoring.** In addition to curricular opportunities in which mentoring can occur, programs exist that bring faculty and students together in more informal ways. For example, in CAS, which has the largest first year class and enrolls many students who have not yet identified a clear choice of major, a Faculty Mentor Program has been established. At the outset of their second semester, freshmen are offered the opportunity to get to know a faculty member in a discipline of interest to them. Some 230 faculty volunteered to participate in this program during the spring 2004 semester, and 525 students took advantage of the opportunity.

**Challenges**

**Mission and Organizational Structure.** Although it is generally recognized that “advising services must be organized around a series of program goals and objectives that are clearly related to the institution’s mission, and the delivery of services as well as the information systems that support these services must focus on the identification and achievement of student educational outcomes” (Gordon and Habley 2000, p. 177), the University lacks a formal statement that spells out its commitment to quality advising and mentoring and that guides individual schools in formulating their objectives.

**Access to Faculty.** There is evidence that many students feel that they do not have enough access to faculty (see below, on evaluation and assessment), and access is obviously a precursor to mentoring. The effort to improve students’ access to faculty advisers and mentors must start in the classroom. The classroom provides the most natural way to promote faculty mentoring of students because it builds on shared intellectual interests and on preexisting personal acquaintance. NYU must therefore move wherever possible to reduce over-reliance on part-time instructors and to assign where appropriate regular, full-time faculty. At the same time, we must also involve faculty in a more formal advising structure, and such involvement
may require incentives. One relevant challenge would be to find ways to expand the Freshman Honors Seminar Program, which provides new students exposure to faculty in small-group settings and where there is potential for mentoring and for follow-up contacts; in addition, research supervision can often equate with faculty mentoring and advising in the larger sense. Another approach would be to establish faculty-student mentoring seminars: small groups of new students would be assigned to a faculty mentor as well as a professional staff adviser from the CAS Advising Center to ensure long-term, stable, and consistent academic advising while promoting the notion of faculty mentoring. In order for such a model to succeed, a significant number of faculty members would have to participate. The details of this proposed pilot study are outlined in Appendix HH.

**Co-curricular Faculty Involvement.** Co-curricular programming has the potential of increasing contacts between students and faculty. The Kimmel Center for University Life will offer venues for this activity. The Faculty-in-Residence Program and the Weinstein Learning Initiative also try to bridge the gap between residential and academic life. These efforts should be examined to determine whether they can be expanded and serve as models for other support programs (see further the Student Affairs part of this self-study, below).

**Technology and Advising.** The University’s Student Information System (SIS) contains a vast amount of information, but it has certain limitations as an advisement tool. For example, it cannot readily give departments rosters of majors or minors enrolled in other schools, or lists of students’ GPAs in their major. In addition, school advisers have not always considered ways to increase their availability through email, bulletin boards, and other technological tools and to have a widely publicized general email address (like the longstanding CAS service, CASVirtualAdvisor@nyu.edu) for students who are uncertain where to turn.

**Evaluation and Assessment.** A recent all-University Student Satisfaction Survey showed 78% of respondents were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with available academic advising in advising centers and academic departments, an increase of 3 percentage points over an eight year period (see Appendix II). In contrast to indications of overall improvement in academic advising, there is evidence of a lack of substantive student engagement—or mentoring—with individual members of the faculty. Two-thirds of the students responding said they spent an average of less than 15 minutes with their adviser, and 37% are not happy with either the amount of time spent or the quality of assistance provided by their advisers (both increasing nearly 6 percentage points). For their part, some faculty would respond that students do not take advantage of the office hours that faculty announce and hold. These are disappointing figures, but since the results are a composite for first and third year students across schools, more detailed analysis is needed before the extent of student dissatisfaction can be fully understood and addressed. More detailed information would also assist in the improvement of advising programs—including training, assessment, recognition, and reward.

**Recommendations**

- **Mission and Organizational Structure.** Develop a clear statement of the University’s mission in regard to advising and mentoring as a way of encouraging the schools to establish standardized goals and objectives within their own distinct models.
• **Access to Faculty.** Develop incentives to attract more faculty to advising and mentoring. Continue recent efforts to increase the number of Freshman Honors Seminars, with the goal of eventually being able to offer all first year students such a seminar if they choose.

• **Co-curricular Faculty Involvement.** Increase efforts to bring faculty into contact with students where they live and study, such as the Kimmel Center and the residence halls.

• **Technology and Advising.** Explore further the uses of technology in the advising of students.

• **Evaluation and Assessment.** Make regular surveys of students’ perceptions of advising and their academic performance, and correlate the results with external measures of their performance and activities.

9. LIBRARIES

Overview

Libraries are now both physical and virtual places. The walls of the physical library have expanded to encompass the online realm with the creation of web pages, digital content, and e-services to reach users wherever they work. The major changes in information-seeking behavior engendered by the web and services such as Google recently prompted several major national studies whose findings apply to NYU.19

Research and scholarship today is increasingly interdisciplinary, and research library collections and services are being crafted to support that change. At the same time, collections now encompass both electronic and traditional formats, and the overall trend is toward growing use of electronic resources. Primary source materials, reflecting the documentary trends of the 20th century, are increasingly multiformat, and digital collections are expanding. (See Appendix JJ for the December 2002 report of the Dean’s Working Group on Libraries and Information Technology.)

Libraries have moved to a user-centered model for service and program delivery. Users now expect 24-hour, 7-day-a-week access to services off-site and on campus; a technology-enriched environment that capitalizes on their computer literacy; that accommodates different learning styles—individual, collaborative, face-to-face—and is conducive to multi-tasking.

Most large research libraries are creating off-site facilities to house less-used collections, thereby optimizing library space for the many patterns of on-site use. Libraries are creating differentiated user spaces that reflect user study and social preferences, cafes, wireless and quiet zones, computer labs, 24-hour study areas, and computer-based instructional areas.

**Current State**

**Undergraduate Library Usage.** Undergraduates are heavy users of NYU’s Bobst Library, for study and research. Over 4,000 undergraduates enter Bobst daily during the academic year, accounting for 56% of the library’s total entries. They continue to rely heavily on the library’s print collections and circulate more than 400,000 books annually, about 37% of the total Bobst circulation. The library’s instructional program offers undergraduates a range of classes that introduce them to the research process, and some 3,700 of them participate annually. (See the statistical summary in Appendix KK.)

**Support of Undergraduate Learning and Research.** The research library collection at NYU, including the Law, Medical, and Institute libraries as well as Bobst, is more than ample to serve the undergraduate curriculum and user. It includes over 4.6 million volumes; over 15,000 videos and DVDs; and more than 44,000 journal subscriptions, including 14,000 e-journals and 350+ databases for locating research materials. In 1999 the library digitized language-learning tapes enabling students to practice languages from the residence halls. These lessons and other curriculum-supporting audio on the web were used over 166,000 times in 2002-2003. Recent years have seen a rapid and continuing growth in the library’s electronic journals collection. Usage of e-resources has more than doubled in each of the last few years. In 2002–2003, for example, users in the library, the residence halls, and other off-site locations performed more than 5.3 million database searches and retrieved over 513,000 electronic full text articles.

Drawing on usability studies with students and faculty, the Library completely redesigned its website (http://library.nyu.edu/) in 2003 to make it easier for students to locate and use e-resources and library services. The new design features e-services such as Ask-a-Librarian (email and chat reference) that are familiar communication tools for undergraduates and that make the reference/learning experience less intimidating; subject pages that orient them to basic research sources in their discipline; and online services such as book renewal.

The Libraries collaborates with NYU Information Technology Services (ITS) to leverage the resources and expertise of both organizations. This has resulted in improved access to information resources, the creation of a digital library infrastructure, and the joint development of the Studio for Digital Projects and Research. The Libraries and ITS also work together to simplify information seeking for students and faculty through joint publications and to integrate library resources, such as e-reserves and electronic journals, with Blackboard.

**Instructional Services Team.** In spring 2000, the Library reorganized staff assignments in order to create an undergraduate librarian position and an undergraduate/instructional services team consisting of the undergraduate librarian, instructional services librarian, instructional design librarian, and graphic designer to: provide a personalized point of contact for undergraduates and the faculty who teach them; help undergraduates develop efficient and effective information-seeking skills early in their academic careers; and create print and web instructional
and promotional material for students. The team provides in-person and web-based services and has developed new services, such as the term paper research clinics that provide individualized assistance customized for a student’s paper topic.

Challenges

Assessment. The Library has an ongoing and expanding program of assessment, evaluation, and communication with users to identify and respond to their needs, improve services to diverse groups, and build communities of users. Recent assessment efforts have included two reference service studies, web usability testing with undergraduates and faculty, and two user activity and library usage studies to aid in Bobst Library renovation planning.

In 2002 the Libraries participated in LibQual+, a national online user survey sponsored by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). LibQual+ measured user preference and satisfaction with the library in four areas: (i) service, (ii) access to information, (iii) library as place, and (iv) personal control. LibQual+ revealed that NYU students and faculty are less satisfied with NYU library services than their ARL counterparts and that NYU library services and facilities do not generally meet minimum user expectations. (A summary of the findings is in Appendix LL.) NYU undergraduates rated personal control, i.e., the ability to work independently, as their highest priority. They reported dissatisfaction with the level of library service in regard to print collections; reliability and courtesy of assistance; accessibility of electronic resources from home; and the library as a comfortable and inviting location for study and research.

The Libraries Strategic Planning process, conducted in 2002–2003, utilized the information gathered from LibQual+ along with the other assessment data. The Strategic Plan identified challenges for the Libraries’ role within NYU and shaped program planning and delivery for the next three years. (The Strategic Plan is included as Appendix MM.) Challenges for services to undergraduates clearly emerged and include:

Undergraduate Research Skills. Providing research skills instruction at the right points in students’ intellectual development remains a challenge. In addition to the mechanics of the literature review of a discipline, critical evaluation are aspects of the research process students need to conduct independent research. While a growing number of faculty members elect to schedule a research assignment-related library instruction class for their students, there is no standard requirement in the curriculum that introduces students to research skills.

Visibility and Accessibility. Students and faculty alike are unaware of the existence of many library resources and services—virtual and physical. They find Bobst Library’s complex collections and services sometimes difficult to navigate and often miss the rich electronic resources available on the library’s web. One faculty member stated, “I would like the library to seek me out and meet my needs and to explain to me what I could really get out of the library.” Students said, “The stacks can be confusing,” and, “It is difficult for me to find the chemistry journals I need.” Making the library more accessible, visible, less daunting and more user-friendly is an ongoing challenge.
**Web Environment.** The web has abetted the tendency to choose format over substance and convenience over accuracy. Students expect one Google box to connect them to all library resources, unaware that less than 7 percent of the material these search engines retrieve is appropriate for educational/scholarly purposes, that only a fraction of scholarly content is available digitally, and that only a fraction of the digital content is available on the open web. Using BobCat, databases, and other access tools to locate books and articles remains confusing.

**Space.** All users expressed a general dissatisfaction with Bobst Library user spaces and facilities, reinforcing the need for Bobst Library renovation. A written comment from an undergraduate in the LibQual+ survey is representative: “The issue is the environment. . . . I WANT to spend more time at the library but it is a very uncomfortable place to work. The designated quiet study areas often become loud. Lighting is bad. All the chairs are broken or missing.” The challenge for Bobst Library renovation is to create physical library spaces for the undergraduate population that reflect varied modes of study, research and social interaction.

**Recommendations**

- **Assessment.** Continue to improve and expand the program of assessment and communication with users.

- **Undergraduate Research Skills.** Expand collaboration between librarians and teaching faculty to integrate research-based assignments and information literacy skills into the curriculum. Adopt a phased approach, introducing basic searching skills and critical evaluation of materials to freshmen and sophomores and more discipline-specific research skills to juniors and seniors.

- **Visibility and Accessibility.** Promote the use of information and learning resources to all of NYU’s undergraduates. Bring librarians into contact with students and advisors where they live and study, such as the residence halls and Study Abroad sites and virtual communities such as Blackboard courses. Continue to improve and expand communication with users and develop programs and services in response.

- **Web Environment.** Design programs and services that enable students and faculty to use library resources any time, any place. Have the Libraries and ITS collaborate to create a virtual library that integrates high quality library resources and services into users’ online environments (e.g., electronic reserve service, Blackboard, NYUHome), and to improve user authentication and access to digital resources. Continue to conduct usability studies of web-based services.

- **Space.** Renovate Bobst Library to provide welcoming physical spaces that stimulate intellectual discourse and creative work. The renovation should create a gateway to information and research for undergraduates that reflects their information-seeking habits and learning styles. It should include communal spaces for social interaction, wireless and wired workstations, collaborative study areas, quiet zones, electronic classrooms for user instruction, and research consultation spaces that can be used by librarians, students and teaching faculty.
10. TECHNOLOGY

Overview

Technological advances over the past decade have already had a significant impact on education—expanding access to information and enhancing communication. Students, faculty, administrators, and staff have a vast array of information at their fingertips through the Internet. The technological means that NYU faculty across the disciplines are using to foster and facilitate learning include collaborative writing tools, presentation software, asynchronous communication through email, listserves, and electronic bulletin boards; synchronous communication through chatrooms and conferencing; web pages and web-based course management systems (e.g., Blackboard). In addition, the use of discipline-specific applications and tools is proliferating. Even more dramatic impacts are foreseeable in the years to come.

The inter-connectivity and speed of today’s networks enable scholars to interact with an ever-larger community. These developments have spurred increased demand for technological resources both in and outside of the classroom—e.g., in computer-aided collaborative study, independent research, and co- and extended curricular opportunities, as well as in everyday student life. The vast majority of undergraduates expect to use technology across a broad spectrum of their activities while they’re at NYU. Most count on becoming prepared to exploit the technologies that are applicable to their pursuits after college. But, as the Boyer Report reminds us, “technology cannot be a substitute for direct interactions between human minds” (p. 14). Technology must serve the joint masters of learning and research, not control them.

Current State

NYU has recently made notable progress in providing technological services of all sorts to the academic community. (See also the Libraries section, above.)

Curricular Support. Services to faculty from NYU’s Information Technology Services (ITS) and the Libraries include support for use of digital multimedia, scholarly digital content, and websites for instructional and scholarly use. In particular, ITS Academic Computing Services provides assistance to faculty in developing and employing technologically driven course enhancements, using a variety of modalities and working in close collaboration with NYU Libraries, with the Center for Teaching and Learning, and with instructional technology specialists in the schools. The most widespread of recent technological enhancements is Blackboard, a commercially produced web-based course management system, which was introduced at NYU in spring 2000. In fall 2003, roughly 3,000 classes, involving over 32,000 students and 2,700 instructors across NYU’s schools made use of Blackboard. This represented a 91% increase over the number of classes using Blackboard in fall 2002, yet the total is still less than 30% of each term’s classes (including recitation and lab sections). Blackboard is currently available to all faculty automatically and is being tested for use at NYU’s sites abroad. In addition, ITS supports over 1,000 forums in Lyris, a commercial listserv software that provides email lists for courses and other uses. Instructors can arrange with ITS to use videoteleconferencing and to make specialized applications and tools available to their students.
**Students.** Almost all students are computer-literate. All are eligible for University email accounts through the web-based portal NYUHome, which also provides access to a wide range of services and resources, such as Albert, NYU’s online, web-based interface to the Student Information System (SIS) for registration, bursar, and financial aid transactions. Some 97% of NYU’s undergraduates used Albert and viewed it as “somewhat important” to “very important” in the 2002 Student Satisfaction Survey. ResNet supplies students in all the NYU-owned student residences with connections to the Internet. About 95% of students in the undergraduate residences have registered their computers on ResNet. Other academic resources include ITS’s Student Computing Labs (where efforts are being made to increase capacity), 110 NYU Homestations for Internet use, and loaner laptops with word processing and spreadsheet software, and network access for students to use within Bobst Library. Following successful pilots with wireless computing, the university launched its wireless computing service, NYU-Roam, in fall 2003 in a number of locations around Washington Square. Currently available as 24 sites, the number is increasing on an ongoing basis.

**SIS.** The Student Information System, an integrated suite of applications from SCT, Inc., was implemented over a decade ago. SIS contains records for all students at the University, with data relevant to admissions, financial aid, bursar, and registration, as well as course schedules, room assignments, enrollments, instructors, and the like. Access to the main database is permitted for viewing and some user-originating changes; other entries are made by way of batch uploads. For example, the Faculty of Arts and Science’s Arts and Science Information System (ASIS) downloads course information from SIS and uploads to it instructor data that departments have themselves posted in ASIS. Beginning in fall 2003 a modification in SIS enables all schools to enter instructor information into SIS directly. Further access to data has been limited to extracts from which users can download and manipulate data to a greater or lesser extent, depending on their access rights. SIS records were recently incorporated into the University Data Warehouse with web-based reporting tools, which will improve the ease and flexibility of manipulating SIS data, as well as integrating it with data from other University systems. The web-based interface called Albert enables students to register for courses, make address changes online, and check their transcript, degree progress, and payment status. Use of Albert through the web has rapidly overtaken, but not yet completely replaced, use of an earlier interactive voice-based system called Torchtone, which offers students similar transactions over a phone.

**Classrooms.** Some 92% of NYU’s general-purpose classrooms are equipped with analogue devices, such as slide projectors, VCRs, and TV monitors. About 35% of general purpose classrooms have a network connections or the capability for one. In a new facility at 194 Mercer Street, which opened in spring 2003, all 16 classrooms have network drops and an advanced instructor station that includes a computer and an interactive multimedia projection system; one classroom has a computer for each student. Technical staff and spare parts are onsite. In addition, faculty seeking facilities for hands-on computing instruction with their students can schedule class time in the Libraries’ Electronic Resources Center classrooms and in the ITS student computing labs.

