Washington & Jefferson College
Self-Study 2018–2019

Presented to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

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www.washjeff.edu
Contents

Executive Summary ................................................................................................................................. 1

Preface ............................................................................................................................................ 3

1. Endurance of Mission (Standard I) and Anticipation of the Future (Standard VI) ...................... 11

2. Institutional Leadership (Standard VII) and Ethical Practices (Standard II) ............................... 30

3. An Effective Curriculum for the Twenty-First-Century Student (Standards III and V) ............. 51

4. The Comprehensive Student Experience from Recruitment to Graduation and Beyond (Standard IV) ................................................................................................................................. 78

Conclusion ..................................................................................................................................... 99
Executive Summary

Prologue

A small liberal arts college with roots in the eighteenth century, Washington & Jefferson College has completed a self-study to assess our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges and to demonstrate that we comply with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education’s Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation. The multiyear process has been organized, well documented, inclusive, open, and productive. We have identified three priorities for coming years: improved communication among all parties at the College; enhanced diversity among faculty, staff, students, and the curriculum; and a more widely participatory planning and budgeting process.

Chapter 1 (Standards I, VI)

The mission of Washington & Jefferson College has remained unchanged over the centuries: it has sought to offer a useful liberal arts education since its founding. The mission statement has been refined to achieve its present iteration for the twenty-first century, and it shapes the strategic plan and goals that guide trustees, faculty, and staff. It also has directed the institution through curriculum changes, assessment processes, and cocurricular experiences for students.

Our financial resources enable us to accomplish our mission. Our endowment has increased, and our debt is manageable. We can pay our bills, and we have completed a successful comprehensive campaign. We continue to maintain our A− bond rating from Standard & Poor’s and have ample cash reserves to weather an economic storm. We have the faculty, staff, facilities, and resources to accomplish our mission, have built two new buildings since 2008, and continue to renovate buildings and spaces to meet the needs of faculty, staff, and students. Nevertheless, our discount rate has inched up as our net tuition revenue has ticked down.

Chapter 2 (Standards VII, II)

W&J has well-articulated governance structures on multiple levels. The institution is governed by a Board of Trustees, which is a member of the Association of Governing Boards, and follows its guidelines. The Washington & Jefferson College Bylaws outline the structure, roles, and responsibilities of the trustees, president, and faculty, among others. Regularly updated organizational charts reflect reporting relationships throughout the institution, and each committee has a written charge. Faculty have a vigorous governance structure, as do the students. There is, however, a need to enhance shared governance for faculty and empower decision-making in administrative units.

Ethics and integrity are central to our mission and operation, so the College has well-documented policies, procedures, and structures. The institution fosters a climate of respect and supports both diversity and diversity education. W&J is an equal-opportunity employer and
complies with all state and federal laws. The College has policies and procedures for the hiring, evaluation, promotion, and separation of faculty and systems of evaluation for both faculty and staff. College offices ensure that publicly disseminated information is accurate, and they comply with applicable reporting policies, regulations, and requirements.

Chapter 3 (Standards III, V)

W&J offers an undergraduate curriculum leading to a bachelor of arts degree and has recently added a very small postgraduate program offering two master’s degrees and one certificate. Since the last self-study, new academic programs have been added and undergraduate graduation requirements have been revised so that the College offers a coherent, systematic, and rigorous education relevant to the twenty-first-century student that includes the acquisition of important skills as well as opportunities for exploration. Courses of study are described in the College Catalog, and the liberal arts program is designed, delivered, and assessed by qualified faculty.

The implementation of the revised graduation requirements in 2016 dovetailed with a more encompassing and structured assessment process for both curriculum and programs that has already led us to start initiating changes to improve student learning.

Chapter 4 (Standard IV)

W&J admits and supports a student body whose interests, abilities, and goals match our mission as a liberal arts college. The institution is committed to student diversity, retention, persistence, timely degree completion, and success after graduation, offering support systems sustained by qualified professionals that enhance the learning environment. Units offering student support have documented assessment plans and submit annual reports to ensure their relevance and success. The College also makes available many opportunities both on and off campus for extracurricular enrichment and leadership and continues to connect with its graduates through alumni organizations, activities, communications, and events.

Conclusion

Through this self-study process, the community of Washington & Jefferson College has examined the school’s mission and achievements to comply with reaccreditation requirements and to ensure that W&J is doing two things successfully: holding true to its liberal arts mission and adapting to changing economic, social, and cultural conditions.

Note. In this report, citations to materials in the W&J Resource Room Wiki are given parenthetically, with the titles of documents italicized; underlined text indicates a hyperlink.
Preface

The College

Washington & Jefferson College (W&J) is a selective, private, residential liberal arts college with an enrollment of about 1400 students. It is located 28 miles south of Pittsburgh in Washington, Pennsylvania.

Our Roots

W&J has weathered the demands of change for nearly 240 years. It all started in the 1780s with three log-cabin schools on the frontier, which soon led to two academies for young men. Those academies transformed into two separate baccalaureate-granting institutions: Jefferson College (1802) and Washington College (1806). In 1865, the year that brought an end to the American Civil War, change came again as those two colleges merged to form a single men’s college, Washington & Jefferson College. Over a century later, in 1970, during another era of social upheaval, it became a coeducational institution.

Through such evolution, W&J has learned that survival depends on adaptation. We are an heirloom institution, with roots that have developed in the local soil for our conditions. We have prepared students for over two centuries to meet the challenges of their times by offering both a useful education and a support structure for their growth during a transformative moment in their lives. Historically, our students have come to us green, but they mature into life-long learners. They come to us local but leave us global. Students come to get a better job; they leave enriched by a challenging education.

The students change under our watch, but we also have the ability to change to meet the needs of our students in their time. In a period when liberal arts colleges have been transitioning into universities, we remain a small liberal arts college, but we are not the same liberal arts college we were in 1818 or 1918. Our curriculum has changed over time. Nor are we as local as we once were. We eagerly seek out students willing to transplant themselves to southwestern Pennsylvania for four years to learn from us and also invigorate us. Our sturdiness comes from an influx of new ideas. To thrive and remain relevant, a successful college must continually reshape itself for new generations, and W&J has been doing just that for many years.

Since Our Last Self-Study

The campus and the educational program at W&J have developed by leaps and bounds in the past several years. The John A. Swanson Science Center, embryonic when we submitted our last self-study report, is up and running. The Dieter-Porter Life Sciences Building was renovated in 2012. In 2017, we added a new facility, the James David Ross Family Recreation Center, and in 2018, we began renovations of the U. Grant Miller Library. The curriculum has been recently revised with a clearer general-education component and with skills development more tightly
integrated into majors. We have reshaped our academic calendar to provide an education more relevant to 2018. New majors, minors, and concentrations have been added, and we have brought back our very small graduate program, which existed from about 1880 to 1984, albeit not in the same areas nor in the same format. The assessment of general education and programs has been organized and already has led us to revise some of our programs so we can provide a better education. Grants and donations have greatly enhanced opportunities for W&J students to travel or study abroad. Our recently completed comprehensive campaign brought in over $115 million in cash and pledges, exceeding a goal of $100 million. Relations with the city of Washington have improved, and joint projects move forward, such as the Greater Washington Area Business Incubator in partnership with the Observer Publishing Company.

Nevertheless, we cannot rest on our laurels in these uncertain times. For nearly three years, many of us at W&J have been deeply involved in the self-study, thinking about where we need to go next. Several things are certain: the College must continue to strengthen its programs, attract students from a greater geographical region, and enhance the student experience so that the liberal arts education W&J offers remains meaningful, enriching, attractive, and useful in the twenty-first century. How to do that is the question, and we have some promising ideas. The announcement in May 2016 of the retirement of President Tori Haring-Smith slowed progress somewhat, but the arrival in August 2017 of a new president, Dr. John Knapp, has done much to inspire hope and confidence among faculty and staff alike that we can implement desirable changes.

Our Priorities

In conversation with the campus community and the president, the steering committee has identified three institutional priorities for the coming years:

1. to improve communication among all parties at the College;
2. to continue to enhance the diversity of faculty, staff, students, and curriculum;
3. to develop a more widely participatory planning and budgeting process.

Our Goals for the Self-Study

Our goals in this self-study have been many: to demonstrate that we meet the standards for reaccreditation and also to assess our strengths and weaknesses, identify our opportunities and our challenges, and develop plans to make our institution stronger, our students wiser, and our world better. To this end, we have utilized existing assessment data and provided opportunities for all members of the W&J College community to participate in the process. The recently initiated strategic-planning process will also make use of our findings so we can address our three stated institutional priorities. The new strategic plan, to be completed in October 2019, will continue W&J’s move forward for all people at the College—students, staff, administrators, faculty, and trustees.
An Overview of Our Process

The Steering Committee

The first step of our self-study was taken in January 2016, when President Haring-Smith appointed the steering committee’s two co-chairs followed by the selection of a steering committee. Members were chosen on the basis of expertise in specific areas or deep knowledge of the College.

The aim was for an even balance between faculty and staff, representation from many units of the College, and as much inclusion as possible (staff who subsequently left the College or retired are marked with an *):

1. Patricia Brletic, Professor of Chemistry (co-chair)
2. Lindsey Guinn, Director of Assessment & Institutional Research (co-chair)
3. Elizabeth Bennett, Professor of Psychology
4. Beth Creehan, Director of Enrollment Systems
5. T. Scott Frank, Professor of Communication Arts
6. Mark Harris, Professor of Chemistry
7. *Tyler Kowcheck, Director of Residence Life
8. Ralph Liberatore, Associate Professor of Economics/Business
9. Kimberly Paletta, Administrative Assistant in Advancement
10. Ketwana Schoos, Assistant Dean of Student Life for Inclusive Campus Engagement
11. Thomas Szejko, Interim Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
12. Linda Troost, Professor of English
13. Kelly Weixel, Associate Professor of Biology

The Preliminaries (2016)

The steering committee planned an open and participatory self-study process from the start. It began its work by surveying faculty, staff, students, and trustees in spring 2016, inviting their input on identifying eight issues that would be most important to the institution in the next eight years. The various constituents responded with issues that were most pertinent to their corner of the College.

Table 0.1 Respondents to the Spring 2016 Survey

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>% Responding</th>
<th>Top Concern</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustees</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trustees ranked enrollment as their top concern since the operating budget depends on tuition dollars and all their other concerns stem from that. Faculty and staff both listed compensation, which has been a subject under discussion for some years. Students, who see the College from a different vantage, listed housing, which reminds us of its importance in attracting a cohort every year.