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20 A survey of freshmen and juniors conducted every two years by the Office of Institutional Research; 2002 was the first year questions were asked about Albert.
**Funding.** In fall 2001, NYU introduced a student technology fee of $50, proceeds from which have enabled ITS to begin addressing several priorities identified as crucial by student senators and by the Faculty Working Group on IT Direction and Services, which drew representation from all the schools. These priorities included a renewal program for academic hardware, extended hours of coverage for key services, and expanded capacity and capability of key infrastructure. Proceeds of the fee, for example, are funding ongoing renewal of equipment in student labs; availability and expansion of NYUHome, email, Blackboard and other academic resources; extended hours when computing labs are open and the help desk is staffed; as well as technology-enriched classrooms.

In 2002–2003, NYU adopted a multiyear University financial plan that includes for the first time an ongoing commitment to capital investment in information technology. In the first year of the plan, resources from the new IT capital fund have been used, for example, to modernize the core of the University’s network and the network in Bobst Library, to replace the ancient cashiering system in the Bursar’s office, and to upgrade the old system that supports NYUCard. More importantly, the availability of a multiyear IT capital allocation makes it possible to plan renewal of other University systems, such as SIS.

**Challenges**

Despite recent investment that has led to expanded and upgraded services, challenges remain. As the University Presidential Transition Team noted, given the increased importance of technology, these challenges “must be met if we are to achieve the academic status we desire” (p. 8). The interest in using technology has increased faster than NYU’s ability to keep up, fueled in part by strides the University has made and in part by the rapid development and availability of new technology.

**Curricular Support.** NYU faces two major challenges in curricular support. The first is scalability of the technical assistance for faculty. The growth trajectory in the use of Blackboard, digitized content, multimedia, and other tools suggests that more faculty will turn to such technology in the next few years, and that those who already are using it will do more. With the libraries and the schools, ITS needs to continue pursuing innovative ways to accommodate geometric growth in utilization of the technological basics by faculty, helping them become familiar with new forms of technologically assisted delivery of information, whether to enhance their own teaching, guide students toward appropriate research methods, or increase communication among all members of a class.

NYU’s second major challenge in curricular support is even more daunting. Most uses of technology at NYU and other institutions barely scratch the surface of the transformative possibilities for undergraduate education. Some technology-enabled opportunities can have wonderful results, but sometimes technology simply makes a bad approach worse, more quickly and more broadly. Tapping into the positive possibilities will likely require new collaborations, new roles, new approaches to encouraging curriculum development, and reconsideration of pedagogy, goals, techniques, content, and assessment. These activities must be closely linked with a continuing capacity to explore new academic technologies and incorporate the most promising of them into supported services. NYU needs to invent appropriate venues and
mechanisms for generating and harnessing the energies, talents, knowledge, and resources of the enterprise that are essential to perpetuate effective engines of instructional innovation.

**Students.** While almost all students are computer-literate, many arrive unfamiliar with at least some dimensions of accepted protocols of Internet citizenship and of security risks associated with connecting their computer through a university network to the wider web, among other issues. It is a challenge to design and deliver education and awareness programs that engage their attention. ITS continually evaluates how to improve its orientation offerings, web content, and publications. As instructors’ usage of Blackboard expands, more students are becoming dependent upon the availability of reliable network connections from their residences to fulfill their academic responsibilities. Students also make increasing use of the network for ordinary life. When these uses collide, the impacts are felt primarily within ResNet, among the student residences, because the capacity of NYU-Net, the University-wide network of which ResNet is a part, is limited. While individual rooms in the residences are wired for individual computers, there are few computer-equipped labs and virtually no network-enabled or projection-equipped meeting spaces in the residences. In spring 2003 ITS and Student Housing jointly opened the first computer-equipped lab in the Lafayette Street Residence Hall. It was actively used, despite the high percentage of connections also activated in individual rooms. As NYU moves to bring more academic engagement into the residences, the challenge is to identify and equip spaces for group computing and for technology-assisted teaching and learning, as well as to establish ongoing hardware renewal and technology support programs for them.

**SIS.** SIS presents a number of challenges. It requires considerable training and persistence to be used with comfort. Its rigid data structures are increasingly problematic, as the University moves toward much more flexibility in academic programming. Its term-based timeframes, for example, require workarounds to handle records and billings for students who pursue part-semester programs, such as first summer session abroad and second at Washington Square. Its access restrictions can, in some modes, result in leaving out of lists students majoring or minoring in a program but matriculated in other schools. More sophisticated data management can be had through RAMIS or the newer University Data Warehouse, but the rigidity of the underlying SIS data remains problematic. SIS has been the official system of NYU since the late 1980s, when it was phased in over several years, replacing largely manual systems. Despite numerous software upgrades, modifications, and a conversion to COBOL2, it is now antiquated and inefficient in terms of the support it requires throughout the University. It is a challenge to convert this immense system to a more modern one, requiring a sizable investment in terms of cost, personnel, and, especially, time. It is conceivable that by the time the mapping was complete and tested and the conversion ready to go, the new software would be outdated. But other large institutions have completed conversions in at least equally complex situations. Students for their part have requested additional features in Albert, including one that would enable users to search for courses by instructor.

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21 Collisions within ResNet can be especially painful when the network infrastructure in a student residence is outdated, as it is in some buildings. Student complaints about ResNet are dealt with in the Student Affairs section, below, as is the role of electronic communication in the building of community. Parent complaints about ResNet have focused on their students’ inability to get work done and on their own surprise that ResNet facilities are not uniformly excellent in all the residences. ITS worked with Student Housing on an effort to address the most urgent problems. The results have been well received. The challenge is to establish an ongoing program of ResNet renewal.
Classrooms. The new Mercer Street classrooms are a fine step forward, but only a beginning. More such facilities are needed at a time when faculty demand for Internet connections and digital projectors has skyrocketed. With only one general-purpose classroom equipped with computers for students, demand for class time in the Libraries’ ERC and the ITS student computing labs remains high, reducing lab seats available for individual students. Even though 92% of general-purpose classrooms are equipped with analog devices, Classroom Media Services, a division of NYU Libraries, must still deliver a great many pieces of equipment. Despite recent improvements in their operations, there are still problems, including delivery of faulty equipment, three weeks advance time needed for equipment reservations, and troubleshooting equipment problems in a timely manner, all leading to faculty and student complaints. Course scheduling is so cumbersome for all classrooms that departments must submit data on paper forms rather than being able to enter the data by computer. In addition, procedures for scheduling general-purpose classrooms with network connections are currently manual, because the automated scheduling tool does not track that attribute. An effort is underway to replace the current classroom scheduling system.

Funding. The goal of funding for technology is twofold. The first is to achieve effective and efficient use of the resources already available for technology, a particularly difficult challenge while demand for the use of those resources continues to increase, as do the external costs to the University for many of them. The second challenge is to sustain the availability of planned IT capital so that multiyear technology initiatives can be pursued and renewal of necessary infrastructure can be assured.

Recommendations

- Curricular Support. Pursue innovative ways to accommodate geometric growth in faculty utilization of the evolving technological basics without multiplying support resources at the same rate. Simplify, coordinate, and automate ways for faculty to get information about technology resources at NYU and access to them. Invent appropriate venues and mechanisms for generating and harnessing the energies, talents, knowledge, and resources that are essential for technology-supported transformations in teaching and learning.

- Students. Improve the design and delivery of education and awareness programs for students. Increase resources available to students in residence halls and elsewhere on campus for academic computing, in terms both of ResNet renewal and of technology-equipped common spaces for group work, teaching, and learning.

- SIS. Provide in a timely manner user interfaces for data entry and manipulation that are simple to learn but sophisticated enough for routine usefulness. Make access to SIS data more attuned to user requirements, while allowing a suitable level of security. Begin planning for the next generation of SIS.

- Classrooms. Identify ways to fund, create, support, and renew technology-enhanced classrooms, following the successful model at Mercer Street. Expedite booking and

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22 For example, last semester there were 5,500 deliveries for projectors to display computer-based content such as PowerPoint, websites, and Blackboard.
delivery of equipment to underequipped rooms. Upgrade the classroom scheduling process by automating both the request procedures and the process for scheduling networked rooms.

- **Funding.** Implement collaborative methods for ongoing systematic study of all NYU technological facilities and their alignment with planning for undergraduate teaching and learning. Make recommendations for investment and staffing.

- **Assessment.** Consider developing measures to determine whether current and emerging technologies support the desired curricular learning outcomes.

11. ACADEMIC SPACE

Overview

Undergraduate education depends not only on libraries (discussed in section 9) and adequate technological tools (discussed in section 10) but also on appropriate academic space. In addition, school-specific space can serve the broader goal of community building within the schools. Academic space includes not only traditional instructional facilities like lecture rooms, seminar rooms, and laboratories, but other types of space as well—for example, library stacks and reading rooms, performance and exhibition space where students and faculty can develop and showcase their work, lounges and study space in which students can work and socialize, and, finally, conference and meeting space for faculty to bring (as they increasingly do) national and international conferences to NYU without taking needed student space out of service. The University Presidential Transition Team’s Academic Space Committee considered this topic in great detail and the present self-study depends heavily on its findings and recommendations. While the preceding section considered the technological equipment of classrooms, this section deals with the availability (location, scheduling, and “ownership”) of classrooms, their configuration and mix, and their physical condition.

Current State

The Transition Team found that NYU ranked very low on a 1997 survey of gross square footage per FTE student, faculty, and staff. In these cramped conditions, faculty and students alike must contend with a shortage of adequate space, long lines for elevators and heavily traveled staircases, and indifferent maintenance of facilities. As the Transition Report put it, “Instructors sometimes lack a welcoming and appropriate . . . environment in which to teach . . . And the overall result in some instances is an impediment to learning” (p. 8). The shortage of rooms is due to several factors, including an increase in undergraduate enrollment by 45% over the past decade (see the Prologue, above) and a proliferation of classes (e.g., the introduction of the MAP required hundreds of small recitation sections to accompany lectures). Recently, attempts have been made to alleviate this crisis. Thus, departments are reminded each term to schedule classes at less popular times of the day and on Fridays. Schools have been asked to reduce the proliferation of inessential or underenrolled courses. In addition, the University is taking steps to increase the amount and quality of classroom space. Finally, most of the University has implemented modular class scheduling, whereby classes are scheduled in uniform time blocks. This has reduced, but not eliminated, the overlapping of classes that leads to the un
derutilization of classrooms and impairs students’ ability to avoid conflicts. A review of modular scheduling by the University Senate’s Academic Affairs Committee, which will be undertaken this spring, will consider whether it has achieved a more productive use of classroom space. The Committee will address some of the issues raised in this section of the self-study—the adequacy of classroom space in terms of numbers, size, technological equipment, flexibility of seating arrangements, and maintenance.

Challenges

**Location.** The provision of accessible classrooms (i.e., either on lower floors reachable by wide staircases or in buildings with sufficient elevator capacity) remains a challenge in the crowded neighborhood of NYU.

**Scheduling.** Classes continue to proliferate, and there is widespread resistance among faculty and students to scheduling them in the early morning or on Fridays. Also, the introduction of weekly class-free “common hours” at which meetings can be held has eroded some of the gains made by the modular schedule. And, to the extent that modular scheduling has worked, it has led to increased crowding of stairs, hallways, and elevators at class changes.

**Proprietary Rooms.** The situation is complicated by the existence of proprietary classrooms, i.e., space that is exclusive to one school. These rooms are often funded by an individual school, are more readily (or exclusively) available to that school’s faculty, and are often better equipped and maintained than rooms in the general pool. The Transition Team divided between members who believed that all proprietary space should be returned to the general pool and those who believed that the “owners” of such space should have priority but not exclusive rights to it. It is not certain whether reducing proprietary rights would increase the overall number of classrooms available, since most of these proprietary rooms already house classes and reduce the pressure on the general pool. But such a move would definitely increase the flexibility of scheduling, making more rooms of appropriate size, configuration, and equipment available to faculty from across the University.

**Classroom Configuration.** It is important to have a proper mix of large, medium-size, and small rooms. At present there is a scarcity of classrooms that can accommodate classes with enrollments in the hundreds, including planned “signature” courses taught by the most distinguished faculty from across the University. At the other extreme, small rooms are also in short supply, even as the need for them has dramatically increased because of curricular changes; our doubling of the number of Freshman Honors Seminars in fall 2003 over fall 2002, for example, revealed an acute shortage of seminar-style rooms. While it is important to maximize classroom seating, it is equally important to ensure that the right courses are put in the right spaces. In other words, a classroom suitable for a large lecture course is not appropriate for a recitation or a seminar, which requires a more intimate space configured with movable seats and a table.

**Classroom Management.** Courses increasingly depend on technology, but despite the effort to provide classrooms with at least the basic instructional technology, the rooms in the general pool still tend to be underequipped. When media not in the room are required, delivery
has often been unreliable; and even when equipment has been installed in classrooms there have been problems with maintenance and service. These issues are being addressed: Classroom Media Services has introduced new management techniques and is now working more closely with Information Technology Service (ITS) in cases where equipment is supplied or maintained by the latter office. (The use of PowerPoint, for example, requires a computer, or at least a connection, that ITS must supply and a digital projector from Classroom Media Services.) Finally, the assignment of rooms, either by computer or by hand, has not always adequately taken into account the technological and spatial requirements of a particular class. This has led to needless investments of time and equipment resources into media deliveries.

**Condition of Rooms.** Quite apart from the shortage of classrooms and their inadequate equipment and configuration, there is one final challenge. General pool and proprietary classrooms alike often suffer from missing ceiling tiles, broken coat pegs, expired light bulbs, lack of chalk/markers and erasers, broken blinds and curtains, and so on. In addition, instead of a system containing reliable gaps during the day when rooms can be maintained (litter removed, wastepaper baskets emptied, and movable furniture like lecterns and folding chairs restored), modular scheduling has allowed little or no time for daytime “policing.” It often seems impossible to keep up with all the running repairs and regular maintenance that these heavily used rooms need.

**Recommendations**

- **Location.** Continue to move administrative offices to the periphery of the campus, freeing up instructional space. Develop more large classroom space on the lower floors of buildings or where there are adequate means to move people from floor to floor.

- **Scheduling.** Maximize use of space by enforcing sensible minimum enrollments in courses, and by insisting that, wherever possible, the modular schedule, less popular hours, and Fridays be used.

- **Proprietary Rooms.** Review the issue of proprietary classrooms to determine whether there are inefficiencies that can be compensated by modifying that system.

- **Classroom Configuration.** Create some additional large classrooms (preferably close to ground level to minimize elevator traffic), as well as increase the supply of suitably equipped smaller rooms for recitations and seminars, with an adequate mix of seating arrangements for different teaching styles.

- **Classroom Management.** Develop a coordination system (whether centrally or simply through better organization and communication among the various existing offices) to make classroom management—scheduling, matching rooms with course or instructor requirements, and supplying (either in-room or through reliable delivery) appropriate equipment—more flexible and accommodating to the needs of the classroom users. Accountability where different offices are involved in overall classroom care needs to be clearly established.

- **Condition of Rooms.** Develop a funding strategy that builds into school and University budgets resources for ongoing maintenance of general pool classrooms.
12. TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Overview

All good teachers must master their subject matter, but they must also develop the abilities to fashion good learning objectives for their students, to foster the achievement of those objectives, and to understand and help their students understand the nature and progress of learning that takes place. They should instill in students a passion for learning, help them develop skills of critical analysis, and nurture their ability to learn on their own throughout their lives. As the University Presidential Transition Team Report put it (p. 7):

There are many opportunities in most, if not all, fields that could innovatively stretch the boundaries of knowledge and the excitement of learning. In this respect [the Transition Team] emphasize[s] the importance of classroom teaching and the sympathetic mentoring of students by faculty. Stimulating teaching not only has a lasting effect on students, but it also can contribute to scholarship as faculty members try out new ideas in dialogue with their students.

An overriding issue in higher education is the allocation of teaching responsibilities among the different categories of instructors. Inevitably, in a University as large and diverse as NYU, the allocation will vary considerably. One objective of the current NYU administration is to develop a system that permits appropriate flexibility in the types of instructor categories. In a speech delivered in September 2003 at the University of Ottawa as The Inaugural Canada Post Lecture, President Sexton presented some of his ideas on the creation or formalization of such categories as “teaching professors,” “global professors,” and “adjunct faculty.” (See Appendix NN.)

As noted in the Prologue, NYU’s new Analytical Planning Group has begun a study of the composition and deployment of faculty in the various schools. This study is also looking at the relationship between the percentage of full-time faculty who teach and student graduation rates. The high rate of turnover among part-time faculty, their sporadic presence on campus, and the relatively large proportion of the faculty ranks filled by part-time faculty are all factors being investigated in the study of attrition.

Apart from deployment of faculty, other aspects of teaching are explored elsewhere in this part of the report—in the discussions of undergraduate research (section 4) and advising (section 8). The present section, entirely devoted to teaching, will be concerned with two issues: how to assess the quality of teaching and how to use the assessments in order to improve instruction. Also related is an ongoing study of grading trends in the undergraduate divisions of NYU, for which see Appendix OO.

Before focusing on these issues, we briefly note the related topic of outcomes assessment. Under the University by-laws, the educational program of each school is the responsibility of the faculty and officers of the school (By-law VI). Accordingly, student learning outcomes assessment at New York University is a school-based effort. An Outcomes Assessment Liaison Committee, with representatives of each school, was established in 2002. Its initial function was to compile information on current school assessment activities, to promote...
awareness of the Middle States Association’s requirements regarding outcomes assessment, to share information about outcomes assessment methods, and to assist the schools in the development of their outcomes assessment plans. The Center for Teaching Excellence, described below, also serves as a resource for information and expertise on outcomes assessment.