The most widely mentioned issues overall included (in order of rank):

- age of facilities;¹
- compensation plans and salaries (faculty and staff);
- student housing;²
- finances (endowment and financial health of the institution);
- retention of students; and
- academic calendar.

These topics, save the final one, are related. We learned one valuable thing from this initial survey: we needed to make clear the importance of enrollment and everyone’s stake in it. Deferred maintenance, compensation, housing, finances, and the addition of new academic programs all depend on enrollment and retention. Therefore, the self-study had to determine what we provide our students, how we pay for it, and what students take away with them after graduation so we can, yet again, adapt to the times and continue to attract a strong student body.

The committee also crafted charges for each of the seven work groups that included a Middle States standard to be addressed and research questions that emerged from the survey and from the steering committee. It established general guidelines describing the goals of the self-study and the methodology to be used and recommended a format for the work-group reports. Forty-two faculty and staff accepted invitations to serve on work groups, and, once those were in place, the steering committee prepared Self-Study Design, assembled materials for the W&J Resource Room Wiki, and established a student consulting group.


Early in 2017, Self-Study Design was approved by Dr. Tito Guerrero on behalf of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and the work groups commenced their labors, with two members of the steering committee serving as liaisons to each.

In the spring term, the work groups met regularly and researched their questions along with W&J’s compliance with each Middle States standard. The steering committee assisted by organizing and administering surveys for faculty, staff, students, trustees, and alumni, drawing questions from those submitted by the work groups. The committee also arranged several open

¹ Includes deferred maintenance and accessibility.
² Includes room size, air conditioning, themed housing, co-ed housing, types of rooms available, furniture, etc.
meetings with faculty, staff, and students facilitated by two faculty members and met with the Board of Trustees and the Alumni Executive Council at Commencement and Homecoming.

In the fall, the co-chairs met with the newly arrived president, John C. Knapp, and discussed institutional priorities. Work groups, now supplied with survey results, continued their research. In December, work groups submitted written reports to the steering committee (Workgroup Reports).

**THE SELF-STUDY REPORT COMES TOGETHER (2018)**

In January 2018, a subset of the steering committee, drawing material from the work-group reports and the *W&J Resource Room Wiki*, began compiling the self-study report. The full committee carefully reviewed chapters as they were completed and offered suggestions for expansion and revision. They also reviewed the revised chapters.

In early March, the president, senior staff, and members of the work groups received a preliminary draft of the report. Comments could be made online through an anonymous survey or in person during one of the two “speed dating” sessions—where stations for each chapter were staffed by steering-committee members collecting responses from faculty and staff moving from station to station. The steering committee reviewed all comments, and a revised draft was offered in mid-April that incorporated most suggestions. Two more “speed dating” sessions followed, all of which were open to all faculty and staff.

Over the summer, a subset of the steering-committee continued revising chapters by incorporating comments from the second round of speed-dating sessions, the full committee, and volunteer reader-reviewers. In mid-August, the final draft was released to the College community and the chair of the visiting team. The Board of Trustees approved the completed self-study report at its October meeting. All in all, the process was highly participatory.

**The Members of Our Teams**

Fifty-seven faculty and staff (20% of the total) served on either the steering committee, a work group, or as a facilitator (we called them “champions”). Many more members of the College community—faculty, staff, students, trustees, and alumni—completed surveys, attended open meetings, and offered comments along the way. Response rates for the preliminary 2016 survey were very strong; response rates for the 2017 survey were also good (the results can be found in the *Middle States Survey Results*). We aimed for a participatory self-study process, and we succeeded.
TABLE 0.2 RESPONDENTS TO THE MIDDLE STATES SURVEY

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE WORK GROUPS

Forty-two work-group members were selected to represent a cross-section of faculty and staff. Current or recent service on relevant governance or advisory committees was considered when appointing faculty, and staff expertise was considered when selecting administrative members (staff who subsequently left the College or retired are marked with an *).

Standard I: Mission and Goals

1. Thomas Contreras (chair), Associate Professor of Biology
2. Melissa Cook, Associate Professor of Communication Arts
3. Amy Dille, Associate Director of Admission
4. *Lisa Hamilton, Director of Student Health & Counseling Services
5. Michele Hufnagel, Associate Vice President for Development & Alumni Relations
6. Benjamin Seltzer, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

1. Olga Solovieva (chair), Assistant Professor of Religion
2. Lori Galley, Associate Professor of Accounting
3. Sam Gidas, Associate Professor of Business
4. Kathleen McEvoy, Professor of English
5. Beth Miller, Copyright & Subscription Services Librarian
6. Charles Powell, Gift Planning Officer

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

1. Amanda Holland-Minkley (chair), Professor of Computing and Information Studies
2. Charles Hannon, Professor of Computing and Information Studies
3. *Elizabeth McClintock, Director of Academic Advising & Disability Support Services
4. Anu Shanmuganathan, Associate Professor of Biology
5. Mark Swift, Professor of Music
6. Alternate: Jeannette Kline, Professor of Mathematics
Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

1. Jason Kilgore (chair), Associate Professor of Biology
2. Rachael Bolden, Users Service Supervisor & Interlibrary Loan Manager
3. *Pete Curtis, Head Soccer Coach
4. Timothy Klitz, Professor of Psychology
5. Leslie Maxin, Registrar
6. *Tyler Tenney, Student Success Consultant & Magellan Project Coordinator
7. David Zlockie, Director of Community Standards & Support Services

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

1. Steven Malinak (chair), Associate Dean of Academic Affairs & Professor of Chemistry
2. Nichole Fifer, Assistant Professor of Political Science
3. Karin Maresh, Associate Professor of Communication Arts
4. Rebecca McDonald, Associate Professor of Psychology

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

1. *Marlene Grenell (chair), Controller
2. Leslie Dunn, Associate Professor of Economics
3. Stephen Kuhn, Professor of Accounting
4. Samantha Martin, Research & Collections Librarian
5. James Miller, Associate Vice President for Facilities & Planning
6. Michael Timko, Director for Administrative Computing

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

1. Carolyn Kyler (chair), Professor of English
2. Dana Devereux, W&J Trustee
3. Zheya Gai, Professor of Political Science
4. W. Thomas Mainwaring, Professor of History
5. Deborah Polvani, Assistant Professor of Chemistry
6. Jason Robison, Gift Planning Officer
7. *Kaley Wood, Human Resources Specialist

THE CHAMPIONS

Two “champions” were added midway through the process to foster a sense of ownership among the campus community within the context of the self-study open meetings. The champions led the meetings, guided discussion, and encouraged participation and openness.

1. Lori Galley, Associate Professor of Accounting
2. Todd Verdun, Associate Professor of English
THE STUDENT CONSULTING GROUP

Thirty-four W&J students provided their perspectives to the steering committee and the work groups. Potential members of the student consulting group were identified by soliciting faculty and staff for recommendations and by inviting students to self-identify. These students attended one of two orientation sessions that explained the role of the consulting group, and they were introduced to the work-group chairs. The composition of the group was as follows:

- Year: 67% upper-level students, 33% lower-level students
- Gender: 65% female, 35% male
- Race: 85% white, 15% diversity (African American, Asian, and international)

Outcomes from Our Process

Having completed our self-study, Washington & Jefferson College:

1. engaged in a participatory and transparent process that involved members of all areas of the Washington & Jefferson College community and caused them to reflect on the status of current institutional and strategic priorities;
2. demonstrated that Washington & Jefferson College meets the Middle States Standards for Accreditation and the Requirements of Affiliation with a focus on continuous improvement in the attainment of its vision, mission, and goals;
3. documented current assessment practices to identify challenges and opportunities and detailed how the College is using assessment data in decision-making processes;
4. provided a concise, comprehensive, and accurate analysis of Washington & Jefferson College to facilitate planning.
1. Endurance of Mission (Standard I) and Anticipation of the Future (Standard VI)

Standard I

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

Mission Statement

The mission of Washington & Jefferson College has remained unchanged over the centuries. The College has sought to offer a useful liberal arts education in one form or another since evolving from log-cabin schools on the hardscrabble frontier of a new nation.

Our mission statement, however, is of more recent origin, first appearing in the College Catalog of 1968–69. Between 1995 and 2008, the statement was refined to achieve its present iteration and now lays out for the twenty-first century the core liberal arts mission begun over two hundred years ago:

The College’s mission is to graduate people of uncommon integrity, competence, and maturity who are effective lifelong learners and responsible citizens, and who are prepared to contribute substantially to the world in which they live. To this end, the College promotes the development of skills, knowledge, personal qualities, and a worldview that characterize a well-educated person.

The statement is widely disseminated. It appears on our website and in our published documents: the College Catalog (p. 16), the Faculty Handbook (p. 1), the Employee Handbook (p. 8), and the Student Handbook (p. 36). The institution’s mission statement defines the College’s purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what W&J intends to accomplish.

Vision Statement

In 2007, the Board of Trustees approved an aspirational vision statement to complement the statement of mission.

Washington & Jefferson College will be recognized nationally as a highly selective, residential, student-centered liberal arts college with an exceptional record of producing future leaders, whose graduates are prepared for a breadth of life opportunities and professional success. Toward that end, W&J will assert its place as Pittsburgh’s premiere liberal arts institution, a role it has played for more than 230 years. More broadly, it will
also be known as a robust community of engaged and intellectually curious faculty, staff, and students.

2012 Strategic Goals

In 2012, the Board of Trustees approved seven goals in the Strategic Plan that directly connected to the mission and the vision statements. The president and senior staff (the five vice presidents) developed the plan in consultation with the board. Faculty and staff were then given opportunities to comment on a draft of the plan before its finalization and approval. In a separate action plan, planks and action items were laid out (Strategic Plan–Action Plan with Campaign Impacts). These goals have guided trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff in much of their planning and have served as the operating philosophy of the College.

Highlights of completed action items:

Goal 1. Establish W&J as leading the way in defining a liberal arts college for the 21st century.

Revised graduation requirements; added new courses of study to the curriculum; undertook library renovation and enhanced electronic resources; expanded guaranteed admission and reserved seats in professional schools; increased funding for Magellan Projects; created Washington Fellows program to “attract the best and brightest students and connect them.”

Goal 2. Promote and develop excellence in teaching, scholarship, and creative work.

Expanded endowed professorships; reinstated Office of Assessment & Institutional Research; centralized and expanded assessment of academic programs; started addressing inequities in faculty salaries.

Goal 3. Increase the diversity of the learning environment.

Established YES Prep Scholars and Charles West Scholars to support multicultural students; obtained Mellon grant to support First Year Seminar faculty by funding panels and discussion groups on pedagogy and multicultural awareness for all faculty; developed programming to promote multicultural awareness and support multicultural student organizations; added identity-based programs of study; increased number of multicultural faculty, staff, and students; expanded international recruitment.

Goal 4. Enhance the visibility of W&J locally, nationally, and internationally.

Built a stronger social-media and traditional-media presence; promoted W&J stories in the media; launched the “Be a President” messaging program; promoted student stories on website and campus LCDs; implemented public-lecture series by the Center for Energy Policy and Management; helped establish the Pennsylvania Consortium for the Liberal Arts.
Goal 5. Expand W&J’s reach beyond our traditional audiences to diversify our revenue sources and support the College’s core enterprise.

  Created, approved, and implemented graduate programs in professional writing and applied healthcare economics; developed international programming (English Language Institute).


  Contributed financially to the local community (Route 19 paving-project contribution, purchase of bulletproof vests for all thirty-one members of the Washington police force, etc.); established Good Neighbor Award for local matriculants; funded local sponsorships (Pony Baseball World Series, Main Street Farmer’s Market, Whiskey Rebellion Festival, etc.); established Washington Area Business Incubator (public/private partnership between College, Observer Publishing Company and city of Washington).


  Completed comprehensive campaign of $115 million; revised *Campus Master Plan*; expanded and upgraded athletic facilities; submitted successful grant applications; instituted or completed projects for energy efficiency and recycling; implemented one-click online giving.

The College started a new strategic-planning process in spring 2018, which will conclude in fall 2019, after the Middle States evaluation team has visited W&J. The president has declared that it will be deeply informed by the work done toward this self-study, be guided by best practices, and thoroughly involve all constituents of the College. The president is chairing the committee, and a faculty member is directing the process (*Strategic Plan 2019 Timeline and Committee*). The College has contracted with Art & Science Group to help us define our strengths and find our niche in the liberal arts world of today.

**How the Mission and Goals Inform Our Work**

W&J’s vision and strategic goals are linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills that mission. This work is effected through the current curriculum and attendant systems. The curriculum—with both required and elective courses—imparts the “skills, knowledge, personal qualities, and a worldview that characterize a well-educated person.” The supporting systems—academic departments and administrative units—align their own published missions and goals to that of the College so they all work toward the same end: the education and development of the student (see, for example, mission statements by Chemistry and the U. Grant Miller Library). Likewise, the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research, guiding the faculty and administration, ensures that all units link institutional assessment directly to the College mission and institutional student-learning outcomes.
Another important aim is connecting the academic departments of the College with the Office of Student Life to align institutional student-learning outcomes and their assessment to the cocurricular experiences available to the W&J student. For example, the offices of Academic Affairs and Student Life work together on the first-semester experiences of incoming students and on the Magellan Projects, which a faculty team advises and staff members facilitate. Many varsity and club teams have a faculty or staff advisor, as does each social fraternity and sorority. The W&J radio station has students, faculty, and staff working side by side. In this way, stakeholders achieve a more holistic understanding and appreciation for how the mission achieves its objectives.

The College engages in regular reflection to define more clearly the modern liberal arts institution known as Washington & Jefferson College. Over the past three years, academic programs updated their mission statements and refined their goals for majors; administrative units did the same. The director of the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research and an associate dean in the Office of Academic Affairs review any updates to mission and goals reported in the annual reports and provide feedback to ensure that all programs and units align their work with the larger mission of the College.

How Students Learn of our Mission

First-year students are introduced to the College and its mission through recruitment materials, the Gateway and Orientation programs (see p. 84), and the First Year Seminar program (see p. 54). A reading of the mission statement is central to the Matriculation ceremony to ensure that students begin to dedicate themselves to what W&J seeks to achieve. Mid-year transfer and international-exchange students are oriented to W&J and its mission through advising, the mid-year Orientation, and workshops. All these efforts, including four years of study, make the mission meaningful to students. The mission is discussed at Matriculation and again at Commencement, providing a bracketing experience for students. However, our student focus group for the self-study commented that more exposure to the mission was needed after the first year (Standard I Focus Group Summary–Students).

The W&J Liberal Arts Experience

Our recent curricular changes best exemplify W&J’s approach to the liberal arts. Our revised graduation requirements prepare students not only to take the next step in their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual lives but also “to contribute substantially to the world in which they live,” to quote our mission.

One thing that marks W&J as an important example of the liberal arts college for the twenty-first century is the ability of the faculty to design programs that both fit neatly with the College’s mission and also offer skills and experiences that prepare students to work in a modern economy. For example, our entrepreneurial-studies and professional-writing programs were specifically designed to complement a liberal arts curriculum. The interdisciplinary
communication arts program is, at its core, a liberal art with performance aspects that prepare students to make public presentations that engage and hold an audience for their duration. Our graduates go on to do worthy work in both the private and public sectors. They become doctors, lawyers, scientists, judges, teachers, business owners, and artists; they also live satisfying lives filled with family, friends, and volunteer work.

Next, intimate class sizes enable intellectual discussions among students and faculty that create the value that marks the liberal arts. Students are generally guaranteed small classes. For example, the First Year Seminars, capped in fall 2018 at eighteen students per section, connect the special knowledge and skills of the faculty with the needs of the first-semester college student. Several faculty members even design seminars outside their home disciplines to investigate an area of interest that can connect with incoming students. “Space and Place: Geography Matters” is taught by a member of the music department, and “Coffee: A Liberal Arts Look At” is taught by a mathematician. This sort of multidisciplinary intellectual exploration happens all across campus at W&J, and the First Year Seminars enable beginning college students to see how one can be energized by a life of the mind and the cross-pollination of disciplines. Small discussion-oriented courses allow for types of insights that might not occur in lecture courses of one hundred or more students.

Also, cocurricular experiences create opportunities for students to put into practice the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to develop further their “personal qualities” and to enhance the liberal arts experience. Participation in the Student Government Association, the Camerata Singers, the soccer team, the dance team, and many more—these experiences deepen personal connections students have already made in courses. Such person-to-person connections mark the W&J experience. Alumni speak of the life-long ties they forged with coaches and teammates as well as with faculty and staff. A W&J education is not just a collection of courses to be worked through; it is also the building of professional and social networks.

In conclusion, the W&J community and experience enriches the minds and lives of young people for their betterment and, ultimately, for the betterment of the nation. W&J creates “responsible citizens.”

Observations on Standard I

W&J meets Standard I and Requirements of Affiliation 7 and 10. The College has a clearly defined educational mission that informs all work and study at the College. This mission is well publicized and disseminated among students, and the College’s goals are appropriate for a small, residential liberal arts college. The mission statement and the goals are regularly assessed and adjusted to remain current. We work steadily to achieve College goals through the curriculum, extracurricular experiences, and the work of academic departments and administrative offices.
Strengths and Suggestions, Standard I

**Strengths**

- The College has a well-defined mission to which its vision and strategic goals are aligned.
- Academic programs and administrative units have mission statements and goals aligned with the College’s mission that guide their work.
- The faculty design academic programs that fit with the College’s liberal arts focus but also offer skills and experiences that prepare students to work in a modern economy.
- Cocurricular experiences enable students to deepen personal understanding and further educational opportunities in accordance with the mission.
- All mission statements and goals are assessed regularly.

**Suggestions**

- Make the College’s mission, student outcomes, and institutional goals more prominent on the College’s website for both internal and external stakeholders; show more examples of their modeling by the College community; show more examples of the relevance of the liberal arts.
- Offer more opportunities, not just Matriculation and Commencement, for “student-friendly” considerations of the mission, perhaps by encouraging faculty, staff, and students to discuss it, as appropriate, in the context of the work they are doing.

**Standard VI**

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

**Overall Finances**

Financial resources enable W&J to accomplish its mission, and over the years, they have been sufficient to secure the necessary faculty, staff, buildings, and other needs. The College’s total net assets (assets less liabilities owed to third parties) grew by $40.3M from 2014 to 2018. Most of the increase, $38.9M, was due to non-operating activities (contributions to permanent endowments, gifts restricted for specific operating or capital improvement purposes, and unrestricted gifts designated by the board for capital improvements, quasi-endowment, and general reserves). Operating activities accounted for the remaining $1.4M (see Table 1.1). Greater resources would allow enhancement of programs and activities, but we have determined how to do what we need to do with what we have.

Our present financial position is good. As a result of a recently completed comprehensive campaign, the endowment has grown, and the physical plant has expanded and improved. Our current debt has proven to be manageable, and the most recent credit rating for our bonds by
Standard & Poor’s was an A−. We have adequate cash reserves to weather short-term financial storms. However, maintaining this sound position in future years will be challenging.

**OPERATING REVENUES AND EXPENSES**

The following presents operations results for fiscal years 2014 through 2018, the time since our periodic-review report.

**TABLE 1.1 OPERATIONS, 2014 THROUGH 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTE Undergraduates</td>
<td>1302</td>
<td>1323</td>
<td>1310</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>1364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Tuition and Fees</td>
<td>$52,388,246</td>
<td>$55,465,944</td>
<td>$57,024,287</td>
<td>$61,775,911</td>
<td>$64,220,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Financial Aid</td>
<td>(23,312,011)</td>
<td>(25,933,472)</td>
<td>(28,524,964)</td>
<td>(33,070,775)</td>
<td>(35,175,938)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Tuition Revenue</td>
<td>29,076,235</td>
<td>29,532,472</td>
<td>28,499,323</td>
<td>28,705,136</td>
<td>29,044,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary Enterprises</td>
<td>14,745,141</td>
<td>15,761,621</td>
<td>15,963,978</td>
<td>17,281,457</td>
<td>17,320,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue from Other Sources</td>
<td>9,327,310</td>
<td>9,895,510</td>
<td>10,422,159</td>
<td>11,198,509</td>
<td>11,744,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Revenue</td>
<td>53,148,686</td>
<td>55,189,603</td>
<td>54,885,460</td>
<td>57,185,102</td>
<td>58,109,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Expenses</td>
<td>48,160,970</td>
<td>48,457,798</td>
<td>49,963,731</td>
<td>50,498,716</td>
<td>51,915,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation and Amortization</td>
<td>5,591,945</td>
<td>5,506,650</td>
<td>5,572,592</td>
<td>5,738,952</td>
<td>5,737,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>53,752,915</td>
<td>53,964,448</td>
<td>55,536,323</td>
<td>56,237,668</td>
<td>57,652,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Unrestricted Net Assets Due to Operations</td>
<td>$(604,229)</td>
<td>$1,225,155</td>
<td>$(650,863)</td>
<td>$947,434</td>
<td>$457,474</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like many small private colleges, W&J relies largely on tuition for income. During the past five years, the College experienced both challenges in maintaining optimal enrollment and significant pressure from the market on net tuition revenue. In 2014, financial-aid discounts represented 44.5% of gross tuition; by 2018, the discount rate was 54.8% of gross tuition for all full-time enrolled students. Over the period 2014–18, net tuition revenue remained relatively flat despite a modest increase in enrollment and an increase in gross tuition charges of 4% per year; first-year enrollments, however, are projected to remain at current levels for the next several years, not increase. Prospective students and families are approaching higher education like consumers shopping for an automobile: they want the lowest price. Such a mindset will continue to affect W&J’s ability to fund operations.