Each school is required to have a written assessment plan which addresses each registered curriculum (including majors and any general education requirements) and related activities (including but not limited to academic support services), and includes specific assessment activities. Evidence should be available of the use of assessment results in the improvement of curricula and in planning. The assessment process should relate to the school’s mission and goals, and should include participation by faculty and other constituencies. The assessment process should include direct assessment of student learning, both qualitative and quantitative, and the assessment results should be integrated with planning and resource allocations. There should also be a timetable for the periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of the assessment process. The New York State Education Department requires proposals for new academic programs to include assessment information related to the development of the program, and plans to assess the success of the program in meeting its goals and objectives and to assess student learning outcomes. The University’s outcomes assessment plans are contained in a companion document to the self-study.

Current State

At the University level and within individual schools attention is paid to the quality of undergraduate teaching in a variety of ways.

All-University Initiatives. The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) promotes ongoing discussion about teaching and learning at the University level, striving to facilitate that conversation and to contribute to it intellectually. It works with schools, departments, and individuals to use the existing research and theoretical literature on human learning, motivation, and development to confront specific learning issues and to fashion innovative educational environments. It then helps design and implement assessments to measure the outcomes and to feed those results back into the literature. One service they provide is direct consultation with faculty designed by the teacher, including attending classes, videotaping lectures, and giving feedback. In addition, CTE provides consultation on ways to evaluate teaching, on the design of learning spaces, and on the selection, design, and use of learning technologies. Its research and evaluation office provides detailed information and assessment services for learning initiatives developed throughout the University. (See Appendix PP for 2002-2003 CTE Annual Report.)

Currently there is no University-wide uniform method of assessing teaching; assessment devolves upon the individual schools, and often among programs within the schools, as the University by-laws assign the educational conduct of each school to its respective faculty. These activities are discussed below. At the University level there are efforts to improve teaching in partnership with the schools. The CTE has recently been charged with heading a University-wide task force charged with evaluating teaching based on learning outcomes.
The University recognizes the importance of high-quality teaching by its Distinguished Teaching Award (which was recently combined with the NYU Alumni Association’s Great Teacher Award). Established in 1987, the Award is presented annually to outstanding full-time faculty members not only to acknowledge their achievements but also to signal that, along with research, exceptional teaching, both within and outside the classroom, is among NYU’s institutional priorities.

**Individual Schools’ Initiatives.** All undergraduate schools of NYU are committed to assessing and improving the quality of teaching. In each school there are end-of-term evaluation of courses and instructors by means of student survey instruments, which typically include quantifiable questions and narrative comments. In most cases a schoolwide evaluation form is used for this purpose, but in the Steinhardt School of Education and the Tisch School of the Arts each department uses its own form. In addition to distributing the schoolwide form, which was developed jointly by faculty and the College of Arts and Science (CAS) Student Council, some individual departments and programs in CAS have created their own forms to meet specific needs; some also use a departmental form to assess the effectiveness of instruction midway in the semester so that they can take remedial action if needed. The teacher education programs in Steinhardt have moved to a web-based evaluation form for their field placement courses (didactic courses continue to be evaluated with paper forms distributed in the classroom), and final grades are not given out until a student has responded—a procedure that has apparently not provoked complaints from students. Online evaluation is standard for all courses in the College of Dentistry.

Access to the results of student evaluations varies from school to school. In almost all cases, the results are shared with departments and discussed with instructors in the effort to improve instruction. (One part of the Stern evaluation form is seen only by the instructor in the course.) In CAS the quantifiable results (with a few student comments chosen by its Student Council) are also published online as a Course Evaluation Guide (CEG) and is available to everyone. In the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, by contrast, the results of the school’s evaluation are not made public or available to students, but its Student Council has begun to distribute its own evaluations and publish the results on its website. In the Ehrenkranz School of Social Work, the results of the evaluation of instructors are also made available to all social work students. In Tisch evaluation results are not usually made available to students.

Some of the schools rely on other forms of teaching evaluation and development as well. Stern, for example, requires all faculty in a two year cycle to participate in the “STEP” program, which requires the instructor to be video-taped, receive observational feedback, request a student small-group analysis, or request a peer review. The details and outcome of STEP review procedures are confidential (seen only by the instructor); the Dean’s Office merely assures that the instructor participated. The Center for Teaching Excellence provides a staff person for the instructional feedback, while Stern underwrites the expense. In Gallatin, which places a higher premium on teaching than on research, every non-tenured member of the faculty is assessed through a class visit by a senior faculty member; the observations are arranged in advance, and the resulting report may also include a review of the syllabus and assignments. Class observations are also routine in the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS). Finally, CAS partners with the Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) and the CTE in providing
orientation and professional development for TAs, who come not only from GSAS but also from Tisch and Steinhardt.

Several schools offer their own awards to recognize excellent teaching. CAS recently made the selection process for its Golden Dozen Award more rigorous, increased the amount of the award (which, in the case of regular faculty, is added to the honorees’ salary base), and began giving departments of award-winners a modest stipend for program improvements. SCPS has Outstanding Teaching Awards and merit increases for good teaching. The David Payne Carter Award for Teaching Excellence is awarded each year at the Tisch Salute.

Challenges

As the foregoing shows, all NYU’s schools take the assessment and improvement of teaching very seriously. They also face similar challenges.

Faculty Development. There is a tendency among the general public to think of teaching as the communication of information and to focus only on presentation techniques. But teaching is about creating environments that foster the appropriate construction of knowledge. There is also little tradition in American higher education of faculty members conceptualizing their teaching practices and developing ways to exchange ideas about teaching and learning issues and concepts.23

Centralized Evaluation. The schools’ various course evaluation processes, are labor-intensive and costly, requiring the help of University offices or outside vendors (to print, deliver, pick up, and scan up to tens of thousands of forms). It has typically taken several months after the end of the semester before the results become available. A more efficient system would be desirable, since delays in the processing of course evaluations diminish their usefulness when teaching appears to be problematic. Centralized administration might increase the number of courses assessed, and also permit the pooling of experience and the realization of economies of scale; at the same time it would send a strong signal about the value the University as a whole puts on teaching.

Online Evaluation. An online evaluation process, once set up, would be faster and much less laborious and costly. An important advantage from the students’ perspective is that they could complete the reviews at a convenient time and all at once, at a considerable saving in time. It is an open question, however, whether the response rate would be comparable to in-class administration of the questionnaire, and whether students would respond more or less thoughtfully online than on forms filled out in class.

Evaluation of TAs. TAs play an important instructional role in many schools, but the evaluation of their teaching has tended to be superficial, especially when they are not the instructors of record. Since the current CEG has only limited utility for this purpose, some CAS departments and programs have developed more extensive assessment mechanisms for their

TAs. Modification of the general form so that it yields better data regarding TAs would make possible greater efficiencies and comparisons across departments and programs. A related challenge is to link assessment with programs that help graduate students improve their effectiveness in the undergraduate classroom and at the same time prepare for the academic careers that many of them will eventually pursue.

**Reviewing and Acting on Evaluations.** The procedures for reviewing the course evaluation data that are currently available, whether in deans’ offices or departments, have tended to be informal and somewhat haphazard (see above). Although individual departments must take responsibility for the quality of the instruction they provide, supervision and review is needed at the school level as well. A recent initiative in CAS sought to address this challenge by establishing a standing faculty committee to review the course evaluations each term and bring to the attention of the dean, chairs, and directors situations where the quality of teaching can be enhanced. The schools vary in how they deal with poor teaching, from decanal intervention to voluntary measures on the part of the instructor.

**Other Means of Assessment.** A further challenge is to devise methods to assess instruction other than student evaluation of teachers and courses. An outcomes assessment, for example, might ask if the teaching helps and encourages students to learn what the curriculum promises in ways that make a sustained and substantial difference in the way they think, act, or feel.

**Mentoring.** Although the CTE is a valuable central resource for individuals or departments wishing to improve the quality of their teaching, more could also be accomplished at the local level. It is not clear, for instance, to what extent experienced, successful teachers are encouraged to mentor less experienced colleagues, in a formal or informal setting.

**Incentives.** The extent to which teaching assessment—by whatever means—is used in promotion and tenure discussions, in annual merit raises, and so on, varies from school to school, and from department to department. To correct this, the Provost’s Office is developing University-wide guidelines on promotion and tenure that each school is to incorporate into its procedures. In rewarding good teaching, we rely more on special awards than on sensitively calibrated adjustments in the institution’s academic reward system. There are also variations—perhaps inevitable—in the value that the schools place on teaching, compared with other traditional faculty responsibilities (research, artistic endeavor, service to the profession or institution, etc.).

**Recommendations**

- **Faculty Development.** Promote programs that help faculty members (including library faculty) and graduate students explore important teaching and learning issues, collect feedback on their teaching, and consider alternative approaches to fostering learning.

- **Centralized Evaluation.** Ensure that all courses in all undergraduate schools are evaluated. Explore the advantages of moving toward an all-University course/teacher evalua
tion process, and ask the selection committee for the Distinguished Teaching Award lead this effort under the direction of the CTE.

- **Online Evaluation.** Investigate the feasibility, advantages, and drawbacks of conducting course/instructor evaluations online.

- **Evaluations of TAs.** Develop comprehensive measures for evaluating the performance of graduate student teaching assistants that parallel the new approaches to the assessment of faculty teaching. Increase resources for the development of graduate students as apprentice teachers.

- **Reviewing and Acting on Evaluations.** Develop or maintain in each school a formal mechanism for reviewing teaching evaluations and dealing with deficiencies.

- **Other Means of Assessment.** Devise comprehensive measures of teaching effectiveness that go beyond student ratings of teachers and courses, and incorporate principles of outcomes assessment.

- **Mentoring.** Consider putting in place a system of senior faculty mentoring for junior faculty. Steinhardt’s or Gallatin’s mentoring program could serve as a model.

- **Incentives.** Encourage good teaching not just by “awards” but also by building incentives directly into the system of hiring, reappointment, promotion, tenure, and annual merit raises.

13. DIVERSITY AND ENGAGEMENT

**Overview**

As is stressed elsewhere in this self-study, New York University values the diversity and engagement of its students and faculty. Differences in background and viewpoint are expected and respected; consensus is neither a requisite nor a goal. Engaged students have relationships not only with their professors but also with their classmates, their reference groups (others facing common issues, shared interests, and similar goals), and alumni. It is essential that NYU provide a sense of belonging to students and faculty in as many different ways as there are backgrounds, interests, and aspirations among them. The process of learning is enhanced in an environment that is not only personally unthreatening but also empowering of each member of the community. “Diversity of backgrounds and approaches enriches the process of discovery, the ways of thinking about solving problems, the multiple modes of communicating ideas” (Boyer 1998, p. 35). This interaction facilitates learning and makes the sum of the undergraduate experience greater than the discrete activities or isolated relationships that compose it.

**Current State**

**Student Diversity.** NYU enjoys a rich diversity of students. In terms of ethnicity, for example, the following information was volunteered by the NYU undergraduate student body in the fall of 2003: White (60.0%), Asian (20.4%), Black (7.6%), Hispanic (10.0%), Biracial or Multiracial (1.5%), and Native American (0.3%) (see Table 4 below for a ten year comparison). Percentages in Table 4 are based only on the number of respondents, not the total undergraduate
enrollment. All ethnicity is self-reported. The rate of reporting has decreased from 95% in 1993 to 72% in 2003 (including those identifying as bi- or multi-racial, which was not an option in 1993).

### Table 4. Reported Ethnicity, Undergraduate Enrollment, All-University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 1993</th>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percentage</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>1,493</td>
<td>11.03%</td>
<td>1,024</td>
<td>7.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific</td>
<td>2,917</td>
<td>21.55%</td>
<td>2,739</td>
<td>20.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,294</td>
<td>9.56%</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>10.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi- or Multiracial</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td>205</td>
<td>1.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>7,817</td>
<td>57.76%</td>
<td>8,040</td>
<td>60.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13,534</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>13,397</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of the Registrar

NYU undergraduates come from all 50 states and some 84 foreign countries. The proportion of the entering class that comes from the New York City or metropolitan area (defined as 17 counties) has declined from 55% in 1993 to 38% in 2003. Freshmen living in residence halls rose from 60.7% of the class in 1993 to 95% in 2003. Economic diversity is evidenced by the fact that approximately 74% of undergraduates receive financial aid. Other examples of the richness of NYU life are indicated by the following figures: in fall 2003, 626 students registered with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities; students indicate involvement in nearly 30 religious affiliations; and the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Student Services involves hundreds of students in its activities. In the fall 2003 semester, 60.3% of the 19,506 undergraduates were women (in fall 1993, the figure was 57.7% of 15,225).

**Faculty Diversity.** The increasing diversity in the U.S. student population has not been paralleled by national changes in the professorate (Chait and Trower 2001). This is unfortunate, because “students enhance the texture of their learning by listening [to] and interacting with faculty and students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds” (Boyer 1998, p. 35). NYU’s faculty does not mirror the diversity of the student body, since it includes no Native Americans and is less than 5% Black, less than 4% Hispanic, and less than 7% Asian (see the comparison below for AY 2003–2004). Longitudinally, however, there have been increases in the representation of minorities on the faculty, with the percentage of the tenure and tenure-track faculty in those groups rising from 11.4% to 15.6%. But this proportion has leveled off at about 15% since 1999. The percentage of tenure and tenure-track faculty that is female has increased, from 28.1% in 1993–1994 to 33.4% in 2003–2004, the second highest among peer and target

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24 Financial aid at NYU is largely merit-based and thus may not be the best indicator of the economic diversity of student backgrounds. Further study needs to be done to demonstrate the point more reliably; other factors include family contribution to a student’s aid package, proportion of students with private or public loans, and so on. For more general discussion, see part II above, Enrollment and Financial Aid.
institutions. The Office of the Provost and the Faculty Senators Council are working to increase faculty diversity and engagement.

![Faculty 2003-2004](chart1) ![Undergraduates 2003-2004](chart2)

**Staff and Administrator Diversity.** Staff members and administrators are key partners with faculty in the overall academic mission of the University. As in the case of faculty, achievement of non-faculty diversity at NYU is an evolving process. Longitudinal comparisons from 1993 to the present (see Appendix QQ) provide evidence that NYU has moved toward increasing diversity in the non-faculty domain as well. Overall, the percentage of women non-faculty employees has remained relatively stable (slight increase from 54.8% to 55.1% from 1993 to 2003), but a substantial percentage increase has occurred in the Executive, Administrator, Manager job cluster (from 47.7% to 56.0%). Likewise, the percentage of minority non-faculty employees has increased overall during this period (from 45.2% to 49.2%), with the greatest increase in percentage occurring in the technical job cluster and the greatest absolute increase in the professional job cluster.

**Grievance Procedures.** Procedures are available to students, faculty, and administrators to address issues of discrimination. In addition, concerted efforts are underway in the Office of Equal Opportunity to formulate a general anti-harassment policy.

**Challenges**

Although NYU is already a very diverse institution, in a few areas we would like more diversity. The concomitant challenge is to ensure that this diversity is an integral part of the academic experience that we offer undergraduates.

**Increasing Diversity.** While the overall proportions of women and minorities among NYU’s non-faculty employees suggest a desirable diversity, these proportions do not prevail in all types of non-faculty positions. Still, the level of diversity among the University staff is more encouraging than the diversity among students and faculty.
Given the demographics described above, a challenge for the University is to increase the proportion of students of color. To some extent diversity produces diversity, since students are more inclined to join a community that they perceive as welcoming people of all backgrounds and outlooks. Financial aid is key to building a student body that appropriately reflects the diversity students see around them in New York City and the world. Our financial aid and admissions policies must take into consideration the changes in the character and quality of NYU over the past few years and must provide the flexibility to attract students who will come and stay, and form the sort of community we envisage (see part II of this study, Enrollment and Financial Aid).

An even greater challenge for the University is to increase the diversity of its faculty without sacrificing quality. This will require continual attention and reinforcement, involving not only structural issues like demographics and compensation but also issues of institutional climate and culture. Although at the aggregated University level, the statistics on faculty diversity are encouraging, our location in New York City should make it possible to attract an even higher percentage of faculty of color. The public programs on faculty hiring sponsored by the Provost’s Office and the Faculty Council have made a good start toward the goal of increased diversity. The recruitment of a diverse faculty depends to a great extent on the pool of interested and qualified candidates. Accordingly, one aim is to enlarge this pool by providing special advising and mentoring of women and minority students and by creating special opportunities for undergraduate research.

**Engagement.** A final major challenge we face is how best to incorporate existing diversity into the undergraduate academic experience. In particular, we need to develop ways to bring students and faculty together and to learn from people of different backgrounds. Universities must intentionally create such opportunities for this to occur (Light 2001). On the curricular and co-curricular level, faculty, administrators, staff, and students benefit from the groups’ diversity by engaging with one another in a variety of ways. Academic programs, for instance, ranging from Africana Studies to Asian/Pacific/American Studies, and from Gender and Sexuality Studies to Deafness Rehabilitation, provide students with the opportunity to study different cultures and different populations. Several of these have all-University institutes attached for outreach activities. In addition, University administrative offices (e.g., the Office for African American, Latino, and Asian American Student Services, the Office of International Students and Scholars, and the Spiritual Diversity Network) provide extensive support services to those populations. Finally, many student groups both University-wide (e.g., La Herencia Latina, Black Science Students Organization, and the Asian Cultural Union) and in the schools (e.g., CAS’s Academic Achievement Program and Ehrenkranz’s group for African-American, Hispanic, Asian American and Native American students) support and celebrate particular communities.

Such specialized programs, however, whether they are academic or provide student support services, do not constitute by themselves a sufficient level of engagement. Just as all courses and departments are available to all qualified undergraduates, so should intellectual diversity be a priority of those courses and departments. The goal should be to carry ideas of difference through the curriculum and into other aspects of every student’s life. This may require faculty to renew and enrich the subject matter of their courses and to implement new and inclu
sive teaching strategies. (See also the discussion of diversity and community in the Student Affairs part of this self-study, below.)

Related to the issue of engagement is the need to put full-time faculty into the classroom. They are key to furthering the enrichment that diversity of backgrounds, cultures, and ideas brings to NYU. Historically, NYU has made more use of adjuncts than many peer and target institutions, in large part because of the ready availability of talented people in the New York City area. In many cases these adjuncts are making valued contributions to the NYU education. In other cases, however, there has been an overreliance on adjuncts. This can become problematic: such part-time instructors, for all their expertise and dedication, tend not to be hired for every semester. This makes it difficult for students to receive mentoring and valuable recommendations.

Recommendations

- **Increasing Student Diversity.** Consider strategies at the provostial and school levels for ensuring greater diversity in the student body. Examine whether current financial aid policies, particularly the consideration of merit in making financial awards, is effective in recruiting and retaining a broadly diverse student body, including students from all economic strata, and, if not, make appropriate revisions.

- **Increasing Faculty Diversity.** Explore more effective ways of recruiting a diverse faculty in all schools and departments. Create opportunities for networking and mentoring among faculty from underrepresented groups. Develop concrete strategies for increasing the number of minority undergraduates interested in pursuing graduate degrees and entering academic life.

- **Engagement.** Develop incentives for faculty participation in co-curricular activities such as the Faculty-in-Residence Program, academically related student clubs, and each school’s scholars’ program. Explore ways of developing incentives to increase faculty involvement in advising. Increase in each school the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty in appropriate courses.
IV. STUDENT AFFAIRS

1. INTRODUCTION

The preparation for a new University administration during 2001-2002 included a review of the University’s overall philosophy concerning the role of extracurricular undergraduate student life. The University Presidential Transition Team established a committee that dealt with student life issues. That committee continued to meet over the summer of 2002 as the Dean’s Working Group on Student Affairs. In fall 2002 the group was augmented by additional faculty, administrators, and students and reconstituted as the NYU’s Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Student Affairs (a working group analogous to the one on Academic Affairs, mentioned previously in this report), co-chaired by the Vice Provost for University Life and Interdisciplinary Initiatives and the Dean of the College of Arts and Science (see Appendix F for Student Affairs Committee membership). This Committee explored a wide variety of topics, including the role of community building and diversity at NYU, with particular attention to areas of residential living, including educational programs, housing selection, and faculty participation. It also explored student extracurricular activities, substance abuse, mental health, and associated behavioral issues. In addition, the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs took a leadership role in developing educational programming for undergraduates in the residence halls, and a new Vice President for Student Affairs joined NYU in March 2003 with responsibility for a broad portfolio of University-wide extracurricular services and programs.

The convergence of these organizational changes and the Middle States self-study process has resulted in a renewed vigor and focus on student affairs at NYU. The ensuing efforts to improve undergraduate student life discussed in this section of the report are guided by the same principles noted in its Prologue—the primacy of the University’s academic mission, active partnership between the University and its students in all aspects of the learning process, the importance of diversity, and extension of the educational experience beyond classroom walls.

This part of the self-study relies heavily on the work of the Committee on Undergraduate Student Affairs described above and its subcommittees. The Committee was charged by the Provost and the University’s Middle States Steering Committee to explore the following topics:

Diversity and Community: At the heart of our efforts to improve undergraduate life is the desire to support the University’s academic mission by providing opportunities for students to learn and grow as individuals—by reaping the benefits of exposure to difference, and by engendering a collective spirit.

The University is organizationally decentralized and geographically diffuse. The academic diversity outlined in the previous section of this self-study is paralleled by the many extracurricular activities through which students can pursue their interests. Our student body is not only diverse in its demographic makeup (e.g., race, ethnicity, national origin, socioeconomic circumstances), but also in where and with whom they live, in how they spend their time, and in their priorities, motivations, skills, and ambitions. Faculty and staff are also diverse in their
demographic makeup and their intellectual interests. As discussed below, NYU’s urban setting introduces a further measure of diversity.

The areas that we have identified as particularly important in building community in this context are not intended as exhaustive. They are valuable, however, as examples from which we might draw general conclusions about how to improve the quality of student life at NYU. These include student clubs, organizations, and activities; community service; communication and the use of technology; career development; alumni relations; and the particular needs of non-resident (commuter) and transfer students.

Residential Life: As part of an aggressive effort to improve, NYU focused in the 1980s and 1990s on transforming itself from a local, commuter school to a residential campus that would attract a national student body. This led to the construction, purchase, and lease of buildings to serve as residence halls, some of which, by necessity, are well beyond the Washington Square neighborhood. As the University’s ability to house students has grown, so has recognition that the residence hall environment offers opportunities for learning and growth beyond the classroom. This section of the report discusses: rethinking the room selection process to cluster freshman and the lottery room selection process overall; developing living-learning programs and special seminars and expanding faculty fellow-in-residence programs and residence hall learning centers; improving the way that resident and graduate assistants are selected and trained; making use of peer educators within the residence halls to address mental health and behavioral issues; and improving residence hall technology.

Mental Health and Behavioral Issues: We must also attend to factors that can undermine or impede our efforts to support the University’s academic mission and improve the quality of student life. Helping students to minimize risks associated with drug and alcohol use are important objectives. This section summarizes some of the data on drug and alcohol use and discusses related issues concerning mental health and behavior. It notes, in particular, the growing need for student mental health services, and it recommends programmatic and service improvements to address these issues.

2. DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY

Overview

The research literature in higher education indicates that student involvement and a shared sense of community within the college environment are important factors in achieving desirable outcomes such as student satisfaction and retention, and are critical components of undergraduate students’ intellectual growth. Astin (1993, p. 279), for example, notes that the strongest negative effect on overall satisfaction at college is the lack of a student community. Schilling (1985) describes the special meaning of “community” in an academic setting as one that emphasizes active involvement with others, and that is characterized by a sense of shared purpose and participation in common activity. Community developed through common activities such as academically related group projects, residence life programs, and community service can create bonds among students from widely different backgrounds.
In recent decades, the demographics of NYU’s students have shifted in parallel along with national trends. In addition, our students are diverse in terms of economic circumstances, religious affiliations, sexual orientation, and abilities.

We believe these considerations are especially important to NYU given its location in New York City, one of the most diverse cities in the world. In addition to its wealth of museums, libraries, and theaters, New York City’s cultural tapestry is reflected in its large and growing immigrant populations from countries all over the world. Moreover, racial and ethnic profiles vary markedly within the city’s five boroughs and from one neighborhood to another. In 1999, the city estimated that 28% of its residents were foreign-born and that city residents spoke 115 languages. To the extent that data are available, they indicate that New York City has a large lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender population. In sum, the city offers a feast of multicultural experiences within walking distance or a subway ride in almost any direction.

That NYU undergraduate students in this highly diverse environment nevertheless want and expect to feel part of a community is clear from the University Presidential Transition Team report and also from a report issued by the student Inter-Residence Hall Council (See Appendix RR). Students want a more “traditional campus” feel while retaining the benefits of proximity to city resources. Many say that it is difficult to meet other students and, in particular, they perceive a lack of connection to NYU faculty and staff who might help them become more engaged.

Diversity and community can connote diffusion, difference, contrast on one hand, and commonality, linkage, shared interest on the other. Our continuing task as educators is to find balance in this tension and identify the mechanisms to achieve and maintain it in ways that benefit our students. Accordingly, we focus on types of opportunities for students to become involved in campus life (clubs/organizations/activities, community service), management and delivery of these services (administrative issues), contextualizing these opportunities within an overarching community-based framework (communication/technology, career development, alumni relations), and the special needs of particular student groups (commuters and transfers).

A. On-Campus Emphasis

Current State

The Center for University Life. The Helen and Martin Kimmel Center for University Life, which opened in spring 2003, is an important new addition to the University’s efforts to promote a broad-based communal environment. Located at the center of the Washington Square campus, it is designed to be a focal point of campus activity for NYU undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests. The Center provides an intellectual, artistic, and social nexus, with space available for club activities, academic lectures, conferences and events, individual music practice rooms, studios for small group performances, and rehearsal suites for larger ensembles. Lounges are located on several floors, some of which have computers for e-mail access, outdoor patios, or study areas. There are also catering and dining facilities, including a food court and a coffee and snack concession. The Center includes a number of student-related administrative offices including the Vice President for Student Af
fairs; Ticket Central; the student-run Program Office; Commuter Student Services; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Student Services; African American, Latino and Asian American Student Services; and Student Activities.

A new office, the Student Resource Center (SRC), will be included in the Kimmel Center starting this spring. The SRC will incorporate existing and new offices and staff positions serving commuters, graduate students, transfer students, new students, the Spiritual Diversity Network, and parents. The Center also will provide a single location where students can get help with, or information about, virtually any issue or problem.

**Student Clubs, Organizations, and Activities.** The University provides an enormously varied program of extracurricular activities—from politics to glee clubs to plays, from debate teams and campus fellowships to Greek life and sports. In addition, NYU places an enormous value on the humanizing power of service to others. There are hundreds of organizations through which students may serve the larger community.

Student clubs at NYU provide students with opportunities to pursue their interests while learning the importance of communication, cooperation, planning, leadership, and other skills. The University’s Office of Student Activities (OSA), the main vehicle for student involvement in clubs and organizations, provides comprehensive programs and related services that support student organizations and students. OSA is a coordinating center for all-Square clubs and organizations (groups with membership open to all NYU students), as well as school-based clubs and organizations (groups with membership limited to those in a particular school). Over 300 NYU student clubs and organizations register annually with OSA. Co-curricular clubs are those that are funded by individual schools and whose membership is open only to students enrolled in those schools. These clubs focus on academic disciplines, arts/performance/media, and the professions.

Student government also is an excellent vehicle for student involvement at NYU. Each school or college has its own student council. Student council presidents together with elected and appointed student senators from each school form the University Committee on Student Life (UCSL), the principal committee of the Student Senators Council (SSC) and the broadest-based student government group at the University. The UCSL transmits policy recommendations to the SSC, which in turn makes recommendations to the University Senate, of which it is a constituent body, and to the University Administration. The University Senate, chaired by the President of the University, is the chief deliberative body of the University.

The athletic and recreation program at NYU offers a large menu of activities, from intercollegiate teams, which compete in the University Athletic Association (NCAA Division III), to club sports, which are open to undergraduate and graduate students and allow participants at various skill levels to share an interest in sports, recreation, and fitness. The Department of Athletics also coordinates an extensive program of intramural sports as well as a number of special events.

**Community Service.** The NYU Office of Community Service is a coordinating base for the University’s community service efforts, overseeing the planning and implementation of
centrally administered service programs, acting as a clearinghouse for information about local agencies, and providing technical support, funding, and publicity for service initiatives undertaken on a school, departmental, or other organizational level. The Office of Community Service works closely with a committee of school-based community service representatives. The University is involved in more than 130 projects (see Appendix SS). Approximately 4,000 students engage in some form of University-sponsored community service activity, including one-day service projects, semester-long volunteer commitments, credit-bearing service learning courses, and year-long work-study assignments through the America Reads/America Counts tutoring program. Each of the University’s schools and divisions also sponsors numerous community programs, and community service activities are an integral part of programming activities in residence halls. In 2002–2003, nearly 150 programs were conducted by resident students. The Office of Community Service also has begun to implement online registration for its projects, which has increased outreach to the NYU community and participation in community service projects.

Communication. Communication is a crucial binding force for building and maintaining a sense of community. It enables students, faculty, and administrative staff to be aware of programs and activities, to share opinions and exchange ideas, and to be informed about important information related to rules, regulations, standards, and expectations for appropriate behavior.

Many components of NYU’s technology infrastructure support student life (see also section 10 of the Academic Affairs section of this self-study). The University network connects computers in over 100 buildings in Manhattan and other buildings in our international sites to each other, the Internet, and Internet2. NYU’s broadband cable distribution system reaches over 250 classrooms and 100 conference rooms and offices. NYU Cable TV content distribution services reach the student residences. The University portal, NYUHome, provides authenticated Web access to over 60,000 students, faculty, staff, and alumni. NYU’s online services include e-mail and electronic forums, event calendars, individual file management, courseware, electronic library resources, sources for news and activities in the city, and electronic voting for student leaders. NYUHome handled 2.1 million logins in November 2003 and the website received about 8.5 million hits that month. Approximately 120 NYU Homestations are deployed in Bobst Library and other public locations, allowing students to gain easy walkup access to NYUHome and the services it offers. In spring 2003, ITS and the Office of Housing and Residence Life jointly established the first residents-only computing lab in the Lafayette Street Residence Hall. Extensive use of Blackboard commercial courseware adds an easy and efficient tool for dialogue (assignments, postings, chat, etc.) among students and teachers. NYU roam, a wireless network that is being set up on campus, will extend possibilities for collaboration in spaces such as lounges and other common gathering areas.

An All-University Events Calendar was launched in fall 2003 to help inform and involve the University community in events taking place around campus. Nearly 100 individuals across campus may submit items to the calendar, and it is expected that all NYU schools and major organizations will be on board by the end of the spring 2004 semester. Among the advantages of the calendar is the ability to view events from within NYUHome, and to browse events by calendar category. The response so far has been positive from both students and event planners.
Non-Resident (Commuter) and Transfer Students. Defining a commuter as any student who does not live in University housing, NYU enrolled 8,213 undergraduate commuters in fall 2003. While some of these students may live in private residences close to Washington Square, most travel to campus (sometimes from distant locations) to attend class, use University resources, and participate in extracurricular activities. Responses to the University Presidential Transition Team survey and related information indicate that non-resident students often feel neglected. They would like more programs and resources intended specifically for them, and they would like better information about campus services. In response, the University created a new Commuter Student Services Office in September 2002, which is staffed by a full-time coordinator and half-time graduate student assistant. The Office is centrally located in the newly opened Kimmel Center for University Life. The Office also serves as home to the Commuter Circle club, a student-run affinity and advocacy group for commuter students.

Transfer students are another group that merits special consideration. For fall 2003, NYU enrolled 19,506 undergraduates. Of these, 4,035 were new freshmen (full and part-time), and an additional 914 students were new transfers to the University. Transition Team survey results and anecdotal information indicate that, like commuters, transfer students perceive a lack of services and attention to their circumstances. They reported difficulty in making the transition to the University, and often feel disconnected from the University community. They would like more information about how to get involved in a new environment (meet people, make friends, establish relationships, participate in activities, etc.) and help in doing so.

Challenges

Creating Community from Diversity. The size and complexity of the University make it difficult to relate to as a totality. Institutional symbols that represent some universities in a unified way—major intercollegiate sports teams at many Division I institutions, for example—do not exist to the same degree at NYU or do not serve the same function. New York City is an important educational and cultural resource, but it also can be a distraction. These same factors can contribute to students’ feeling overwhelmed and less able to make connections with one another or with faculty members. The Academic Affairs section of this self-study describes the broad diversity of the NYU student body and the importance of integrating students of different backgrounds fully into the undergraduate academic experience. As we seek to expand the possibilities for education beyond classroom walls, it is equally important to involve all students fully in the life of the University through extracurricular activities and programs. The challenge is to develop diversity and community in this context and in ways that build on the particular characteristics and strengths of NYU’s culture.

Administrative Issues. While the University provides a wealth of resources, these often exist in separate offices that are so decentralized that students (and sometimes administrators) find it difficult or time consuming to accomplish administrative tasks. A student survey conducted by the University Presidential Transition Team was highly critical on certain aspects of the University administration. While recognizing that there are many able and responsible administrators, the Team noted that student respondents frequently referred to their sense of being treated impersonally and felt that administrators often were less responsive or helpful than they
should be. Respondents reported that they were often frustrated by what they saw as an ineffective institutional bureaucracy.

**Student Clubs.** Student clubs and organizations are positive features of the University environment, but they must be managed well. Some students have expressed concern about the availability and timeliness of information regarding programs, events, and other activities. Some have questioned whether the money allocated to clubs might be better used to support academic projects. Some students appear to want more activities that provide opportunities to meet other students in smaller settings, especially on weekends. And finally, some think that clubs are overly regulated to the point of impeding their accessibility and function.

**Community Service.** Challenges in this area include increasing the retention of volunteers in ongoing community service placements; expediting the assignment of volunteers and their actual start date at the site; incorporating a greater reflective component into the volunteer experience; incorporating community service into the study abroad experience and immersing students into the culture of their host country at a deeper level; supporting the desire to perform community service among students whose schedules do not permit ongoing service opportunities by providing meaningful one-day service; and publicizing service opportunities in an environment in which students regularly report that they “tune out” fliers, posters, and e-mails because they receive so much information from many sources.

**Communication.** Because of the University’s size and decentralized nature, it can be difficult to achieve and articulate a clear consensus on issues. Policies and procedures that provide guidance or expectations for student behavior, for example, may differ in substance or interpretation in various areas. Difficulties in this respect for the University’s message to students about drugs and alcohol are noted below in the section on mental health and behavioral issues.

Technology represents a powerful and increasingly indispensable tool in linking members of the University community. However, keeping abreast of constantly changing and expanding technological needs is a fundamental problem, particularly within the University’s residence hall system, as noted above in the Academic Affairs section of this self-study. No funding structure has been established to renew the ResNet infrastructure. As wiring and electronic gear has aged, the quality of service in some student residences has deteriorated. This has occurred at a time when the number of students registering computers has more than doubled and the volume of traffic generated by the typical student has more than quadrupled. A related problem that affects resources is the growing popularity of file-sharing services. In some cases, students using these services are in unwitting violation of copyright; in many more cases, the files being shared are so large as to degrade connectivity and speed. (An additional complication is that file sharing software which allows a student to download music also allows anyone else with the same software to access the student’s music files and to copy them.) NYU has taken steps to upgrade the worst of the early ResNet infrastructure, but there is more to do.