Offsetting this decline in net tuition revenue, however, was increased revenue from auxiliary enterprises (largely room and board charges). Additionally, the College drew more heavily on its endowment to fund current operations: during the five-year period, amounts transferred exceeded investment earnings by $3.7M. The College, however, considers this a short-term
phenomenon that will be alleviated by growth in the endowment as deferred gifts are received from the recently concluded comprehensive campaign.

In this context of flat revenues, the College made a point to control its costs. Cash expenses, excluding depreciation, grew at an annual rate of just under 1.3%. Total faculty and staff compensation, which represents about 54% of total cash expenses, grew at a rate of 1.6%. Supplies and services grew at a rate of less than 0.5%.

While revenues were insufficient to cover all operating expenses in two of the last five years, operating losses were driven by non-cash charges for depreciation and amortization, so no cash losses were incurred. Nevertheless, cash that could have been used to finance the replacement and improvement of existing physical facilities went to fund the retirement of debt. Should this practice become a pattern, it will curtail W&J’s prosperity over the long term unless the College can secure sufficient restricted and unrestricted gifts to fund such replacements and improvements.

In December 2017, the College completed an advance refunding on its 2010-issued bonds, which decreased the interest rate from 5.04% to 3.22% on the newly issued 2017 bonds. This will generate cash-flow savings of approximately $4.5M over the initial three years of the refinanced debt. The savings will be segregated each year from the College’s operating accounts and used for projects and uses recommended by the administration of the College and approved by the Board of Trustees.

**Reserves and Liquidity**

The College maintains ample liquid reserves to respond to short-term financial challenges. The amount available to cover short-term expenditures has ranged between $23.4M and $25.5M over the past five years. This represents about a half year of annual “cash” operating expenses. The College also maintains a $3M line of credit, and, in an extreme financial crisis, W&J could access $22.7M of unrestricted board-designated (quasi-endowment) resources.

**Endowment and Comprehensive Campaign**

In the last five years, the endowment has increased. As of June 30, 2018, it stood at $143.5M ($120.7M of donor-restricted resources and $22.7M of unrestricted board-designated resources). Compare that to June 30, 2013, when it was at $122.2M ($100.1M of donor-restricted resources and $22.1M of unrestricted board-designated amounts).

In June 2017, the College completed a highly successful six-and-a-half-year comprehensive campaign that exceeded its goal by 15%. The previous campaign, ending in 2002, raised $60M; the An Uncommon Bond campaign nearly doubled that amount. While the goal was to secure gifts totaling $100M, the final amount totaled $115M, including gifts of $55.1M for the permanent endowment. In the past, finding money for a building was easier than raising money for an endowment, so this is quite an accomplishment for W&J.
Of the total raised, approximately $31.3M comprised deferred gifts outstanding as of June 30, 2017, with $17.8M of that outstanding for the endowment. Assuming a constant draw percentage, this additional endowment, once received, will increase funds available for financial aid. Despite the eventual receipt of these gifts, though, the balance of the College’s endowment will still be such that student revenue must continue to drive operations.

**Peer Comparison**

Since our last self-study, our financial status has been solid when compared to our peer colleges (Allegheny, Juniata, Knox, Ursinus, Washington, and Wooster). We have been able to keep our discount rate significantly lower than that of our peers; however, our rate has increased sharply in recent years.

**Table 1.2 Discount Rate: Washington & Jefferson College Compared to Peer Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discount Rate (%)</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W&amp;J</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers (Aggregate)</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>N/AV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our net tuition dependency ratio, a measure of tuition and fees minus financial aid compared to the operating budget, has stayed in a close range. Our peer schools have generally enjoyed a lower ratio.

**Table 1.3 Net Tuition Dependency Ratio: Washington & Jefferson College Compared to Peer Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W&amp;J</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers (Aggregate)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>N/AV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our endowment dollars per student has improved considerably since the last self study.

**Table 1.4 Endowment per Student: Washington & Jefferson College Compared to Peer Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W&amp;J ($)</td>
<td>50037</td>
<td>55928</td>
<td>72145</td>
<td>72145</td>
<td>85834</td>
<td>102501</td>
<td>100986</td>
<td>98164</td>
<td>98727</td>
<td>102415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers (Aggregate $)³</td>
<td>70900</td>
<td>75561</td>
<td>83430</td>
<td>79193</td>
<td>88325</td>
<td>103374</td>
<td>103374</td>
<td>110479</td>
<td>89070</td>
<td>N/AV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
<td>97.2%</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
<td>97.7%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>110.8%</td>
<td>N/AV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ Based on available data; peer schools included vary.
Finally, our primary reserve ratio has been 1.78 in recent years, better than that of most of our peers, who average 1.4. This measure of financial sufficiency and flexibility has enabled W&J to cover expenses in a fiscally sound manner (W&J Factbook).

**Budgeting**

**ROLLING FIVE-YEAR PLAN**

The College uses a rolling five-year financial plan, which is developed under the leadership of the College’s chief financial officer. The development process includes the participation of and extensive discussions among members of senior staff.

The first year of the financial plan represents the budget for the forthcoming fiscal year. Senior staff develop three scenarios for an operating budget: proposed, optimistic, and pessimistic. The proposed budget and broad financial plans for the succeeding four years are developed each academic year, starting in December and culminating with approval by the Board of Trustees in May of the budget for the forthcoming year. In August, after enrollments are known, the approved budget is reviewed and adjustments made accordingly.

Each budget represents planned changes to most, but not all, spendable resources. The actual revenues and expenses reported in budgetary comparisons are reconciled to the change in unrestricted net assets due to operations reported in the College’s audited financial statements.

**PLANNING PROCESS**

The depth and breadth of the planning processes that result in budgetary requests vary. At the moment, no formal system is used to document budgetary requests by the College’s various units; additionally, no formal system is used to connect unit assessment to the allocation of financial resources via this budgetary process. We are working on a better system, one that aligns allocations with the assessment and planning activities of budgetary units. With input from middle management, department chairs and program directors, and relevant faculty committees, the planning and budgeting process will be more transparent and participatory.

**FISCAL CONTROLS AND AUDITS**

The College documents its fiscal procedures and controls by system narratives that are annually reviewed and updated in conjunction with the audit of the financial statements by the College’s external auditors. The College has established formal policies regarding expenditure approval, travel and expense reimbursements, gift acceptance, and various aspects of human-resource administration.

The College’s financial statements are audited annually by Schneider Downs & Co. The board’s Audit Committee meets three times a year, including a meeting with the external auditors for
audit-planning purposes and a meeting to discuss the auditor’s report and findings. Since the last self-study, the College has received unqualified (clean) opinions as to the fairness of the presentation of its financial statements, and the auditors have reported no material deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting.

**Faculty Numbers and Salaries**

In fall 2018, the College had 114 full-time instructional faculty and 38 part-time faculty. Full-time faculty teach most courses; the highest concentrations of part-time faculty are in the applied-music and foreign-language programs. The number of full-time faculty has stayed relatively constant over the past eight years, and the College maintains a student-to-faculty ratio of 11:1, in line with our peer institutions. As a result, classes are relatively small, though course enrollments vary by program. These small classes allow the kind of personalized teaching W&J is proud to provide.

While the overall number of faculty seems adequate for instruction, some programs face more staffing constraints than others, relying on adjunct faculty, overloads, or increased section sizes to cope. Because the number of programs has grown while faculty numbers have not, there is some departmental stress: in response to the statement “there are sufficient faculty to offer and support our academic programs,” 61% of faculty respondents disagreed (*Middle States Survey Results–Faculty*).

**FIG. 1.1 FULL-TIME FACULTY POSITIONS**

![Graph showing full-time faculty positions from 2009 to 2018](image)

The full-time faculty is currently 69% tenured. As new faculty members are hired to replace retired professors, however, non-tenure-track lines have come to dominate at the assistant-professor level, surpassing tenure-track lines in 2015. The erosion of tenure may be minimal at
W&J compared to other schools, but it has happened, with no rationale given to affected departments for why some lines were demoted while others were not. This is a concern among faculty because the proliferation of non-tenurable lines at salaries generally lower than those of tenure-track lines creates problems with recruitment, retention, planning, staffing committees, and the cultivation, over time, of faculty leaders (e.g., department chairs, deans).

For 2018–19, the College will spend $8.3M on base faculty salaries and $3.3M (est.) on benefits. Faculty salaries and benefits at all ranks have been below those of our peers since the early 2000s. The ad-hoc Salary Committee, consisting of representatives from the faculty, trustees, and administration, recommended in 2011 hiring a consultant; as a result, a commissioned study of tenured and tenure-track faculty salaries was undertaken by Sibson Consulting in 2013. The consultant noted that base salaries of W&J faculty in aggregate were at 92% of the median when compared to its six peer institutions (Sibson Report, p. 3) and 94% of the median when compared to the average of three data sets (SR, p. 18). The report identified statistically significant disparities at the full professor rank between men and women and recommended that the College study those salaries “on a case by case basis in order to detect possible inequities” (SR, p. 52) that might be linked to gender. In addition, the report observed that the salaries of “21% to 33% of individuals appear to be low when contrasted to the market (less than 85% of the median)” (SR, p. 3).

The College has adjusted some individual salaries (primarily those of women) in response to the Sibson report. In 2012, 24.7% of tenured/tenure-track faculty (at all ranks) were 85% or more below the market median, with the associate rank containing the most affected faculty. By 2016, the percentage of tenured/tenure-track faculty at 85% or more below the market median had dropped to 18%, with the predominance now at the full professor rank. Admittedly, salaries are still below the market median, which the Faculty Executive Committee suggested would be the “favorable comparison and target for competitiveness ... that was recommended by the Salary Committee in 2011” (FEC Perspective on Compensation, 2014).

Also, salaries of some women still lag behind those of men, and the salaries of non-tenure-track faculty were not studied in these reports. A compensation plan needs to be developed by relevant senior staff, widely shared, and implemented over time.

**Staff Numbers and Salaries**

For the past three years, the number of staff members remained relatively constant at about 174 full-time and 35 part-time, but the re-establishment of in-house facilities management in July 2018 has shifted those numbers to 232 full-time and 20 part-time.