**Non-Resident (Commuter) and Transfer Students.** The benefits of many programs described above are diminished or unavailable to students who travel to and from campus, or who join the University community after starting their college careers elsewhere. Problems that can be associated with time management, awareness of programs and services, or negotiating a novel and complex environment are magnified for non-resident and transfer students. Commut
ers often have little time to participate in on-campus activities because of competing demands of travel, work, and, in some cases, responsibilities at home (approximately two-thirds of non-resident students commute from their permanent home address). Moreover, as noted above, the term “non-resident” can encompass important differences in circumstances. In spring 2003, the Commuter Student Services Office conducted a survey to learn more about commuter students (See Appendix TT.), in particular the extent to which commuters were involved in student clubs or activities and whether they felt a sense of connection to the University. As expected, those respondents who were not at all involved indicated that they did not feel a sense of connection to the University. But even respondents who reported being involved in at least one student club or activity indicated they were, on average, only “neutral” about feeling connected. In response to these findings, the NYU Commuter Student Services Office and Commuter Circle have taken further steps to encourage commuter students to get involved on campus. New programs for freshman and transfer commuters include an Online Community (virtual study groups, information and communication via discussion boards and chat rooms), a Commuter Assistant Program (September, 2004; matching new students with upperclass students for support and guidance), and Commuter Appreciation Week (Spring 2004; social events, cultural excursions, and community service projects).

Transfer students often face difficulty and need help in making the transition to a different college environment, but not in the same way as freshmen who are completely new to any college. As described below in the Residence Life section of this self-study, transfer students tend to receive less desirable housing assignments, often more distant from the center of campus, because they are not part of the previous year’s lottery process. Transfer students also generally register for classes later than other students, when some courses may be closed. Consequently, transfers are more likely to have inefficient schedules that may require more travel between class centers and outlying residence halls. Little has been done to gather systematic data toward better understanding the needs of transfer students. Nevertheless, greater emphasis recently on transfer student issues has resulted in the creation of several new programs for these students, including a transfer student orientation program in January, transfer student listserv, transfer student workshop during Parents Day, and a transfer student Sunday brunch cruise.

Recommendations

Creating Community from Diversity.

- Build community in ways that draw strength from the complexity of the University’s makeup and environment. These efforts should be attuned to the particular needs of various groups (students of color and international students are two examples) while maximizing the potential for mutual enrichment with the University community. Create “niche communities” that reflect students’ varied interests and passions, and create opportunities both for bonding within groups and bridging to others.

- Set a clear and consistent tone of inclusion, involvement, and academic excellence as core values that infuse all aspects of undergraduate life.
Develop and nurture student programs outside of the classroom, including in residence halls, that are academically relevant, engender a sense of belonging, and that encourage linkages among students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Consider expanding to other residence halls the community building mechanism exemplified by the Student Advisory Board in Carlyle Residence Hall, which works with the building’s staff to gauge residents’ interests.

Emphasize the University’s and the city’s resources as bases for community. Create programs that emphasize community in new forms (e.g. class identity, graduate students, etc.). To maximize participation, schedule more activities and events in the evening and on weekends when they are less likely to conflict with class-related or work responsibilities.

**Student Clubs.**

- Develop new mechanisms to inform students about clubs and how to become involved. Develop ways to promote cross-group engagement, for example through funding or other incentives for co-sponsored events, rewarding the involvement of faculty and staff, or other means of collaboration. Improve procedures related to club funding to assure their transparency and fairness.

**Administrative Issues.**

- Create a culture of quality service that insists on the accountability of all offices and promotes a more hospitable, user-friendly environment for students.

- Streamline the way in which we offer and manage programs and services. To the extent possible, cluster related services in central locations and train staff as generalists to increase efficiency in helping students. Provide customer service education for staff members emphasizing their work in contributing to the overall community.

- Use objective assessment mechanisms to design, implement, and monitor programs and services. Conduct periodic reviews to monitor programs and services and modify these as necessary. Include student opinion in all phases of assessments.

- Form working partnerships and communicate regularly across related administrative areas to increase opportunities for collaboration and to avoid gaps, unnecessary duplication, or conflict among centralized and school-based programs.

**Community Service.**

- Increase involvement in ongoing service opportunities by reaching out to specific populations (academic majors, scholars groups, athletic teams, clubs, residence halls) with on-site presentations and tailored open house events.
• Expedite placement of volunteers by forging closer relationships with our partner agencies by placing college work-study employees on-site to help with the processing of new volunteers.

• Continue to provide opportunities for students to come together in a variety of settings including “on location” at the partner agencies, in residence halls, and at dining halls to make these sessions as inviting as possible.

• Develop stronger community service opportunities at study abroad sites by continuing to work with the Office of Global Education on providing pre-departure sessions on community service opportunities abroad, and continue to cultivate relationships between overseas staff and local agencies in the adjacent communities.

• Continue to provide a rich assortment of one-day service projects at agencies where we are developing ongoing relationships while at the same time providing an ongoing stream of assistance to agencies that seek our help.

• Review methods currently used to attract students’ attention to community service opportunities.

**Communication.**

• Develop an ongoing renewal strategy and funding plan for the technology infrastructure, particularly ResNet and other in-residence facilities that support residential student life. Consider creating a master calendar.

• Ensure in leased residential properties the availability to students of network, phone, and cable TV infrastructure and services that are comparable to services in NYU-owned properties.

• Promote close collaboration among Student Housing, Student Life, Information Technology Services, and student leaders for planning and delivering technology-related services to students.

• Enhance the ability of NYUHome portal to facilitate outreach by student organizations to their constituencies and more effective participation of students in student life activities and initiatives.

• Educate students about computer file-sharing issues.

**Non-Resident and Transfer Students.**

• Expand current efforts to connect commuter and transfer students with one another and with the larger University community. Examples might include increased involvement/awareness through summer study, on-campus jobs, or study abroad; and participation in residence hall-based activities (for instance, establishing a category of
residential affiliates where students could apply to be involved with particular student residences, sharing in activities wherever possible. Affiliates would be invited to participate in the full range of residence hall programs as though they were resident students. To the extent possible, programs would be designed and scheduled particularly to be convenient for commuter students.

- Create a dedicated office, like that for commuter students, to provide services and programs specifically for transfer students, including a special orientation.

**B. Community Beyond Washington Square**

**Current State**

**Career Development.** New York University places a high priority on guiding its students along the path toward the world of work. NYU students are increasingly career-oriented, reflecting a national trend. National studies show that career-related considerations strongly influence students’ college choice. Moreover, the University has an obligation to provide the best possible career counseling and placement services to its students since college is a transition to employment or graduate and professional education.

Most career-related services for undergraduate students at NYU are offered or coordinated through the University’s Office of Career Services (OCS). This Office provides a comprehensive range of programs and services that support the broad educational objectives of the University. OCS services and programs are designed to provide advice and support during all stages of the career development process, helping students to assess interests, identify career options and goals, determine effective job search strategies, and develop related skills (e.g. preparing resume and cover letter, interviewing well, using proper dress and etiquette, etc.).

OCS programs include seminars, workshops, and presentations that focus on lifelong learning as it relates to career development. Other major programs include the Career Development Learning Series, Employer/Professional School site visits, Career Week, seven career fairs, and International Work Abroad Week. An extensive on-campus recruitment program matches students in one-on-one interviews with potential employers and a large on-line job listing system assists students in obtaining full-time work upon graduation. The Student Employment and Internship Center (SEIC), a separate component of OCS, helps students secure internships, on-campus and off-campus part-time jobs and summer positions. OCS staff participates in orientation programs for new students and collaborates with students, faculty, and administrators to offer programs at school-based sites, in residence halls, and other locations on campus throughout the academic year. Specialized career seminars and employer presentations are geared to individual academic disciplines and majors, class year, international students, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, students with disabilities, and students of color and diverse ethnic backgrounds.

OCS makes extensive use of electronic resources, including on-line job listings, databases and journals, fax and electronic resume referral, e-mail to employers, and listservs. The
Office also seeks alternative sources of funding for student programming through corporate partnerships.

The OCS Mentor Network Program helps NYU undergraduates explore their career interests by matching them with experienced alumni professionals from diverse careers organizations. A separate database provides contact information for NYU alumni living in foreign countries who are available via e-mail, telephone and in-person meetings to assist NYU students seeking jobs abroad.

OCS’s most recent annual survey (2003) of all new BA/BS recipients during the first fall semester following their graduation shows a placement rate of 92% and that the average starting salary for respondents representing all majors and schools is well above the national average. (The survey may be found on the OCS website at http://www.nyu.edu/career services/ by clicking on “student services.”) A Part-time Job and Internship Survey is administered at the conclusion of the spring term of students’ junior year. The most recent report of that survey (September 2003) found that 80% of respondents had worked at a part-time job or internship. OCS also conducts focus groups with students to obtain feedback on programs and services, and regularly administers evaluations after workshops and special programs. These include feedback from participating alumni and employers.

**Alumni Relations.** The Office for University Development and Alumni Relations (UDAR) provides programs for alumni at campus and regional locations across the United States. Many of these efforts are designed specifically to involve alumni in University life and create connections with current students. These initiatives include (i) Regional receptions hosted by President John Sexton with faculty speakers for newly accepted students, their parents, and alumni. (ii) The Distinguished Visitors Program, which brings accomplished alumni and trustees together with students for dinner at the NYU Torch Club followed by a presentation at one of the University’s residence halls. Speakers share their experiences and insights on public policy, business, the arts and other topics. This joint effort with the Office of Residence Education complements the University’s efforts to foster the retention of freshmen and sophomores. Plans are underway to expand the program to include several events each semester in other freshmen residence halls and to utilize faculty-in-residence as hosts; and (iii) Student Roundtables at which a high profile alumni or trustee guest joins President Sexton or a school dean for an informal lunch and discussion with a group of invited students.

The NYU Alumni Association Board of Directors has a standing Student Relations Committee, which includes current student leaders, recent alumni who have been student leaders, and established alumni.

For a fuller description of issues related to alumni, see Part V below.

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25 The 92% figure represents respondents who were either employed (71%) or enrolled in graduate or professional school (21%).
Challenges

**Career Development.**

(i) **Space.** The Office of Career Services has been successful despite chronic space constraints impeding a high level of service. While students have become more career oriented, career preparation has moved from a focus on graduating seniors to a continuum that extends throughout the college years. Internships and part-time jobs also are increasingly important ways for students to gain experience, establish contacts for future employment, and defray college costs. Consequently, over the long-term there has been a significant growth in OCS services and programs and in the number of students and employers served. However, the main OCS office has occupied essentially the same space since 1984. Greater demand for services and a larger clientele have generated more traffic and activity in already inadequate space. As a result, OCS offices are often crowded and noisy and project a poor image to students and prospective employers. Additionally, students sometimes find the multiple office locations confusing.

(ii) **Alumni Involvement.** OCS services and programs represent practical ways to maintain ties with former students and to engage them in the life of the University, but space and staffing constraints limit the potential for expansion in these areas as well.

(iii) **Faculty Involvement.** OCS works with faculty members to create programs based on course content and majors. Engagement of faculty as mentors to students seeking a first job should be encouraged. We can do more in this area.

(iv) **Funding/Corporate Support.** OCS has been successful in securing corporate support for its programs and services. But the Office’s efforts have been limited to avoid competing with potential contributions to the University’s general fund and school-based development efforts.

**Alumni Relations.** Challenges in this area include creating a culture of engagement and motivation for giving back to the University and fostering an NYU identity that complements school and program affiliations.

Recommendations

**Career Development.**

- Examine possibilities for increasing, improving, and consolidating space for the Office of Career Services. To the extent that resources permit, such space should be sufficiently sized, configured, and located to enable students more conveniently and efficiently to take advantage of OCS services and programs in a manner appropriate for a first-rate research university. If an appropriate location cannot be found, explore ways to avoid confusion about multiple locations.

- Build on existing career-related programs to involve alumni more in the life of the university and its students.
• Facilitate and support career-related mentoring relationships between faculty and students.

• Consider ways to fully exploit OCS’s fundraising potential with corporate sponsors.

**Alumni Relations.**

• Maximize existing and create new linkages among the University’s Office of Development and Alumni Relations, the Division of Student Affairs, and Admissions and Financial Aid to reinforce and facilitate relations with students from admission to their status as alumni.

• Develop and strengthen mentoring programs that use graduates and other professionals in and beyond New York City.

• Provide incentives for students to establish chapters of professional organizations (e.g., the American Management Association), and tap the resources of advanced-standing students (juniors, seniors, and graduate students) to establish and strengthen mentoring efforts.

• Encourage faculty to develop advisory councils in appropriate fields to tap the experience of alumni professionals.

• Consider the practicality of involving local professional communities and alumni in service learning projects.

3. **RESIDENTIAL LIFE**

**Overview**

New York University’s vision for undergraduate residential life is a living and learning environment that nurtures social, intellectual and personal growth (see Appendix UU). Because a pivotal part of this experience is a student’s residence, NYU must assist students in finding a comfortable home that allows them to connect to the University and challenges them to meet their academic and personal aspirations.

While the literature shows that “residence halls with the strongest impacts on cognitive development and persistence are typically the result of *purposeful, programmatic* efforts to integrate students’ intellectual and social lives during college” (Terenzini and Pascarella 1994, p. 32), a successful effort must also take into account structural factors and, in particular, the changing developmental needs of each undergraduate class. While first year college students often are adjusting to living on their own, away from family and friends, second year students often struggle with personal development—making decisions about educational majors, careers, personal identities, and life goals (Perry 1999). Second year students also face the reality that most support systems available to them when they were freshmen (orientation, introductory classes, special advising and tutoring, etc.) are no longer available, or no longer appropriate.
They may feel that, because they are no longer freshmen, they should know how to handle situations themselves. Third and fourth year college students face the prospect of life after college and begin to focus on exploring professional interests as well as employment or graduate school opportunities.

Programmatic efforts tailored to these changing developmental needs would include strong faculty presence and participation, resident assistants, peer education, advising and mentoring, community space for gatherings, and thematic learning environments in clustered housing designated by class or other means. Accordingly, this section is concerned with two critical components for creating living/learning communities: The housing selection process and educational programs in residence halls. Three recent initiatives that are targeted for expansion (a Faculty Fellow-in-Residence Program, a College Learning Center within Weinstein Hall, and an improved Resident Assistant Training Program) are described below under “Educational Programs in the Residence Halls.”

A) Housing Selection

Current State

In the last decade, the number of NYU undergraduates in residential housing has more than doubled, from 4,336 to 10,634, in fall 2002. Excluding adult students and students studying abroad, NYU housed approximately 68% of full-time undergraduates, including approximately 86% of its freshmen, averaged over the fall 2002 and spring 2003 terms. A more complete breakdown of the percentages of students in NYU housing by semester is given in Table 5.26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># Housed</td>
<td># Enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>3,709</td>
<td>4,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
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<td>4,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>2,110</td>
<td>3,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>1,475</td>
<td>3,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>10,634</td>
<td>15,735</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of Registrar

NYU houses students in 27 residence halls, of which 14 are owned and 13 are leased. The halls vary substantially in size (from 80 to 1,193 beds), in type of room layout (from tradi

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26 The large difference in fall and spring enrollment numbers for each class is due primarily to two factors. First, advanced placement credit is registered during a student’s first semester, so many students who were freshmen in the fall became sophomores in the spring. Likewise, sophomores become juniors and juniors become seniors. Second, many more students participate in study abroad in the spring semester than in the fall. Study abroad students are not included in the table.
tional singles and doubles to apartments with multiple bedrooms and kitchens), amount and type of social space, and in proximity to the Washington Square campus. The halls span a large geographical area within Manhattan and may be divided into four main clusters, Washington Square, Union Square, Uptown, and Downtown. (See Appendix VV for a map of NYU’s undergraduate residence halls.) Six halls have central dining facilities, which help students make friends and establish a sense of community within a residence hall. Some buildings have limited amounts of social space. Because NYU’s housing stock contains a large percentage of apartment-style and remote location offerings, housing selection and programming present greater challenges than at many other institutions.

The current housing selection process has been in place since 1987, with a few changes partly in response to student concerns. New freshmen are guaranteed University housing until graduation provided they accept housing when offered by Admissions, meet all application and payment deadlines, and never have their housing cancelled, except for approved study abroad or medical leave. Subsequently, as returning residents, undergraduate students who meet procedural requirements, are guaranteed housing up to a total of four years. Incoming freshmen are asked to state a preference for living in a traditional-style hall, which typically has single or double rooms with private baths and no cooking facilities, or an apartment-style hall. The traditional halls (Weinstein, Goddard, Hayden, Brittany, and Rubin) are located in the immediate vicinity of the Washington Square campus, while the apartment-style halls (Alumni, Carlyle, Coral Towers, Palladium, Third North, Thirteenth Street, and University Hall) are located farther away, in the area of Union Square. In addition, all incoming freshmen may request low-cost accommodations on their housing applications. In fall 2003, 369 out of 3,642 freshmen in NYU housing requested and received low-cost housing.

Challenges

**Freshman Clustering.** Freshmen are not required to live in NYU housing, but nearly 90% choose to do so. To create a common and shared experience for all first year students, following the example set elsewhere (Harvard, Emory, USC), NYU has begun to cluster them more than it did in previous years. We believe that such clustering is likely to be most effective if it is concentrated in a small number of residence halls that are close to one another and to Washington Square. For fall 2003, 69% of freshmen who are in NYU housing live in the five traditional residences near Washington Square. These residences, on average, consist of 93% freshman and 7% sophomores, juniors, or seniors. Of the 31% of freshmen who do not live in the five traditional residences, the vast majority live in Third North, Palladium, or University Hall, where they participate in the same First Year Residential Experience programs offered in the traditional halls (see map of undergraduate residence hall locations, Appendix VV). Beginning in fall 2004, nearly all freshmen will live together in all first year residences with strong programming and support services to help them make successful transitions to the University and achieve high personal and academic goals.

**Point/Lottery System.** After their first year, students select housing through a lottery that is based on seniority. Students receive one point for the first and each consecutive semester they are in NYU housing. Students with more points are given greater preference in their choice
of residence halls. (See Appendix WW for a detailed description of the lottery process.)\textsuperscript{27} Under this seniority system, second year students have fewer seniority points than juniors, and seniors and tend to be placed in one of the less popular halls located farther from Washington Square. Students are first assigned to a residence hall and select available rooms from that residence hall at a later time. A more transparent process to permit students to select rooms as well as a residence hall from the pool of rooms available at the time of selection would improve the process.

**Sophomore Housing Needs.** According to research literature, second year students often grapple with the challenges of identity formation. Pressures from such challenges have been linked to the “sophomore slump” (Arnstein, 1984), a condition “characterized by apathy and lack of interest or a sense of meaningless unattached to a specific cause” (Grayson, 1989, p. 12). As a result, a lottery system that tends to disadvantage second year students may be inadvisable. To address sophomore needs, NYU might consider clustering second year students relatively near Washington Square, for example at Union Square, where the University has developed a significant residential presence, or might consider developing programs in the residence halls for sophomores that can “mitigate frustration in the bridge between the first year and formal entry into a major” (Gardner, 2000). According to Gardner, such programs should be designed to highlight values clarification and purpose, development of critical skills, and exploration of career goals and interests; in addition, faculty members could provide information about their programs.

The notion of sophomore clustering received mixed feedback from resident assistants and Inter-Residence Hall Council members. Some noted that “sophomore clustering would be a welcome change” and that sophomores “have unique needs.” “Bringing them closer to the University and a more vibrant part of the city (Union Square) would be one step in the right direction toward heading-off these unfortunate developments in the future. [In addition,] more clustering translates into better training for staff members, who can focus on the needs of their demographic.” On the other hand, one student said that “[a]lthough the points raised (sophomores going through anxiety about their future, feeling their safety net has been stripped away) are completely valid and need to be evaluated, there is a lot to learn…when various upperclassmen live together… Also, designating a certain area for sophomores would reduce incentives for upperclassmen to return to NYU housing and instead seek renting an apartment off-campus.”

**Upperclass Students.** Upperclass students may prefer buildings that are not on Washington Square. Based on the returns of a survey of 233 upperclassmen at NYU, representing a 15\% response rate of the total number of surveys that were distributed, Stern students found that, on average, apartment-style buildings as opposed to traditional-style residence halls were rated by upperclass students as being highly desirable (Stern Management Consulting Project 2002). In addition, cleanliness, services (e.g., high speed internet access), privacy, and less stringent guest policies were cited as the most preferred building attributes by upperclassmen. The large number of empty beds may reflect the lack of such amenities in the residence halls for

\textsuperscript{27} A special housing option allows students to request to be in a fraternity or sorority (which are part of the residence hall system). The 17 residential fraternities and sororities at NYU occupy designated floors in particular residence halls. There are 174 beds reserved for fraternities and sororities.
upperclass students. Of 12,217 beds, 574 were empty during the fall 2002 semester and 1,295 were empty during the spring 2003 semester. While many of these empty beds (406 in the fall, 661 in the spring) are due to students leaving for NYU’s study abroad programs, other reasons for the remaining empty beds (e.g., insufficient financial aid, procedures for choosing low-cost living arrangements) should be explored. With respect to low-cost housing arrangements, returning upperclass students cannot make specific room choices as part of the housing application process—they can select only by building and then hope for the best depending on their position in the room selection lottery. The uncertainty in this system might mask the number of students who want or need to make such accommodations.

Transfer Student Housing Needs. As noted earlier, transfer students often encounter difficulties in making the transition to a new college environment. New transfer students at NYU are not included in the housing selection lottery, but rather are assigned to available spaces after the lottery for returning students has been completed and new freshmen have been assigned. Spaces for new transfers tend to be scattered and in apartment-style buildings occupied mostly by upperclass students. Returning transfers are given the same priority in the lottery as rising sophomores. With relatively low lottery priority, transfers often are assigned to buildings they perceive as less desirable. These factors make it more difficult for transfer students to feel a sense of community and integration with the life of the University.

Blocking Groups. In addition to disadvantaging second year students, the current housing selection system has another drawback. It does not allow students to apply for housing as a blocking group, a group larger than can be accommodated by a single suite. Such self-determined groups can help students build community. By the same token, care must be taken to avoid creating exclusive cliques that would undermine a broader sense of community within a residence hall. Also, any effort to create blocking groups should consider its impact on the housing lottery selection process. Recent feedback on blocking groups from students was generally positive. One set of students went so far as to say, “The blocking group idea is a gem.”

Uniform Pricing. Room costs differ among residence halls as a function of room and residence hall amenities. A pricing policy that charges a different amount for each residence hall is not consistent with the notion of housing choice equality as it creates a barrier to choice for students with lesser financial means. It also is inconsistent with a lottery system that randomly assigns sophomores, juniors, and seniors to housing within seniority levels after special requests for low cost housing are processed. Finally, such a policy is inconsistent with the way financial aid is established at NYU, in which packages are determined before students are assigned to housing, do not reflect the variation that exists in the price of residential halls, and are not changed once the actual cost of an assigned room is known. Yet uniform pricing exists at a number of other large research universities that also utilize a lottery system for room assignments (e.g., Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Rochester, and Yale). Feedback from students on this issue was mixed, from “uniform pricing is not appropriate” to “definitely a good idea, given the number of complaints I [as a resident assistant] have heard this year.”

Social and Programming Space. Appropriate social and programming space is an important element in creating an environment that fosters a sense of community and enhances the life of the mind in the residence halls. Limitations in the amount, availability, or configuration
of such space in some buildings inhibits the ability to provide programs to support these goals. In a recent survey of NYU resident students by the NYU Inter-Residence Hall Council, only 35% of respondents said they felt the residence halls had a sufficient amount of community space. In a separate question, 71% of survey respondents felt that social life and the residential experience at NYU would be strengthened if the residence halls had a greater amount of community space. (See Appendix XX for results from the Inter-Residence Hall Council Survey.)

**Recommendations**

- **Freshmen Clustering.** Cluster all freshmen in one of the six residence halls closest to Washington Square (Weinstein, Brittany, Goddard, Hayden, Rubin, and Third North).

- **Point/Lottery Process.** As a departure from the current system of selecting rooms and halls, inform students at the time they make their selections about which rooms and halls have been selected by those preceding them in the lottery. In this way, blocking mates can view the remaining spaces available and make informed choices. All proposed changes to the point/lottery system should reflect student input in order to help build a consensus in support of such changes.

- **Sophomore Needs.** To help sophomores establish identity and develop purpose, NYU should create programmatic opportunities for sophomores that encompass topics such as health and wellness, service learning, declaring a major, and career goals and aspirations. Such programming may be more effective if second year students are clustered in residence halls in an area currently known to be desirable (e.g., Union Square), or in an area made desirable through pricing or other means (e.g., Downtown). Alternatively, as some have suggested, such programmatic opportunities can be established without clustering second year students in residence halls in particular areas. We recommend that a committee explore the benefits and shortcomings of these two alternative ways (with or without sophomore clustering) for introducing programmatic opportunities for sophomores. The process for considering changes to the housing options for sophomores should incorporate student views.

- **Upperclass Student Needs.** Create a committee to identify the factors that contribute to so many empty beds in the residence halls and to propose policy changes that would adjust for such factors (e.g., pricing, location, services and other amenities, lottery system, blocking group capability, low-cost living arrangement selection process, and programming).

- **Transfer Student Needs.** Consider housing and programming options similar to those proposed for sophomores. Potential changes should be evaluated for their impact on the lottery selection process and should include input from students.

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28We understand that the Department of Housing is currently developing an on-line process expected to be available in the spring of 2004 that would maintain the point priority system and enable groups of students to select rooms, at a prescribed time, from the entire pool of upperclass residence halls.
• **Blocking Groups.** Revise housing selection to accommodate blocking groups, while taking account of the impact of blocks on overall residence hall community and the housing selection lottery process.

• **Uniform Pricing.** Study the benefits and shortcomings of offering the same price to each student, including freshmen, for the same room configuration (single, double, etc.) regardless of the location, square footage of space, or amenities offered. The study should include student views. If a uniform pricing policy is adopted, consideration should be given to changing the financial aid policy so that the amount of financial aid reflects the cost of an assigned room.

• **Social and Programming Space.** Review the availability of social and programming spaces in the residence halls to examine how they can be expanded, reconfigured or otherwise changed to better promote a sense of community and programs that improve intellectual life in the residence halls.

**B) Educational Programs in the Residence Halls**

**Current State and Challenges**

**Faculty Fellow-in-Residence Programs.** The position of Faculty Fellow-in-Residence is part of a University effort to create close-knit “learning communities” for NYU students within the residence halls. Faculty Fellows currently live in three residence halls—Palladium, Third Avenue North, and University Hall. They work closely with residence hall staff to design and implement a range of programs that offer students opportunities to interact with faculty members and with one another. The program offers students some of the benefits of small college life within a large University. (See Appendix YY for a report on Faculty Fellow activities.)

Faculty Fellows design activities that align with their academic interests yet appeal to a range of students. These activities are organized around themes such as literature, language and culture, the arts, science and technology, community service, the professions, the first year experience, or other similar possibilities. Classes may be taught in the residence hall by Faculty Fellows-in-Residence and by faculty members they invite. When appropriate, programs and activities are designed to draw heavily upon the many resources in New York City. Because these are live-in positions, they provide sustained opportunities for informal interaction with students. Faculty involvement in the residence halls has been supported through expanded academically-related roles for Community Development Educators and Resident Assistants in each building and the creation of a new position of Coordinator of Academic Initiatives.

**Faculty Affiliates.** The position of Faculty Affiliate is an integral part of the University’s Living/Learning programs (described below), which currently are structured around six floor-based themes in Goddard Hall. These programs combine formal teaching, informal learning, creative activities, and personal support to create an enhanced undergraduate experience. Although Faculty Affiliates do not live in the residence hall, their responsibilities are similar to those for Faculty Fellows-in-Residence. Faculty Affiliates are expected to offer monthly theme-related programs (e.g. excursions within New York City, informal gatherings,
discussion groups, shared meals around a particular topic); be involved with and lend support for other planned activities (e.g. seminars, workshops, film series, sporting events, study breaks, cultural opportunities, etc.) that foster student-faculty relations and advance the floor theme; establish relationships with floor residents by being a resource for students and residence hall staff; encourage faculty colleagues or other appropriate individuals to participate in the activities of the residence hall; and meet regularly with residence hall management and support staff. Because Goddard Explorations is a new program, the challenge has been to establish a solid organizational and programmatic foundation. The success of the program and its expansion to other residence halls will depend on the ability to attract and retain high quality Faculty Affiliates. The Department of Residential Education has reported that as of November 2003, approximately 15 faculty members had expressed interest in pursuing Faculty Affiliate positions for the 2004-2005 academic year.

The College Learning Center. The College Learning Center was created by and is staffed and funded by the College of Arts and Science (CAS) to provide learning assistance to students from all NYU schools who are taking CAS courses. To provide maximum access, the Center is in Weinstein Residence Hall and is open well into the evening and on weekends. It offers individual and group learning sessions in a wide array of subjects, academic skills workshops, and a small academic resource library. There are also two multimedia computer labs (one of which is devoted to language learning), managed by NYU’s Information Technology Services (ITS). Since the Center’s inception, usage has grown dramatically; the number of visits went from 3,150 in 2001–2002 to 9,127 in 2002–2003. (See Appendix ZZ for additional College Learning Center usage data.)

One reason for this growth in usage is the Weinstein Learning Initiative, a program piloted in AY 2001–2002, which is designed to help bridge the gap between the classroom and the residence hall. To that end, Resident Assistants and Learning Assistants work in teams to offer tutoring services and referrals, educational programs, outreach to faculty, alumni and administrators, and support to residents.

Resident Assistants. Resident Assistants (RAs) are responsible for students on a single floor or group of floors. They (1) assist students in their academic development, (2) counsel students as needed, (3) connect students with other students for mutual benefit, (4) bring faculty and students together, (5) facilitate appropriate communal norms, (6) capitalize on the variety of community members, and (7) identify and develop leaders within their communities. The total number of RAs for AY 2003–2004 in all residence halls is 289, consisting of juniors, seniors, and graduate students, a RA-to-student ratio of 1:42 for fall 2003. (Overall, the ratio has been 1:46 system-wide in recent years.) Although this ratio varies by building, the RA’s role in general is a demanding one, complicated recently by having to accommodate changes in their responsibilities and training.

The Division of Student Affairs instituted a pilot program in Weinstein Hall during AY 2002–2003 to increase the number of RAs and reduce the RA/student ratio in that building to 1:18. The program is currently being evaluated in comparison with national norms and results will be available in spring 2004.
Another process, designed to improve the quality of RAs, assigns all rising juniors, seniors, and graduate students interested in becoming RAs to six workshop classes run by members of the Office of Housing and Residence Life. Students are selected as RAs based on their performance in these workshops as well as other qualifications.

Training for RAs has been improved as well. Training during the first days of the fall semester focuses on such topics as alcohol and other drugs, psychological issues, sexual assault, eating disorders, and conflict resolution. Those assigned to first year students have additional training on transition issues, the many differences between college and high school, strategies for community building, leadership development, and program development. The Office of Student Life offers an activities fair for all RAs; the Office of the Provost offers ongoing training through its newly established Advisement Institute. The Institute provides a series of core workshops throughout the year focused on the interplay among the academic, social and residential dimensions of the college experience.

Living/Learning Programs. A living/learning program, called Explorations at Goddard Hall, has been created in one of the residence halls, Goddard Hall, as a pilot program for the 2003-2004 academic year. The program, designed to complement and expand upon classroom learning, consists of six themes, one per floor, that capitalize on NYU’s NYC location. The themes are: All the World’s a Stage (the world of dance, theater and film from on stage, behind the scenes and as an audience member); Concrete Images (take a bite out of the Big Apple by experiencing it through your artistic eye—students and faculty will take trips to museums, walk down historic streets and learn about New York’s artistic richness); F.A.M.E. (Featuring All Musical Endeavors: The Bluenote to CBGB’s to Carnegie Hall); Gotham (from Harlem to Wall Street, explore the many myths and legends of Manhattan’s neighborhoods); Inspirations (New York inspired Henry James and Langston Hughes. How will New York inspire you?); and Visionaries (learn from some of New York’s most prominent leaders, challenge yourself to discover your own leadership role). Two of the themes, All the World’s a Stage and Concrete Images, are linked with the expository writing requirement course, Writing the Essay, and students in these themes take the course in a residence hall seminar room. The residence hall has a community development educator to help with programming and each floor has a faculty affiliate with expertise in the subject matter of the floor to plan excursions and invite speakers with ties to the theme of the floor.

Recommendations

Review and Enhance Existing Initiatives:

- **Faculty Fellow-in-Residence Program.** Expand in stages, eventually to include all residence halls. Develop specific criteria for the selection of Fellows that are linked to role expectations. Facilitate collaboration among Faculty Fellows-in-Residence and other offices and institutes of the university.

- **Faculty Affiliates.** Conduct a first year review of Living/Learning programs including Faculty Affiliate involvement. Use this information to improve Goddard Explorations and to guide decisions on creating similar programs in other residence halls. Examine
the appropriateness and effectiveness of incentives for faculty involvement in these programs.

- **The College Learning Center.** Expand in stages, eventually to include centers in other residence halls. Tutorials offered by these learning centers should reach beyond CAS courses to incorporate offerings from NYU’s other undergraduate divisions.

- **Resident Assistant Program.** Examine RA roles and responsibilities as well as RA selection, RA to student ratios, and RA training, with a focus on the linkages between academic and residence hall life.

- **Living/Learning Program.** Expand in stages, to other freshman residence halls and also to upperclassmen who may or may not be clustered in residence halls.

**Explore and, Where Appropriate, Create New Initiatives:**

- **Peer Educator Training Programs.** Expand the use of peer educators in order to ameliorate the negative effects of high RA to student ratios in the residence halls.

- **Hall Governance Procedures.** Study the role of students in the governance of residence halls.

- **Non-resident Student Needs.** Identify the different sub-groups of students who do not live in NYU housing and study their different needs.

- **Virtual Communities via Technology.** Explore the use of technology to create virtual communities and support existing communities.

- **Maintenance and Operations.** Study the maintenance and operations of relevant physical conditions (e.g., cleanliness, heat, and overall maintenance) within residence halls to determine whether they are adequate.

**Assess Initiatives on an Ongoing Basis:**

- **Baseline Data on Outcome Variables.** The collection of baseline data against which comparisons may be drawn is critical for assessing the effectiveness of the above initiatives. Accordingly, the Office of the Provost is planning to collect and analyze data on the cognitive, affective, and behavioral variables known to be influenced by living/learning communities.

- **Baseline and Tracking Data on Current Programs.** To measure the quality and impact of the five initiatives, we propose to keep track of the following relevant information:
Faculty Fellow-in-Residence Program: The number of faculty fellows in residence halls, number and nature of programs, extent of student participation in programs, extent of student interaction with faculty fellows, and student satisfaction with the programs.

Learning Centers: The number and type of learning assistants, nature of courses supported, scheduling of sessions, level of student participation, nature of student participation: peak times, schools in which students are enrolled, and student satisfaction with program.

Resident Assistant Selection, Responsibilities, and Training: The frequency and nature of training workshops, the perceptions of current resident assistants as to their abilities and skills to carry out their responsibilities, the support resident assistants receive, how they interact with student residents (and their peers), and to what extent they are mentoring or developing productive relationships with student residents.

Peer Support Programs: The nature and number of specific programs developed by peer educators in residence halls, the nature of student participation and satisfaction with such programs, the perceptions of current peer educators regarding their roles and responsibilities, and the impact of the peer support program on the frequency and severity of mental health and substance abuse problems.