Staff were surveyed on whether units had the qualified staff and time to perform their duties. The results were largely positive (Middle States Survey–Staff). Staff members felt good about their skill level: all but one respondent agreed with the statement “I have the necessary training/skills to do my job,” and all but four agreed that “I have the basic information systems
knowledge necessary to do my job.” In regard to the statement “I have the necessary time to do my job,” 72% respondents agreed. However, to the statement “My department has adequate staffing to perform the daily tasks necessary to successfully achieve the goals and objectives of my department,” 51% agreed, with a significant number disagreeing strongly. W&J has historically been lean on staff, but more research is needed to clarify priorities and staff needs.

For 2018–19, the College will spend $10.9M on staff salaries and $4.3M (est.) on benefits.

**FIG. 1.2 W&J STAFF SALARY AVERAGES BY AREA COMPARED TO PEERS, 2012 AND 2016**

Apart from those in the management and computer/engineering/science groups, W&J staff receive an average salary below the mean of our peer institutions (*Staff Salary Comparison*). As with faculty, this could hurt recruitment and lead to greater turnover. The College needs to conduct a study of staff salaries.

**Buildings and Grounds**

The campus has undergone continuous development to assure that facilities are suitable for the twenty-first-century student.

**PROCESS**

During 2013–14, W&J updated its *Campus Master Plan* to provide guidance for future campus development. This update included defining the edges of campus, identifying potential
properties for acquisition, making alterations to existing buildings, repurposing existing building spaces, planning historic-preservation initiatives, reorganizing pedestrian accessibility, improving campus signage, renovating or improving recreation and athletic facilities, and assessing campus-space utilization. The master plan for the campus continues to evolve over time to adapt to the changing needs of the campus and its students.

There is a system for establishing priorities. Annually, the College’s senior staff review a comprehensive list of facility needs and upgrades requested by departments and offices as well as an annual Deferred Maintenance Summary developed by the Office of Facilities & Planning that details the state of existing campus facilities. Efforts have been made to include all constituencies across campus when determining priorities for maintenance and upgrades.

**NEW BUILDINGS**

Since the last self-study, two new buildings have been constructed; both were started only after 80% of the funding was in hand.

**THE JOHN A. SWANSON SCIENCE CENTER**

The building was completed in 2010 and is a 58,000-square-foot academic home for the chemistry, physics, and environmental-studies departments. Housed within the building are academic classrooms, laboratory spaces, student study-lounges, faculty and staff offices, and a four-story atrium. The cost of $32.5M was fully funded from donations and gifts.

Swanson replaces Thistle, Lazear, and McIlvaine. Thistle Physics Building, built in 1912 especially for the teaching of physics, was dismantled in 2018 and replaced with green space; it had been essentially vacant since the department moved to Swanson. Lazear Chemistry Hall, built in the 1940s, remains vacant after the department’s move. The departments of philosophy and sociology, which were housed in McIlvaine Hall, whose site the new science center now occupies, have been relocated to Old Main.

**JAMES DAVID ROSS FAMILY RECREATION CENTER/HENRY GYM RENOVATION**

The project represents a five-phase plan for improvements to the College’s athletic facilities.

Phase I: the Janet Swanson Tennis Complex (2015). With six competition tennis courts and a viewing mezzanine, the new facility provides one of the best Division III tennis complexes in our conference. The cost of $2.4M was fully funded from donations and gifts.

Phase II: the James David Ross Family Recreation Center (2017). This 30,000-square-foot facility is an expansion to the existing Henry Gymnasium and provides basketball and tennis/volleyball courts and a three-lane, 167-meter running/walking track. Additionally, the facility includes an exercise room for dance, aerobics, and yoga classes and made possible the conversion of the rear gym in Henry Gymnasium into office space to house all athletic coaches and a new state-
of-the-art wrestling training/practice space. The cost of $13.4M was fully funded from donations and gifts.

The final three phases of the project are still in the fundraising stages and will ultimately result in a renovation of remaining facilities in the Henry Gymnasium: the competition court area and bleachers, locker rooms, trainers’ areas, natatorium, and the pool’s mechanical system.

**RENOVATED BUILDINGS**

Since 2008, there have been renovations to improve student housing ($2.5M), upgrade academic spaces, upgrade sports and recreational facilities, and generally enhance the appearance and serviceability of the campus. Three projects merit attention.

**McMillan Hall (1793)**

Originally built for Washington Academy and the eighth-oldest academic building in the United States, McMillan Hall is now the home of the president’s office, among other units, and underwent exterior renovation during the summer of 2010. Work included the addition of ADA-compliant ramps, the removal and replacement of existing wooden features (steps, shutters, columns), the rebuilding of windows, repointing, storm-water control, and landscaping. Since McMillan Hall has been on the National Historic Register since 1977, the College needed to follow detailed guidelines for all renovations. The total cost of $779,500 was partly funded from a Saving America’s Treasures grant and additional gifts.

**Dieter-Porter Life-Sciences Building (1981)**

The 56,000-square-foot building was fully renovated in 2013, with air conditioning added. The building is home to the biology and psychology departments. It includes academic classrooms, laboratory spaces, student study-lounges, and faculty and staff offices as well as an animal suite and a greenhouse. The cost of $7.8M was fully funded from donations and grants.

**U. Grant Miller Library (1965)**

The library has experienced changes in the use of and demand for library resources. As a result, the library underwent a reinvention in the summer of 2018. The renovated facility includes group study rooms, more individual study tables, and increased handicapped accessibility, among other improvements. The relocation of our historic archives to larger quarters in the building has also made their resources more accessible to both W&J and visiting researchers. The library has increased its database subscriptions and expanded its e-collections to support student and faculty research. For example, in 2017, in consultation with faculty, the College purchased all five of the American Antiquarian Society’s historical-periodicals collections, providing W&J students and faculty access to one of the most comprehensive collections of American periodicals published between 1684 and 1912.
A generous donation to the *An Uncommon Bond* campaign funded the renovation, along with grants from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, the John R. McCune Charitable Trust, the John R. McCune Foundation, and the PNC Foundation.

**Facilities Management**

The College aims to provide a safe, attractive, and properly maintained physical plant while controlling costs. Facilities management was formerly outsourced on fixed-cost annual contracts, first to Aramark (until 2011) and then to GCA Services. In March 2015, an associate vice president for facilities and planning was appointed to manage day-to-day operations and coordinate with the vendor. While cost effective, results were not optimal. In July 2018, the College re-established the Office of Facilities & Planning, and almost all former GCA employees who sought employment with W&J were hired. They are now part of the College community. They are led by a management staff of six.

We do have issues with deferred maintenance, though, and our many historic structures need significant attention. The President’s House (1892) has undergone considerable recent refurbishment as have, to a lesser degree, Old Main (1836) and Davis Memorial Hall (1847), but more always needs to be done. Even comparatively modern facilities, like the residence halls in President’s Row (built in 1968 as “the Quads”), need additional upgrading. The College continues to refine the management structure and cost controls for inventory and mechanical-system repairs and materials.

**Food Service**

The College recognizes that providing excellent food can be a competitive advantage when recruiting and serving today’s students. For nearly twenty years, the College contracted with Parkhurst Dining Services; however, surveys administered over the past three years reveal a decline in overall student satisfaction. By fall 2017, students scored the Commons (dining hall) at 3.87, George and Tom’s (snack bar) at 3.66, and the Barista (coffee shop) at 3.66 (all out of 5.00) for overall student satisfaction (*Barista Survey Results, Commons Survey Results, George and Tom’s Survey Results*).

A committee comprising representatives from the Student Government Association and staff from an array of campus offices met in spring 2018 to consider proposals from several college-dining providers, including our current one. Among the top criteria for selecting a new vendor were that we maintain both the current cost of meal plans and our dedicated front-line staff. As of July 1, 2018, W&J Dining Services has been operated by Bon Appétit Management Company; the College continues to remain responsible for facilities and equipment. During this transition, Bon Appétit has been responsive to student concerns and has modified food choices and operations.
Technology

Technological needs and issues demand constant attention to stay current and secure, and the staff of the Office of Information & Technology Services (ITS) uses a master plan keyed to the College’s Strategic Plan to guide improvements to the infrastructure, academic-support services, and network equipment.

Security

Cybersecurity is an important part of maintaining a stable campus infrastructure and is tightly woven through all aspects of ITS’s operations. Through network segmentation, Active Directory permissions, and software-security applications, W&J monitors access and adapts to the needs of the College community. Network security is managed through perimeter firewalls, extensive routing, virtual Local Area Networks, separate file servers, and network-management tools.

Hardware

Students, faculty, and staff register approximately four thousand devices on campus, with the majority belonging to students. This proliferation of mobile-computing devices allows for uninterrupted access to the necessary resources for a dynamic learning experience. All classrooms have access to wired network and internet resources, and wireless-network access has steadily expanded on campus to include all indoor public areas, most classrooms, and most outdoor areas. All residence halls have wireless access. Students and faculty have access to College printers without printing quotas.

Equipment for instructional purposes has been installed in most classrooms. This has sometimes been a challenge in nineteenth-century buildings. Such equipment most commonly includes ceiling-mounted projectors or large LCD screens connected to computers, DVD players, and sound systems. The newest classrooms on campus manage the equipment through smart podiums. Two campus classrooms have widescreen media projectors and full sound systems.

A computer-replacement cycle provides faculty offices, academic computer labs, and general-access computer labs with new equipment on a regular schedule. Equipment in faculty offices, classrooms, and general-access computer laboratories is typically renewed every five years, with special consideration for high-end users with greater needs. The replaced computers are sometimes refurbished and redeployed to less-demanding areas. The College supports both Windows-based and macOS-based systems.

The College’s computer network has expanded in recent years to serve the student body, a growing physical plant, and the ever-increasing use of technological resources. The optical-fiber network is currently being upgraded to support 10 Gigabit Ethernet transmissions of all services: academic and administrative systems, audio and video streaming, telephony, and several systems used by the Office of Campus & Public Safety.
**COLLEGE WEBSITE**

W&J’s internet presence comprises a website and two wikis (one for W&J in general and one for the faculty governance system). They are hard to maintain, out of date, resistant to searching, and in need of a makeover. Work on a new website has begun.

The athletic program maintains a separate website.

**LEARNING-MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Since the last self-study, W&J moved from Blackboard to the open-access resource Sakai as its hosted learning-management system. Evaluation of the prior product revealed that switching could save the College thousands of dollars. Each course has a Sakai site for faculty to use to provide access to course materials, collect student assignments, facilitate discussion forums, administer assessments, and communicate grades, among other things. Academic programs also have Sakai sites for communicating information efficiently to their majors and minors, and faculty committees and groups use sites for collaboration and information exchange.

**STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

W&J uses Ellucian’s applications to manage student information. Colleague, WebAdvisor, and Self-Service help the College in the areas of student registration and billing, financial aid, alumni and development, general-ledger accounting, personnel, payroll, and other operations. Managers can view budget information online, students can register for courses and track progress toward their degrees, and faculty can better manage advising and grade-reporting. Ellucian GO, a mobile solution for accessing news and College information, also allows students to register for courses on their smartphones or tablets. W&J uses iModules and Entrinsik Informer’s data-analysis software to compile data and generate end-user reports. The Office of Admission uses Slate to manage the enrollment process. The College supports 25Live, a campus-wide room-scheduling system, and Blackboard Transact, used to manage meal plans and cashless declining-balance accounts.

**OTHER APPLICATIONS**

The College supplies and supports a wide range of current software applications from Microsoft, Adobe, Apple, and other companies for teaching, learning, research, data collection, and data analysis.

**Observations on Standard VI**

W&J meets Standard VI and Requirements of Affiliation 8, 10, and 11.

In order to see the College and its mission endure, institutional processes, resources, and structures are aligned and adequate to respond effectively to the opportunities and challenges that present themselves. These plans are assessed regularly and adjusted as needed. The College’s strategic plan of 2012, which is rooted in the mission, is closely tied to the action plan
that touches all offices. We have a master plan for the campus that is updated as needed and a new strategic plan in development. We have ample liquidity and the ability to respond to future short-term financial needs. We have a well-managed endowment and have controlled costs. Fiscal controls are sufficient based upon unqualified opinions of the fairness of the audited financial statements. Our faculty and staff numbers are not bloated.

Strengths, Suggestions, and Institutional Priorities, Standard VI

Strengths

- The College completed a highly successful comprehensive campaign that exceeded the goal by 15%, and the College endowment has increased in the past four years.
- The College has maintained an A− bond rating from Standard & Poor’s since we received it in February 2010.
- The College maintains ample liquidity and cash reserves to respond to short-term financial storms.
- The addition of two new buildings, the acquisition of additional properties, and the renovations of other facilities have improved the campus.

Suggestions

- Continue to monitor the discount rate and net tuition revenue.
- Work on increasing enrollments.
- Continue to address faculty salaries through adoption of a compensation plan.
- Study staff salaries.
- Move to a new College website to improve both internal and external communication and provide up-to-date information.

Institutional Priority

- Develop a formal system of budgetary requests aligned with the assessment and planning activities of each unit at the College.
2. Institutional Leadership (Standard VII) and Ethical Practices (Standard II)

Standard VII

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

Governance

Washington & Jefferson College’s governance and administrative structures support its mission. These structures work to create a student-centered undergraduate experience that is rooted in the liberal arts tradition. The W&J leadership is invested in the liberal arts and in seeing that they remain meaningful, enriching, attractive, and useful in the twenty-first century.

Board of Trustees

The W&J College Bylaws specify that the Board of Trustees exercises “ultimate institutional authority” and must aim to “advance the best interests of the College and the public good” (Article I).

The board has authority and responsibility over:

- the College mission and strategic plan;
- “material changes” in academic programs and “major enterprises”;
- policies that provide the “best possible environment” for both students and faculty;
- accountability for the College;
- approval of the budget and tuition; and
- the College’s financial health and welfare.

The board’s treasurer serves as the key leader on all financial-management policy matters and works closely with the College’s chief financial officer, the auditor, and board committees. The trustees review the audited financial statements each fall.

The Trustees’ Handbook emphasizes the principle of non-interference, and the chair of the Board of Trustees confirms that the importance of non-interference is discussed with all trustees; any trustee who does not follow the expectation is counseled by the chair. The bylaws emphasize the importance of academic freedom, and the board endorses the 1940 Statement.
of Principles Concerning Academic Freedom by the American Association of University Professors.

As of fall 2018, the Board of Trustees has thirty-three voting members and the bylaws (Article II) require that:

- trustees must be of legal age and not employees of the College (except for the president);
- a majority must be alumni of the College;
- board members should have a range of expertise including business, finance and investments, law, medicine, and policy.

Each board member is elected and takes an oath of office. Each also agrees in writing to abide by the Conflict of Interest Policy, acknowledging that decisions “are to be based solely on a desire to advance the best interests of the College and the public good,” and to disclose any conflicts of interest on the Conflict of Interest Form. Each trustee and officer of the College has the responsibility to:

- be familiar with the terms of this policy;
- promptly disclose personal, family, business, or other circumstances that could raise conflict questions; and
- acknowledge annually by signature agreement compliance with the letter and spirit of this policy.

The Trustees’ Handbook reinforces these expectations, and the College maintains a record of potential conflicts of interest (see, for example, Conflict of Interest List BOT 2018).

As of fall 2018, the board is 9% African American and 24% female, slightly more diverse than it was at the time of the last self-study. Because of the requirement that most trustees be graduates of the College and W&J’s history as a men’s college until 1970, the trustees are predominantly men. Issues of diversity, however, are being addressed by the board’s Governance Committee, which includes race and gender in the matrix of desired qualifications and characteristics of future trustees.

The W&J board is a member of the Association of Governing Boards. It follows the association’s guidelines, which call for putting the needs of the College first and avoiding competing interests.

The bylaws (Article I) give the board the responsibility to appoint, set conditions and compensation for, support, and assess the president. The board evaluates the president annually based on goals developed by the president and board. Input from faculty and staff is also solicited at certain times. At the end of each year, the president writes a report reviewed by the board’s Executive Committee. The committee’s evaluation is communicated to the full
board at the May board meeting in executive session. The board is currently working on better documenting this evaluation process.

The bylaws (Article I) call for “periodic self-assessments of the board’s role in governance and policy-making in relation to widely held standards and expectations concerning board performance in not-for-profit institutions.” This assessment is carried out every three years, and trustees contribute by assessing both the board’s performance and their personal performances. The results of the assessments have been used to make improvements, such as amendments to the *W&J College Bylaws* in 2015. Assessing presidential and board performance is a priority for the trustees.

The current board membership has a 100% participation rate for contributing to W&J College. The board is dedicated to the College and has well-qualified individuals serving as trustees.

**PRESIDENT**

The bylaws (Article VI) give the president both authority and autonomy. The president is the administrative head of the College. All units, both administrative and educational, are responsible to this individual. In educational matters, the president has full authority in the determination and administration of the educational policies, activities, and personnel of the College but properly delegates authority to qualified officers in the areas of academics, student life, finances, student recruitment, and development.

The College recently changed leadership and followed the process laid out in the bylaws for selecting a president. The search committee was chaired by trustee Diana L. Reed and included trustees, faculty members, a staff member, and a student. In searching for a new president during the 2016–17 academic year, the College prioritized finding a leader who was an advocate for W&J’s mission and core values, a strong champion for the liberal arts, and an accomplished leader in higher education.

The recently retired president of the College, Dr. Tori Haring-Smith (2005–17) was appropriately credentialed and had administrative experience consistent with the mission of W&J.

Dr. John C. Knapp, her successor, assumed the office on August 1, 2017, and is also appropriately credentialed. He brings experience as former president of Hope College.

**FACULTY STRUCTURES**

**DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRS**

Each faculty member is a member of a department, and each department is overseen by a chair who manages budgets, schedules, and faculty reviews, both periodic and annual, among other duties. In recent years, the College has shifted from permanent to rotating chairs. Department chairs, along with program directors, meet once a month with the deans in the Office of
Academic Affairs for the exchange of information and discussion. Department chairs are appointed by the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA).

COMMITTEES

Faculty members manage much of their service to the College through committees. Each governance and advisory committee has a documented charge and description of membership. Most make reports at the monthly faculty meeting and file end-of-year reports with the Faculty Executive Committee and the VPAA.

The *Faculty Handbook* outlines the structure of faculty governance, including the criteria for membership and the various roles and responsibilities. The following are the governance committees; their membership is elected by the faculty:

- Faculty Executive Committee
- Curriculum and Program Committee
- Academic Status Committee
- Faculty Review Committee
- Faculty Development Committee
- Graduate Programs Committee
- Academic Planning Council

There are also cocurricular advisory and academic-program support committees; their membership is appointed by the VPAA:

- Academic Affairs Assessment Committee
- Cocurricular Advisory Committee
- Student Conduct Board
- Committee on Arts and Lectures
- Committee on the Library and Educational Technology
- Committee on Publications
- Pre-Health Professions Committee
- Committee on the Legal Profession
- Committee on the Teaching Profession

At times, ad-hoc committees or disappearing task forces are appointed.

The Faculty Executive Committee assesses the governance process through an examination of the annual reports and recommends adjustments to the membership or the addition of new committees. Three of the committees listed above (Graduate Programs Committee, Academic Planning Council, Academic Affairs Assessment Committee) have recently been added as a result of this process.
FACULTY MEETINGS

The faculty meets once a month for these purposes: the exchange of information and presentation of reports; the formal approval of all new programs, courses of study, and courses; the approval of students for degrees; and other College business. The VPAA, as the president’s designee, presides over the meeting, and the secretary of the faculty, a senior faculty member appointed by the VPAA, takes minutes. The president, the VPAA, faculty committees, and others give reports. The meetings are a major forum for communication with the president, the VPAA, and other faculty, and they are well attended.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

SENIOR STAFF

Five vice presidents constitute the senior staff:

- Judith Kirkpatrick, PhD, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College
- Thomas Szejko, BS, Interim Vice President for Business & Finance and Chief Financial Officer
- Michael Grzesiak, MA, Vice President for Development & Alumni Relations
- Nicole Focareto, MA, Vice President for Enrollment
- Eva Chatterjee-Sutton, MA, Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students

A comparison with other Pennsylvania Consortium for the Liberal Arts member schools\(^4\) shows that having five vice presidents, as W&J does, is typical. The vice presidents report directly to the president as shown in the organizational chart for the Office of the President (W&J Factbook). They meet fortnightly to review the operations of the College and meet three times a year with the Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee to foster communication and share updates and progress in their units. Résumés of the senior staff show them to be well qualified to assist the president.

The president reviews the vice presidents at regular intervals.

Two of the vice presidents were promoted from within, one was hired from the Registry, and two were hired through national searches. Most were hired with the participation of trustees, faculty, staff, and students on the search committees.