Living/Learning Program. The number and type of activities, student satisfaction with the program, impact on student learning, sense of community, and retention.

4. MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

Student mental health has always been important to NYU faculty and staff, but there is now a more deliberate effort to relate these issues directly to academic life at NYU. A faculty study group, along with mental health and crisis management specialists, reviewed the University’s philosophy, policy, and practice as they relate to mental health and student behavior. The work of this group was used as the basis for a University-wide advisory board initiated by the Vice President for Student Affairs in fall 2003 term to address these issues. (See Appendix AAA for list of members.)

Mental Health

Overview

The University’s ability to continue providing high-quality mental health services has been tested as entering students often are more affected by and aware of their mental health concerns than in earlier years (Young 2003). On the other hand, new research, particularly on medication therapy, has enabled young people to function better with mental health concerns than previously. Three distinct issues emerge in this area: (1) students are more likely to arrive with emotional vulnerabilities of which the University should be aware; 29 (2) the NYU/NYC

29 Early in the fall 2003 semester three undergraduate students at NYU died, one by suicide, one accidentally as the result of drug use, and a third, the cause of whose death is still under investigation. While it is impossible to know
environment has the potential to affect student mental health significantly; and (3) there are limited resources to address the growing mental health needs of students.

**Current State**

The University Counseling Service (UCS) is the University’s primary resource for mental health services. UCS provides short-term individual and group counseling, referrals for longer-term care, and a wide-range of ancillary support services. UCS has responded to the greater need for mental health services by increasing counseling staff (tripled over the last decade), improving emergency after-hours response, and creating prevention and outreach programs to educate the NYU community about how to identify at-risk students and refer them for help. UCS works closely with the University Health Center’s Office of Drug and Alcohol Education, Center for Health Promotion, and Office of Sexual Assault Prevention, Education and Support. These services are described further below.

Many students who use campus counseling services exhibit typical problems associated with adolescence and college adjustment, e.g., uncertain self-identity, homesickness, roommate disputes, romantic relationships, test anxiety, stress, etc. An increasing number of students arrive on campus who already are taking prescribed medications or who have received counseling and expect their care to be continued. Some students enter college who in the past may have been considered psychologically unable to attend. Many of these students may lack adequate follow-up plans for treatment. In such cases, evaluation is available at the University Counseling Service for short-term treatment and, if necessary, referral to local mental health resources for longer-term care. UCS, in conjunction with the Admission Office and the College of Arts and Science dean’s office, will write to parents of all entering NYU students to advise them how they can help their children’s mental health adjustment to NYU.

The use of psychotropic medication has expanded greatly within the last five years, which would appear to reflect need for greater utilization of mental health services. The events of September 11, 2001, exacerbated these trends. UCS’s most recent data (AY 2002–2003) shows an increase over the previous year of almost 7% in total visits, an all-inclusive category counting individual appointments, group appointments, walk-ins and medication follow-ups. These are up 68% over 1997–1998 (see Appendix BBB). The table in Appendix CCC shows an increase (from AY 2001–2002 to AY 2002–2003) in both individual appointments (up 11%) and number of clients (up 6%). The client total now stands at 9.1% of NYU’s approximately 36,600 matriculated students (excluding the Medical School, which provides its own counseling service).

The table in Appendix DDD shows that women continue to greatly outnumber men as clients (a universal phenomenon at mental health clinics), undergraduate students seek treatment more often than graduate students, and off-campus users (non-resident students) outpace on-campus users (residence hall occupants), though by a smaller margin than five years ago.

the exact cause or causes of such events, it is a tragic moment for an institution when such events occur. National data show that NYU has had a relatively small number of suicides by students; the University has taken and will take vigorous steps to address the issue.
Self-report intake information from the UCS annual report shows that the mental health problems most frequently cited by students in 2002–2003 were anxiety (59% of students noted this concern) and stress (56%), depression (53%), self-esteem (34%), sleep problems (30%), loneliness or shyness (30%), romantic or marital problems (29%), procrastination (26%), eating or weight concerns (23%), academic performance (23%), and anger/hostility (19%). Notably, self-reported alcohol and drug problems were only 4% and 3% respectively. (See Appendix EEE.)

To learn more about students and their mental health needs, NYU decided in spring 2000 to begin participating (by surveying freshmen) in an annual survey, the National College Health Assessment (NCHA), conducted by the American College Health Association. The survey addresses a broad range of health, risk, and protective behaviors, consequences of behavior, and perceptions among students. The survey also assesses illness and effects of selected health conditions on academic performance. The NCHA survey results are the most comprehensive source of data in a national frame of reference, regarding NYU freshman students’ use of substances (alcohol, drugs, and tobacco), sexual activity, and mental health. Table 6 below shows the NCHA survey’s most complete results (spring 2003), comparing NYU freshman students to a national reference group of undergraduates and to the subset of freshmen within the national reference group on selected items related to mental health. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced the following mental health concerns one or more times during the last school year (between September 2002 and the administration of the survey in April 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health Issue</th>
<th>National Undergraduate Sample</th>
<th>National Freshmen Sample</th>
<th>NYU Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt things were hopeless</td>
<td>64 %</td>
<td>68 %</td>
<td>74 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do</td>
<td>95 %</td>
<td>95 %</td>
<td>97 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt academics suffered as a result of internet and/or electronic gaming activity</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td>17 %</td>
<td>22 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt academics suffered as a result of stress</td>
<td>32 %</td>
<td>34 %</td>
<td>41 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt exhausted (from other than physical activity)</td>
<td>93 %</td>
<td>93 %</td>
<td>95 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt very sad</td>
<td>82 %</td>
<td>85 %</td>
<td>90 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Tables 6-8 provide a general comparison between NCHA and NYU data. An exact comparison is not possible because the data were collected using different methodologies. NYU surveyed only first year students, and the national sample includes schools that randomly selected students, or surveyed students in randomly selected classrooms. NYU did not survey randomly and therefore is not included in the national sample.
Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function | 45 % | 49 % | 58 %
Seriously considered attempting suicide | 10 % | 13 % | 16 %
Attempted suicide | 1 % | 2 % | 2 %

Source: University Health Center

In some cases, NYU students reported experiencing these outcomes 11 or more times (the highest response for any choice on the survey) during the academic year. Percentages of respondents in the “11 or more” category were: felt hopeless (12%), felt overwhelmed (27%), felt exhausted (27%), felt very sad (16%), felt so depressed that it was difficult to function (18%), considered suicide (1%), attempted suicide (0.2%).

The NCHA data for NYU respondents revealed several noteworthy differences among and within groups, particularly with respect to gender. Women were more likely to report feeling hopeless, overwhelmed, exhausted, and very sad; students who described themselves as “unsure” about their sexual orientation were more likely to feel depressed or to have considered or attempted suicide.

**Intervention and Treatment.** Medication therapy, once a peripheral aspect of college mental health, has moved front and center. Prescriptions rose 39% last year and have tripled since 1997–1998, most notably for anti-anxiety medications (up 72%) and anti-psychotics (up 173%). UCS medicated approximately 750 students, about one in five who came to the clinic. An increase in prescriptions may require more health professionals trained in psychiatric assessment and psychopharmacotherapy. Securing permanent funding for an additional psychiatric position is a high budgetary priority for UCS (annual report, 2002–2003).

**Challenges**

**Gathering adequate data.** Given limited resources, the UCS must emphasize direct service to students and gathering data about NYU students, and their mental health is therefore given lower priority.

**Awareness and training for faculty and staff.** The entire University community must work together, particularly through early intervention strategies, to address the needs of students who have experienced serious emotional and drug-related problems and psychiatric illness. To do so, we need to identify opportunities and mechanisms to help faculty and staff to recognize student mental health problems wherever they arise and to respond appropriately.

**Inadequate numbers of staff and insufficient office space.** UCS cannot keep up with the growing demand for services without more counselors and offices. Providers from several disciplines, social work, psychiatric nursing and drug and alcohol counseling, in addition to psychologists and psychiatrists, can expand the scope of care to include other forms of treatment. More students, more students with significant mental health needs, and more students requiring medication fuel the need for expansion. But adding staff requires additional funds and more space, precious commodities at NYU.
**Encouraging students to use alternative mental health interventions.** Working with students in small groups is an efficient and effective use of mental health providers. But students tend not to volunteer for group therapy, so counselors must aggressively promote it. In time, group counseling may be a primary option for students and therefore needs to become a more acceptable modality of treatment (UCS Annual Report, 2002–2003). Health education and health promotion groups, such as stress reduction, also are desirable options. Peer education services are also available to students but at present are viewed as educational efforts and not intervention services.

**Improving health insurance coverage for students.** Coverage for many students who are included under their parents’ health insurance policies often is restricted to a narrow range of services, e.g., only for emergencies, or within a small network of providers who may be in distant or inconvenient locations. In many cases, such coverage also lacks adequate mental health benefits. Although NYU’s optional student health insurance plans provide mental health benefits, coverage for related medications can be inadequate for some students, particularly those with chronic illnesses who require ongoing treatment. The problem is exacerbated by the increased numbers of these students at NYU and the high cost of the necessary medications.

**Recommendations**

- **Improve data collection and assessment efforts.** Identify mechanisms and techniques to collect and analyze data and to understand factors that contribute to students’ mental health problems, including links to alcohol and drugs.

- **Improve training for staff and faculty.** Staff and faculty members should be an integral part of a campus-wide response to student mental health issues. Building on current programs, faculty members should be educated to recognize signs of trouble early and the availability of relevant resources, and how best to make use of such resources.

- **Address staff and office space.** Increase staff by drawing on existing resources such as the NYU’s Medical Center, School of Social Work, and School of Education to enhance existing options. Address the central UCS office space problem. In the short term, this might be better accomplished through additional satellite locations similar to dedicated space provided by the College of Arts and Science. Consider expanding this model to include student residential facilities.

- **Improve outreach to students to enhance their use of services.** Introduce more cooperative arrangements and targeted educational, prevention, and outreach efforts. Test proactive and early intervention strategies. All entering students and their parents should be urged to make appropriate local arrangements for mental health care. Expand the use of peer educators in residence halls to develop programs and reach students at risk more effectively.

- **Enhance health insurance coverage for students.** Consider ways to encourage parents and students more carefully to review the adequacy of their insurance policies in relation
to the need for health-related services, including those for mental health. Explore possibilities for increasing the medication benefit under NYU’s student health insurance plans. Any such consideration should be subject to the standard annual review process for changes to the student health insurance program, including overall cost implications.

**Drugs, Alcohol, and Other Risk Behaviors**

**Overview**

Illegal use and abuse of drugs and alcohol are problems on campuses across the country. NYU’s location in a large urban environment increases the potential for student exposure. Some reports and anecdotal evidence have been interpreted to suggest that NYU students engage in risky behavior involving alcohol and drugs, at least in binge drinking, at rates slightly higher than the reference group in a large national study. These circumstances are cause for concern and prompt us to ask what we are doing to address these issues and what we might do better. In the process, we examined:

**Basic Philosophy.** At times, the University appears inconsistent in its messages about drugs and alcohol. For example, the term “zero tolerance” has sometimes been used to characterize the University’s position. Yet harm reduction is the philosophy NYU’s professionals adhere to. Another issue is: should the University take a more parental approach towards students under the age of 21? What are the alternatives?

To address the need for greater clarity and consistency in interpreting the University’s alcohol policy, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs during the summer of 2003 formulated a statement describing the philosophy, guiding principles, expectations, roles, and strategies related to students’ use of alcohol (see Appendix FFF). The statement is based on a wellness model designed to promote a safe and healthy living and learning environment—one that reflects certain core values: honor, trust, integrity, civility, service, responsibility, and citizenship. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with basic principles of personal responsibility, respect for order, and consideration of the rights of others. Further, students are expected to take advantage of University resources to educate themselves and to make informed choices about issues related to drugs and alcohol. In addition to behavioral standards, the statement describes consequences for not adhering to policies and procedures. To underscore the University’s emphasis on the health, well-being, and safety of its students, the statement includes a medical amnesty provision under which an individual seeking medical assistance for another student during an alcohol or other drug-related emergency will not face NYU’s formal judicial process for the possession or use of alcohol or other drugs. The statement has been reviewed and endorsed by the President, Provost, deans, senior administration, and a cross-section of student representatives.

**Policies and Practices.** How should we seek to supervise and influence student behavior in these areas? What are our assumptions about students’ motivation and attitudes as contributing factors? How and when should we communicate with parents about their children’s behavior?
**Effects of Our Environment.** Most serious behavioral or health-related cases—those requiring intervention by municipal emergency medical services, for example—seem to result from drinking and perhaps illegal drug use outside of the residence halls. Stricter enforcement of rules in the residence halls without attempting to understand the individual causes of such behavior may only displace the problem. How should our policies and programs reflect these considerations?

**Current State**

**Alcohol**

**Consequences of Alcohol Abuse.** Alcohol abuse is related to death and injury, health problems, academic problems, property damage, and involvement with law enforcement. Nationwide, thousands of college students die each year from alcohol-related injuries. Alcohol also contributes to other risky behaviors, such as unprotected sex, and impaired judgment or recollection related to such activities. Nationwide, thousands more students are assaulted by other students who have been drinking or are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape. More than 150,000 students develop an alcohol-related health problem (Hingson 2000) and between 1.2% and 1.5% of students indicate that they tried to commit suicide within the past year due to drinking or drug use (DeJong and Wechsler 1998).

National studies of the effects of alcohol on college students have found a negative relationship between the amount and type of students’ drinking and their grade point average, class attendance, and ability to keep up with academic work. The National College Health Awareness (NCHA) survey data indicate that 5% of NYU freshmen reported academic problems because of alcohol use and 4% reported academic problems because of drug use.

Table 7 below compares NCHA survey results for NYU freshmen and national reference samples of freshmen and all undergraduate students related to the consequences of their drinking during the previous school year. NYU has NCHA survey data only for freshmen. This approach reflects the University’s decision to conduct a focused assessment on a segment of the

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31 Hingson 2000. Researchers at Boston University’s School of Public Health reviewed more than 230 studies on college drinking, 43 of which used experimental or quasi-experimental designs to study the effects of interventions to reduce college-age drinking and related problems.

32 DeJong and Wechsler 1998. Under the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act, institutions of higher education are required to review the effectiveness of their alcohol and drug prevention programs biannually. This guide offers a method for gathering and interpreting student survey data on alcohol-related problems based on the methodology of the College Alcohol Survey developed by the Harvard University School of Public Health; it can also be used as a complement to the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey developed by the Center for Alcohol and Drug Studies at Southern Illinois University. Wechsler et al. (2002) used data from college alcohol surveys conducted between 1993 and 2001 to compare underage students’ and older students’ drinking behaviors, access to alcohol, and exposure to prevention. Engs et al. (1996) surveyed 12,000 university students from every state to determine drinking patterns.

33 A national survey of nearly 37,000 students at 66 four year colleges and universities found that students with an A average consume a little more than three drinks per week, B students have almost five drinks per week, C students average more than six drinks per week, and students getting Ds and Fs consume nine drinks per week. Presley et al. (1996)
undergraduate student population considered to be a higher risk for substance-related problems, and also more likely to be amenable to interventions resulting from such research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consequences Attributable to the Use of Drinking Alcohol</th>
<th>National Undergraduate Sample</th>
<th>National Freshman Sample</th>
<th>NYU Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physically injured self</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>16 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injured another person</td>
<td>4 %</td>
<td>4 %</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got into a fight</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did something later regretted</td>
<td>31 %</td>
<td>31 %</td>
<td>32 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgot where you were or what you did</td>
<td>25 %</td>
<td>26 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had someone use force or the threat of force to have sex with you</td>
<td>2 %</td>
<td>2 %</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged in unprotected sex</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic performance affected by alcohol use</td>
<td>8 %</td>
<td>7 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: University Health Center

The NCHA survey also asked students in the three groups in the above table to indicate whether they either had a substance abuse problem within the last school year or were ever diagnosed with a substance abuse problem. The results to these two questions were: National Undergraduate Sample, 4% and 2% respectively; National Freshman Only Sample, 3% and 1%; and NYU Freshman Sample, 5% and 2%.

Alcohol use among college students also contributes to their involvement in property damage, dangerous and disorderly behavior, and involvement with law enforcement agencies (Wechsler et al. 2002; Hingson 2002). Some 15% of NYU freshmen respondents to the NCHA survey reported having injured themselves as a result of alcohol use. Although there are no statistical data on vandalism or property damage at NYU, a review of disciplinary reports indicates a frequent relationship between vandalism and alcohol use.

**Drinking Behavior.** Comparison of NYU students’ drinking behavior to other college students using the NCHA survey has so far provided a partial picture in that the focus has been on NYU freshman only. This information is useful, however, because first year students typically are at higher risk for alcohol and drug-related problems.

With respect to binge drinking (five drinks in one sitting within the last 2 weeks), considered by some researchers and alcohol educators as a particularly serious form of problematic drinking among college students, NYU freshmen respondents to the NCHA survey reported a similar rate of such behavior (40%) to that of the survey’s national reference groups—undergraduates (39%) and freshmen only (39%).
**Drugs.** While NYU freshmen who responded to the NCHA survey use other substances at a rate similar to other college students, they use marijuana more than other college students. Twenty-nine percent of NYU freshman respondents in the NCHA study reported using marijuana at least once in the previous 30 days compared with 19% of freshmen in the national NCHA sample. These data also indicated a degree of apparent misperception among students. Fifty-five percent of NYU freshman respondents reported never having smoked marijuana, yet only 6% said they believed that a “typical student” had never smoked marijuana. This suggests that there is a difference between actual usage and perception of usage or candor about one’s own use. The faculty study group will address these issues.

The NCHA survey asked respondents to indicate whether they had used various substances on one or more days within the last 30 days. Results are shown in Table 8 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance Used</th>
<th>National Undergraduate Sample</th>
<th>National Freshman Sample</th>
<th>NYU Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>69 %</td>
<td>62 %</td>
<td>68 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana (including pot, hash, hash oil)</td>
<td>17 %</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>27 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine (including rock, crack, freebase)</td>
<td>1 %</td>
<td>1 %</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines (including diet pills, speed, meth, crank)</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rohypnol, GHB, or Liquid Ecstasy</td>
<td>0.2 %</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Drugs</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>4 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: University Health Center

Further analysis of these data showed that residence hall students reported significantly higher use of cigarettes, marijuana, and especially alcohol than commuter students. Male respondents reported significantly higher use of alcohol, and marijuana; female students reported significantly higher use of amphetamines. White students reported a significantly higher use than other groups for cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana. And members of fraternities or sororities reported significantly higher rates of alcohol use than other students. NCHA data for NYU respondents also indicated a significant statistical relationship between drug use and mental health concerns, including feelings of helplessness, being overwhelmed or exhausted, sadness and depression.  

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34 American College Health Association—National College Health Assessment, Spring 2003. Additional analyses prepared by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.
**Services and Programs.** One of the UCS counselors serves as designated substance abuse coordinator and liaison to the Office of Drug and Alcohol Education, enabling UCS to provide substance abuse evaluation hours, participation in summer orientation programs, and training for resident assistants.

Other related services include the University Health Center’s Office of Drug and Alcohol Education (ODAE), the Center for Health Promotion (CHP), and the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention, Education, and Support (SAPES), which offer a comprehensive range of educational programs concerning substance abuse, health education, and sexual assault-related issues. These offices use a harm-reduction philosophy, which acknowledges that students should learn to weigh risks, explore options, and make healthy choices. All of these services are provided to students free of charge.

ODAE offers mandatory and voluntary one-on-one educational sessions, referrals, informal consultation for students’ parents, friends and families, interactive workshops and trainings, RA and peer educator training, informational and screening outreach events, a comprehensive website, access to videos, brochures, articles and hand-outs, and a resource library of books and materials. Additionally, ODAE has created specialized outreach and support for students in recovery and students who wish to socialize without the use of drugs or alcohol. CHP offers free and confidential one-on-one discussion sessions, referral, workshops, training, brochures and handouts, a menu of workshops on topics including healthy eating, safer sex, body image and contraception, and a resource room stocked with books and videos. Free safer sex supplies also are provided. SAPES provides services and programs that address issues related to sexual violence and intimate partner violence. These include crisis intervention, medical and legal advocacy, academic interventions, and information and referral. A SAPES advocate can be reached seven days a week through the SAPES 24-Hour On-Call Support Line.

**Assessment.** Ongoing assessment and evaluation efforts for all three offices include collection of baseline data, program and event evaluation data, office use and supply distribution, tracking of diagnoses, and focus groups.

**Challenges**

**Better identification and understanding of the problem.** The range of possible problem indicators for alcohol and drugs is large (e.g., illegal behavior; amount and type of drug use; binge drinking; rates of depression, stress, use of medication in counseling; failure to use condoms; violence; victimization, poor academic performance, etc.). As at other universities, a challenge has been to identify the most useful indicators of mental health and appropriate behavior.

**Develop programs that address a diversity of student populations and needs.** One of the biggest challenges in designing programming at NYU is to create a sufficiently broad menu of opportunities in an environment where the range of students’ interests is virtually limitless. Knowing as much as we can about our students, setting priorities for at-risk populations, and managing resources wisely are key requirements.
Incorporate new training programs. Education has been the primary mode of intervention used at NYU. Our challenge is to develop other methods of intervention.

Applying policies properly. Applying policies in a consistent and unambiguous manner across residence halls and schools has been a significant challenge.

Recommendations

- **Improve data collection and assessment efforts.** Expand data collection and analysis efforts (especially via annual the NCHA survey), and use NCHA and other data to help define problems.

  Improve assessment efforts related to (i) student behavior and (ii) programs and services intended to address risk behaviors. Include process and program evaluation and not merely student behavioral change measures. Collect qualitative information about students’ experiences with NYU offices. Integrate Clery Act, SAPES, and Public Safety Department statistics to provide a more comprehensive picture of sexual and relationship violence at NYU.

  Assess staffing patterns to assure efficiency and consistency with student use.

- **Improve educational and programming efforts to reduce drug and alcohol use and related risk behaviors.** Develop a campaign to educate students, faculty, staff, and parents about the hazards of risk behaviors (especially smoking and the use of Ecstasy, alcohol and marijuana). Publicize social norms that incorporate University policy. Increase student involvement, including late night programming for students, living/learning programs for sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and increase the number of peer educators in residence halls.

- **Improve training for staff.** Improve (and possibly mandate) training designed to inform staff in relevant offices (e.g., housing, academic advising, student affairs deans, global affairs, club advisers, etc.) about CHP, ODAE, and SAPES services and programs. Involve faculty and directors of undergraduate studies in addressing these issues.

  Encourage appropriate “bystander” behavior as it relates to community values and norms. Build the expectation that roommates and friends will intervene to help fellow students who appear to be in trouble.

- **Develop coherent and consistent policies.** Review campus-wide implementation policies for consistency with the University’s principles and applicable law. Investigate models from comparable universities.
V. ALUMNI RELATIONS

Overview

Alumni relations are among areas that merit special attention with respect to building and sustaining community and a sense of connection among current and former students and other members of the University’s family. While many of the University’s programs are more likely to be focused on campus-based efforts during undergraduate years, alumni relations extends the definition and boundaries of community and includes the University’s former students wherever they may be.

Increasingly the University views alumni status not as a discrete phase, but as part of a continuum that begins with the recruitment/admissions process and evolves throughout a student’s college career. In this context, improving the quality of undergraduate student life as described previously in this report also strengthens the foundation for alumni relations.

Current State

As noted previously, the Office for University Development and Alumni Relations (UDAR) coordinates a wide range of programs and activities to involve NYU alumni in University life. The Student Affairs section of this report highlights aspects of those programs most directly related to involvement between alumni and undergraduate students. These include recent UDAR initiatives such as regional receptions hosted by President Sexton for alumni, parents of current students, and newly accepted students and their parents, the Distinguished Visitors Program, Student Roundtables, and alumni mentoring programs. Other notable UDAR efforts include:

Alumni Engagement. (i) The NYU Alumni Association Board of Directors includes approximately 100 volunteer alumni both new and established; (ii) Regional programs for alumni, parents, and friends of NYU. These events serve to introduce President Sexton to the University’s extended community, allow him to reach out to alumni, and provide nexus for individual development calls by UDAR development staff, school development directors, and deans. In addition to first ever metropolitan “regional” events in the tri-state area (New York, Connecticut, New Jersey), these programs also included events in Albany, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Palm Beach, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., and other locations in California and Florida. (See Appendix GGG for a New York Times article on NYU’s new emphasis on alumni engagement.) The College of Dentistry, Stern School of Business, The Steinhardt School of Education, and the Wagner School of Public Service have added their own programs, including dinners with their deans, to several of the University receptions. (iii) Alumni tent at Grad Alley, an outdoor celebration in honor of graduating students, is held annually on the day before Commencement, to distribute NYU memorabilia and provide the benefits of alumni participation; (iv) All-University Alumni Weekend, involving over 1000 participants, includes special celebrations in honor of the reunion classes, and the annual NYU Alumni Association Awards Dinner, a gala dinner dance, lunches by deans, faculty panels, “coffee and conversation” with the President, and a program at the Institute of Fine Arts; (v) The Young Alumni Leadership Circle, NYU’s first donor group
created for recent graduates, brings together a network of young professionals who are committed to the mission and future of NYU. Participants of the Circle provide annual support to the Fund for NYU, and Trustees of the University acknowledge this support and help encourage greater giving by hosting receptions at their homes for Circle Patrons; and (vi) new graduates are able to maintain their NYU Home computer accounts, which provide direct access to VioletNet electronic alumni directory.

In addition to UDAR programs, the Office of Career Services provides a range of services to NYU alumni, including electronic job search, listserv and quarterly newsletter, a special career fair for alumni and graduate students during alumni reunion weekend, and specialized presentations at other times during the year, particularly in partnership with the Recent Alumni Network. The Office actively involves alumni in mentoring and job development initiatives.

Alumni Communication. The NYU Alumni Web site provides a convenient connection to the University’s 350,000 alumni worldwide. It includes news and information about benefits and services available to alumni, regional receptions, reunions, and other events, travel programs, class notes, e-mail capability, and a message board. The first issue of the bi-monthly Internet Newsletter e-mailed to over 52,000 alumni with over 50% registering “hits” (opening the e-mail to at least one page); a full-time Web administrator hired to support expanded use of the Web as part of a more effective outreach strategy, including segmenting marketing to alumni, including those (over 10,000) who reside outside of the United States who do not ordinarily receive a hard-copy of the NYU Alumni News. UDAR communication staff members are working with the editor of NYU Magazine, a new publication launched this fall, to identify potential alumni contributors and notable alumni to be profiled. A UDAR partnership with NYU Information Technology Services allows new graduates to maintain their NYU Home computer accounts, including direct access to the VioletNet alumni directory.

Facilities for Alumni. The University has arranged with the Princeton Club, a private club in midtown Manhattan, to open its membership to NYU alumni and to create a formal NYU presence there. This opportunity, which includes overnight accommodations and athletic facilities as well as reciprocal use of similar clubs around the world, responds to frequent requests from local and out-of-town alumni for a club benefit. Alumni also have access to the dining facilities at the NYU Torch Club and can rent its meeting rooms. Alumni memberships are available for Coles Sports Center, which includes the new Palladium facilities. Alumni also have the opportunity to become a “Friend of Bobst Library,” which enables them to use the Bobst Library facilities.

Fundraising. The University’s fundraising and alumni relations efforts are closely linked. The Office for University Development and Alumni Relations (UDAR) has recently created a series of new programs and strategies for engaging alumni and friends in the effort to increase the University’s financial resources. The centerpiece of NYU’s recent development efforts, “The Campaign for NYU”, is the University’s largest fundraising initiative to date and is focusing particularly on increasing annual giving and alumni participation. The Campaign will run through August of 2008. Components of the campaign include:
(i) **Major Gifts.** Major gifts are needed to build NYU’s endowment, as well as current restricted funds for faculty, financial aid, and NYU’s capital needs.

(ii) **Annual Funds.** The Fund for NYU has for the first time united the schools’ individual annual funds, aims to raise alumni participation, currently 12%, to levels consistent with those at NYU’s peer institutions, and especially to encourage annual gifts of $5000 or more.

(iii) **Advisory Boards.** In each school the dean and development director have established a council of distinguished alumni and friends who will help the school review long-range plans and identify individuals whose support is important to achieving the school’s goals.

(iv) **Alumni Receptions.** Trustees and other key alumni will be asked to network for NYU by hosting receptions in their homes, featuring a dean or faculty member, and inviting alumni and others whose participation in the NYU community we hope to increase.

(v) **Reunion.** All-University Alumni Weekend will highlight special celebrations in honor of the reunion classes and the annual NYU Alumni Association Awards Dinner.

(vi) **Regional Programs.** Regional receptions hosted by the President, deans, and faculty will reach out to the growing constituency of alumni and parents outside of New York; (vii) the Parents’ Program will be expanded to engage parents around the country in development projects.

(viii) **Planned Giving.** The University will seek to make alumni, parents, and friends more aware of the many options for planned giving and how these benefit both donors and the institution; and

(ix) **Senior Legacy.** The Presidents’ Challenge is a $25,000 matching pledge to encourage graduating seniors to make multi-year pledges to the University’s annual fund as part of a Senior Legacy (senior class gift) campaign. This program is being developed as a joint effort of UDAR, the Student Senators Council, and Student Affairs staff.

**Challenges**

**Alumni Engagement.** NYU has 350,000 alumni, a largely untapped resource. Efforts at sustained identification and cultivation of alumni (and parents) as potential donors are relatively new. Levels of NYU alumni participation and annual giving historically have been low. Many alumni attended the University as commuters, part-time, or as professional students, and therefore had less opportunity to develop connections to the institution. In addition, many of the University’s most attractive programs and services have been implemented relatively recently and must be brought to the attention of older alumni.

Challenges in this area include creating a culture of engagement and motivation for giving back to the University and fostering an NYU identity that complements school and program affiliations; creating class identities for students and alumni; developing mechanisms and opportunities for peer involvement, especially among recent graduates; and increasing
alumni participation in annual giving. A key goal is to encourage alumni to reconnect to the University by creating the infrastructure for engagement on a consistent and ongoing basis. Improving the quality of undergraduate education and fostering the notion of the University as a community that continues after graduation will develop a sense of identity and appreciation among alumni.

**Parents.** The University offers programs for parents of freshman and Commencement-related opportunities for parents of graduating students, but could do more for parents of sophomores and juniors. Strong attendance by parents at regional events is an indication of such potential.

**Information Sharing.** There could be greater coordination and flow of information between other University offices and UDAR to facilitate wider, more effective, and more personal outreach to students and alumni.

**Outreach.** While most NYU graduates live and work in greater New York, the University also has a significant constituency in other parts of the U.S. and abroad, and many alumni are forming local NYU networks.

**Recommendations**

- **Alumni Engagement.** Build on current efforts to involve alumni, parents and friends of the University by communicating a clear and consistent message about the University as an extended community. Include alumni through presentations and otherwise in residential education initiatives. Building on the recent President’s Challenge, cultivate partnerships with student affairs offices and individual students to promote giving by recent alumni, and work with Residence Life so that current students feel as though they are “alumni in training.” Consider the creation of an on-campus drop-in center to provide information and welcome alumni. Closely link the planned giving program with regional programs and with alumni efforts to engage reunion classes of 40 years or more.

- **Parents.** Expand efforts to involve parents more widely as members of the University community. Examples might include increasing freshman home community sendoffs, inviting parents of upperclass students to Parents’ Weekend, and broadening outreach to include parents of international students. Develop mechanisms to identify and celebrate alumni families in connection with, for example, admissions, orientation, and Parents Weekend activities.

- **Information Sharing.** Create mechanisms for the improved sharing of information that would allow UDAR to interact more widely and personally with students and parents as alumni families, e.g., identify as part of admissions process, orientation, commencement. Coordinate information about alumni involvement that occurs through other offices. Encourage schools and faculty, athletics, club and organization leaders, and others across campus to inform UDAR when alumni are involved with their programs, classes, and activities.
• **Outreach.** Expand regional alumni groups run by volunteers. Create opportunities for alumni who live in foreign countries to be involved with students as mentors or hosts, especially in NYU Study Abroad locations. Make greater use of technology (e-mail, Internet, etc.) to involve alumni, parents, and friends who may not be able to attend events and programs.
VI. CONCLUSION

This self-study charted at the outset the substantial progress that undergraduate education at New York University has made in recent years. But it also noted several indicators that suggest a need for ongoing assessment and improvement. To this end, the self-study examined the undergraduate experience at NYU under the three principal topics of enrollment and financial aid, academic affairs, and student affairs, with a final section on alumni affairs. Each section summarizes the current state, identifies challenges, and makes recommendations for action or further study.

The report has several over-arching themes. These include the drive for academic excellence at all levels of the university, the importance of integrating the academic experience with student life beyond the classroom, the need to establish an embracing and thriving community at the University, the advantages and challenges of a diverse student body, faculty and administration, and the special consequences for the entire enterprise of its location in New York City.

NYU’s immediate goal is to consolidate its recent gains and to reach a higher level of excellence. To achieve this, there must be continuing and candid evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and far-sighted planning for the future. As indicated throughout the report, NYU will also require significant levels of investment and development support, including expanded involvement of the trustees. Above all, the University collectively must be able to make wise judgments on difficult and complex issues, and it must carefully set priorities. We hope that this self-study will contribute to the achievement of these objectives.
### INDEX TO MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THE SELF-STUDY

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<td>14. Assessment of Student Learning</td>
<td>Section III: 12</td>
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</tbody>
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### NYU WEBSITES

- **NYU General Site**: [http://www.nyu.edu/](http://www.nyu.edu/)
- **Academics**: [http://www.nyu.edu/academics.nyu](http://www.nyu.edu/academics.nyu)
- **Admissions**: [http://www.nyu.edu/admissions.nyu](http://www.nyu.edu/admissions.nyu)
- **Alumni Relations**: [http://www.nyu.edu/alumni/home/index.shtml](http://www.nyu.edu/alumni/home/index.shtml)
- **Center for Teaching Excellence**: [http://www.nyu.edu/cte/](http://www.nyu.edu/cte/)
- **General Education (MAP)**: [http://www.nyu.edu/cas/map/](http://www.nyu.edu/cas/map/)
- **Financial Aid**: [http://www.nyu.edu/financial.aid/](http://www.nyu.edu/financial.aid/)
- **Housing and Residence Education**: [http://www.nyu.edu/housing/](http://www.nyu.edu/housing/)
- **Information Technology Services**: [http://www.nyu.edu/its/](http://www.nyu.edu/its/)
- **Libraries**: [http://www.nyu.edu/library/](http://www.nyu.edu/library/)
- **Services for Students**: [http://www.nyu.edu/students.nyu](http://www.nyu.edu/students.nyu)
- **Study Abroad Programs**: [http://www.nyu.edu/studyabroad/](http://www.nyu.edu/studyabroad/)
- **Undergraduate Advisement**: [http://www.advisement.nyu.edu/](http://www.advisement.nyu.edu/)
- **University Counseling Service**: [http://www.nyu.edu/counseling/](http://www.nyu.edu/counseling/)
- **University Health Center**: [http://www.nyu.edu/nyuhc/](http://www.nyu.edu/nyuhc/)
WORKS CITED*


* This list does not include NYU documents provided in the Appendix.