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\(^4\) With support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the consortium was formed in 2014 by the presidents of Bryn Mawr, Dickinson, Franklin & Marshall, Gettysburg, Haverford, Juniata, Muhlenberg, Swarthmore, Ursinus, and Washington & Jefferson; Lafayette joined in 2015.
**ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS**

The organizational structure of administrative units at W&J College is clearly documented; Human Resources maintains current organizational charts for all employees on campus. Recently updated charts are available in the *W&J Factbook* for the following offices:

- Academic Affairs
- Academic Affairs: Library
- Business & Finance
- Business & Finance: Information & Technology Services
- Development & Alumni Relations
- Enrollment
- President
- Student Life
- Student Life: Athletics
- Student Life: Campus & Public Safety

Employees in each of the above units (except the Office of the President) report to one of the five vice presidents. A few unit directors report directly to the president.

There is also a Staff Advisory Board, chaired by the president, that draws its membership from across the units and meets monthly. This board advocates for staff needs.

Each administrative unit has an assessment plan and submits an annual report that includes information on how assessment data is used to enhance operations. The director of the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research reviews the reports, collects any needed data from them, and provides feedback. The current director has centralized assessment policies, procedures, and timetables throughout the College.

The Office of Assessment & Institutional Research provides assistance in preparing the annual reports and offers workshops on such assessment topics as “Direct and Indirect Measures” and “Closing the Loop.”

**Documentation of Governance Structures**

W&J has a well-articulated governance structure on multiple levels published in the following documents:

- *Washington & Jefferson College Bylaws*: defines the role and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, the president, and the faculty.
- *Trustees’ Handbook*: provides useful guidelines on trustee roles and responsibilities.
- *Faculty Handbook*: outlines faculty governance structures, internal College governance structures, responsibilities of the president, and roles of the vice presidents.
• *Employee Handbook*: comprehensively details issues of employment categories, benefits, and rules and policies.

• *Constitution and Bylaws of the Student Government of Washington & Jefferson College*: establishes student government as “the instrument through which [students] can both fulfill their obligations and insure their rights.”

All structures are amended as needed. Overall, the organizational structure of the College is well documented and regularly updated. Reporting relationships are clear.

**Administrative Engagement**

Various administrative offices regularly engage with faculty and students to advance the College’s goals and mission. For example, the Office of Student Life works closely with faculty members such as the faculty athletics representative, the director of the First Year Seminar program, the ombudsperson, the Magellan Project faculty advisors, and faculty who arrange course schedules for incoming first-year students. The Office of Development & Alumni Relations hosts monthly dinners for students to network with alumni. Faculty, staff, and administrators serve together on many College committees.

Members of senior staff engage with faculty, staff, and students. Among faculty, 93% of survey respondents reported having had opportunities to interact with senior staff, with 44% reporting meaningful interactions; 98% of staff respondents reported having had opportunities, with 55% reporting meaningful interactions; 41% of student respondents reported having had opportunities, with 11% reporting meaningful interactions (*Middle States Survey Results*).

**Challenges with Governance**

W&J has historically been an institution where decisions have been made top-down. Shifting to a model of truly shared governance has proven slow. In the last year or two, however, some progress has been made.

**Shared Governance**

While faculty have the power to establish the curriculum, set graduation requirements, approve students for degrees, and dismiss students, they feel a need for a greater voice in planning, budgeting, and policy creation. In 2009, the Middle States evaluation team noted that “the faculty role in planning and budgetary issues seems unresolved” (*Middle States Self-Study Reviewers Report*, p. 9). This is still somewhat true. For example, the Faculty Executive Committee meets periodically with the chief financial officer to review the College budget, but its role is not participatory.

One of the clearest signs of continued issues with shared governance surfaced in the *Middle States Survey Results*. Of faculty, 71% of respondents agreed with the statement “I have opportunities to participate in college governance,” but only 32% agreed that “Shared governance in its current form works well at W&J.” In contrast, 80% of trustees indicated that
shared governance was working well at W&J. The discrepancy between the faculty and the trustees is an opportunity for improved communication and understanding.

**INPUT ON POLICY DECISIONS**

Faculty have had concerns about how decisions are made, how decisions are communicated, and how much input they have concerning those decisions: 54% of staff and students and 49% of faculty believed they had input on policy decisions; however, only 29% of faculty believed their input was considered, a marked contrast to staff (48%) and students (55%) (Middle States Survey Results).

Faculty perception has declined—from 42% to 29%—since the last survey on this question for the previous self study (Middle States Self-Study [2009], p. 67). Recent procedural issues that faculty cite are those of academic-calendar revision, the creation and implementation of the Washington Fellows Program, and the establishment of a confidentiality policy.

Since the 2017 survey was administered, however, faculty have gained enhanced opportunities for some engagement with policy and planning through the Academic Planning Council (APC) and the strategic-planning process.

**INPUT ON RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Similar patterns emerge in the Middle States Survey Results when it comes to input on resource allocations and whether that input is meaningful: 46% of staff and 50% of students believed they had opportunities to provide input on resource management, but only 26% of faculty believed that. This shows a decline from the time of the previous self-study, when 42% of faculty surveyed perceived they had opportunities to contribute.

**COMMUNICATION OF DECISIONS**

There has been a long-standing problem with the top-down communication structure at W&J. This concern is especially felt among the faculty. In the Middle States Survey Results, 65% of students, 46% of staff, and 24% of faculty agreed with the statement “Decisions at the College are communicated effectively.” Communication by the Board of Trustees also presents an opportunity for improvement: 79% of board members agreed that the Board of Trustees communicated effectively while 44% of staff and 26% of faculty agreed. The gap between the perception of trustees and that of the faculty and staff is a challenge, but the Trustee Survey Results indicates some awareness of this: only five trustees in 2016 strongly agreed that the board has effective means of two-way communication with key constituencies of the College, such as faculty, students, staff, and alumni.

But change is evident. In December 2015, the Board of Trustees added faculty representation to three of its committees to improve communication and meaningful interaction (before then, the only formal interactions were Faculty Executive Committee meetings with a board
committee). The experience proved successful, so a fourth board committee gained faculty representation in spring 2018.

The president is working to improve communication and participatory planning, two of our institutional priorities. He has introduced town-hall meetings to communicate with the faculty and staff more effectively. Students, trustees, senior staff, and faculty are involved in the strategic-planning process, a major change from last time. We are also seeing signs of progress in the involvement of faculty in decision-making, providing them additional opportunities to fulfill their roles as leaders of the College.

**Observations on Standard VII**

W&J meets Standard VII and Requirements of Affiliation 12 and 13. It is governed by a Board of Trustees that responsibly serves the institution, faculty, staff, and students. It is independent, observes best practices, and complies with a written conflict-of-interest statement. It also oversees policy-making appropriate to its role, appoints a president, and assesses the president’s performance. W&J’s president oversees the work, staffing, and development of the College and reports to the board. The president is assisted by qualified senior staff and other administrators, all of whom have procedures for assessing the effectiveness of their units so that the College’s educational mission can be improved. Faculty have clearly articulated structures that allow them to perform their responsibilities.

**Strengths, Suggestions, and Institutional Priorities, Standard VII**

**STRENGTHS**

- The trustees are committed to the institution.
- The College has a highly qualified president, senior staff, and faculty.
- The College has a clearly articulated governance structure.
- The College has organizational charts that are regularly updated and reflect reporting relationships throughout the institution.
- Each administrative unit has an assessment plan and submits an annual report on how assessment data is used to enhance operations.

**SUGGESTIONS**

- Continue to work on increasing board diversity.
- Continue to work on reducing top-down decision-making by enhancing shared governance for faculty and empowering administrative units to make decisions at the appropriate levels.

**INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES**

- Make budgeting and planning more meaningful, participatory, and transparent.
- Improve communication among all parties at the College.
Standard II

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

Ethics at W&J

All members of the College community are responsible for maintaining the highest ethical standards of excellence, integrity, honesty, and fairness and for integrating these values into their work. Ethical conduct is a fundamental expectation for every member of the W&J community. College policies are outlined in the *Faculty Handbook* (ch. 15 in particular), the *Employee Handbook*, and the *Student Handbook*.

**SUPPORTING ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

The College supports academic freedom and includes this statement in the *Washington & Jefferson College Bylaws* (Article VII) and the *Faculty Handbook* (p. 6): “Every member of the faculty shall be entitled to freedom of thought and expression within their professional competence and within the limits of honest and effective teaching. In public utterances, faculty members shall take pains to reflect the dignity and ethics of the teaching profession and of their membership in the Washington & Jefferson College community. Faculty members shall always clearly declare when they are speaking as an individual and when they are speaking as an authorized representative of the College.”

The College has long endorsed the *1940 Statement of Principles Concerning Academic Freedom* by the American Association of University Professors, included in the *Faculty Handbook* (p. 6). In 2017, the W&J chapter of the AAUP was reactivated.

**SUPPORTING ETHICAL SCHOLARLY AND PROFESSIONAL WORK**

Many statements and policies on ethical conduct and respect for intellectual property guide the conduct of the College’s various constituencies.

**RESPECT FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT**

A number of W&J courses teach students about the proper regard for intellectual property. Courses in the professional-writing program, for example, have student-learning outcomes addressing professional ethics. In First Year Seminars and in English composition courses, faculty teach students how to avoid plagiarism. All academic departments and programs train students in discipline-specific conventions for acknowledging sources and properly citing references, and knowledge of these conventions is assessed as part of the institutional student-learning outcome on written communication.
The U. Grant Miller Library disseminates clear guidelines on copyright and fair use on their [website](#), with expanded faculty-specific guidelines on fair use of materials for classroom use included in the *Faculty Handbook* (ch. 16). W&J has a dedicated staff person available to help faculty, staff, and students with issues of copyright and fair use.

**Responsible Curation of Materials**

Staff members also abide by specific codes. For example, the Learned T. Bulman ’48 Historic Archives and Museum, along with its designated staff, adhere to the positions set forth in the Society of American Archivists’ [Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics](#).

The Office of Assessment & Institutional Research and the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee abide by guidelines for the responsible handling of student artifacts used for assessment purposes.

**Responsible Scientific Research Involving Humans or Animals**

The College has a federally registered Institutional Review Board that reviews research proposals from students, faculty, and staff that involve human participants in order to protect the rights and welfare of those participants. Thirty proposals were approved in 2017.

The College has standardized policies and procedures (*IRB Policy Manual*). It had an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee but it has been in hiatus for several years. There is a plan in place to revive it.

**Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest**

Several policies address a variety of constituencies and situations. The *Conflict of Interest Policy* provides general guidelines for all employees, officers, and trustees of the College on how to protect the institutional integrity and reputation of the College. In addition, specific policies and institutional recommendations outlined in the *Employee Handbook* and the *Faculty Handbook* provide clarification of and guidelines for situations such as fiscal conflicts of interest, nepotism, professional and consensual relations between faculty or staff and students, research misconduct, and so on. The *Conflict of Interest Form* allows employees to disclose actual, potential, and perceived conflicts. The College makes every effort to address issues of conflict of interest and to mitigate potential problems before they arise.

**Student Responsibilities**

The W&J mission statement calls for “responsible citizens.” The *Student Handbook* includes both a Student Bill of Rights & Responsibilities and a Student Code of Conduct. In addition, the Student Government Association (SGA), in response to an insensitive social-media post by a student leader in spring 2017, created an Affirmation of Peer-To-Peer Values. At the start of the 2017–18 academic year, all first-year students were called upon to rise and affirm it at Matriculation. This affirmation calls for:
• promoting a culture of respect throughout the College community;
• respecting the privacy, property, and freedom of others;
• practicing personal and academic integrity and expecting it from others;
• respecting the dignity and work of all individuals; and
• promoting the diversity of opinions, ideas, and backgrounds of others.

W&J’s faculty and staff are invested in providing education inside and outside the classroom on integrity and inclusion—and the students have demonstrated that they are, too.

**Periodic Assessment of Policies on Ethics and Integrity**

The College regularly assesses policies on ethics and integrity, whether as part of accreditation or simply for its own assurance. Various faculty governance committees, such as the Faculty Executive Committee and the Faculty Review Committee, take active roles in ensuring that such policies as published in the *Faculty Handbook* are accurate, up-to-date, and fair. The Academic Status Committee routinely examines guidelines regarding academic and student misconduct as well as the processes and practices for adjudicating such matters; they also ensure that statements in the *Student Handbook* and the *College Catalog* are accurate and up to date.

Other College entities, such as the Institutional Review Board and Title IX coordinators, also regularly assess whether the College is meeting its standards of ethics and integrity with regard to their specific areas of concern.

The College has an institutional student-learning outcome for ethical reasoning; it is scheduled for assessment in 2018–19.

**Grievance Procedures**

The College has clearly laid-out grievance procedures. Two grievances since 2009 involved legal action, and both were resolved. None has been filed with the Labor Relations Board.

Faculty members report grievances to their department chairs, the Faculty Executive Committee, or the Office of Human Resources, as appropriate for the situation. Procedures are outlined in the *Faculty and Employee Handbooks*. Staff members report grievances to their managers or the Office of Human Resources, as appropriate for the situation. Students follow policies outlined in the *Student Handbook*. There are separate policies for students who do not feel their accommodation needs have been met and for those with grievances against a faculty member or administrator.

**Academic Honesty Policy**

The Washington & Jefferson College community requires its students to create and submit their own work in every setting at the College, including classes, laboratories, and cocurricular endeavors. A violation of this principle constitutes academic misconduct. The principles, procedures, and the appeal process are published in the *College Catalog* (pp. 176–77). Many faculty members include the policy on syllabi. It is discussed widely in classes.
**Support Structures for Accused Students**

The director of community standards and support services, a member of the W&J staff, meets with students who wish to discuss alleged violations of the Student Code of Conduct or other related community standards.

The conduct support specialist, also a staff member, serves as a source for objective and confidential discussions about the process of adjudicating student-conduct violations.

The ombudsperson, a faculty member, meets with students who wish to discuss possible infractions and proceedings of the Academic Code of Conduct. The ombudsperson serves as a source for objective and confidential discussions about the process of adjudicating academic misconduct. The term lasts for one year.

**Climate of Respect**

The College fosters an overall climate of respect among all faculty, staff, and students. All faculty, staff, and students are held to the highest standards as outlined in the various handbooks. The *Employee Handbook* includes statements concerning the College’s mission as well as a statement regarding the College’s stance on diversity. The College also includes a Diversity/Equal Opportunity Employer/Inclusion statement in all job ads and postings.

Overall, W&J has a relatively positive environment. In the *Middle States Survey Results*, students, faculty, staff, and trustees were asked to evaluate the campus climate according to the following criteria: respect for other members of community and campus inclusivity (a positive environment for people with disabilities, people of diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, family status, sexual orientations and gender identities, age, etc.). A majority of respondents had positive perceptions of the campus climate: 93% of the trustees, 76% of staff, and 73% of faculty expressed various degrees of agreement. The answers regarding inclusivity/positive environment for various groups and contexts within the campus community were also overwhelmingly on the positive side of the spectrum but displayed more variations depending on the specific identity aspect in question. The question about positive environment for people with disabilities, for example, elicited rates of agreement of 51% from faculty, 46% from staff, and 60% from trustees. Among students, 59% agreed with the statement “The classroom climate/learning environment is welcoming to students based on their: learning disability,” and 61% agreed with “The classroom climate/learning environment is welcoming to students based on their: physical disability.” The troubling disparity in these numbers warrants more thorough investigation.

We have made considerable progress toward fostering a climate of respect and acceptance of diversity, but work is ongoing.
Sexual-Assault Prevention / Title IX

With regard to Title IX policies and initiatives, the College is committed to maintaining a learning, working, and living environment free from all forms of sex discrimination, harassment, and other forms of sexual violence, as laid out in the College-Wide Policy Against Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault and Other Forms of Sexual Violence, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and Stalking. These forms of misconduct are specifically prohibited by the College, as is retaliation against those bringing forth a concern or allegation.

This policy applies to all members of the College community and to individuals directly affiliated with the College (e.g., contractors, vendors, and visitors). It also applies to off-campus conduct that may affect the campus community or a student’s access to or participation in the College’s educational programs and activities. Detailed explanations of the policy and the attendant procedures and resources are in both the Employee Handbook and the Student Handbook.

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

The College sponsors a number of programs and initiatives dedicated to sexual-assault prevention and education:

- ASAP (Advocates for Sexual Assault Prevention), a student group that provides peer outreach, advocacy, and confidential consultation to students
- web resources for survivors and supporters of survivors
- annual training for faculty, staff, and athletic coaches
- training for student leaders, athletic teams, and Greek students
- training for new students prior to their arrival on campus
- programming for new students during Orientation

The Title IX policy is annually reviewed, both internally and by legal counsel. The Title IX investigative team is trained annually. Data on Title IX on-campus and off-campus crime, as well as other crimes affecting the campus climate, is published annually.

HEDS SEXUAL Assault Campus Climate Survey

In 2016, W&J administered the HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey to all W&J students. Overall, we learned that (a) many students did not recall receiving or did not retain educational information on sexual assault and that (b) bystander reactions could be improved by including this topic in the educational process.

As a result, W&J made the following changes to improve the climate:

- developing ASAP (Advocates for Sexual Assault Prevention)
- launching a comprehensive web resource for sexual-assault prevention and response
- educating student groups (resident assistants, LINK peer mentors, athletes, Greeks) and asking them to review and acknowledge policy and procedures during training
• offering alcohol-awareness training to first-year students
• providing bystander-training sessions for students
• providing Title IX training workshops annually to all Greek-life organizations
• reorganizing Title IX online-training modules

The survey was administered again in 2018, and results were similar. Students recalled receiving education; however, almost half did not remember the information or were unsure about how to report an assault. “Bystander education” needs improvement since students felt unsure how to intervene. As in 2016, there is significant need for improvement in the effectiveness of education and the clarity of material included in the Student Handbook.

In spring 2018, comparable HEDS surveys were completed by faculty and staff. Most employees felt confident they could respond appropriately to students reporting sexual assaults; 25% of respondents, however, did not recall receiving training on resources and procedures. There is significant need to review both the nature and the timing of training in order to enhance faculty and staff retention of information.

Promotion of Diversity

W&J is invested in supporting both a diverse college population and diversity education. It is one of our priorities for this self-study. While much has been accomplished, we need to do more.

Graduation Requirement and Courses

The diversity requirement is an integral part of the W&J general-education curriculum. Our mission calls for graduating “responsible citizens prepared to contribute substantially to the world in which they live,” accomplished in part by promoting a “worldview that characterizes a well-educated person.” That worldview requires an understanding of diversity.

As part of the Foundations requirement, all students take at least one specially designated course (labeled D or DIVER) that is substantially about diversity and the many ways it is expressed in or informs our everyday experiences. This requirement helps students prepare for and reflect upon the many other ways they encounter diversity at W&J. Many academic departments and programs offer courses that encourage engagement with diversity in a variety of disciplinary contexts. The English department, for example, regularly offers courses on African American and Asian American literature. The sociology department offers courses in the sociology of gender and on race and ethnicity. In spring 2018, two dozen such courses were offered; in fall 2018, nineteen were offered.

Four First Year Seminars in fall 2017 piloted a plan to improve the climate for diversity and inclusion; a team that attended a summer workshop hosted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) developed it. In fall 2018, the pilot expanded to more First Year Seminar sections after the revision of the 2017 pilot and the creation of a Diversity Toolkit.
**MELLON FELLOWS**

In 2016, W&J was awarded a $250,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to revitalize the First Year Seminar program. A team of faculty Mellon Fellows led multiple initiatives for improving inclusivity in the classroom by organizing panels on diversity and inclusion, facilitating discussion circles and faculty workshops, inviting guest speakers, and hosting a multicultural visiting scholar for fall 2018.

**PROGRAMS**

W&J features several academic programs explicitly dedicated to increasing students’ awareness of and positive engagement with diversity. The most recent additions include African American Studies, Conflict and Resolution Studies, Interfaith Leadership Studies, Latin American Studies, and a new major in Gender and Women’s Studies that joins a popular minor.

**EDUCATION OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM**

Many offices foster a communal climate of inclusivity through programs and initiatives. The Office for Inclusive Campus Engagement contributes creative and engaging programs and services to meet the needs of a diverse campus community. It supports multicultural students, and it educates Greek organizations on inclusivity training on an ongoing basis. The Office of Diversity Initiatives offers programs, discussions, and workshops on topics such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic issues. The Office of Student Life supports several multicultural student organizations and a variety of religious and cultural student associations.

**MULTICULTURAL STUDENTS AT W&J**

**FIG. 2.1 MULTICULTURAL STUDENTS AT W&J, 2011–18**

Note: “Other” includes American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; Non-Resident Alien; and Two or More Races.
The Office of Admission has been continuously working on diversifying the student body, and much work has been done in the last ten years to make W&J appealing and accessible to students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. As a result, the number of multicultural students has increased from 8% of the student body in 2009 to 20% in 2018.

The number of international students has also grown. These efforts are noticed and appreciated by campus constituencies. Responses in the *Middle States Survey Results* showed that an overwhelming majority of faculty (86%), staff (72%), and trustees (85%) agreed that the diversity of the incoming student cohorts had increased over the past five years.

**Programs to Recruit and Support Multicultural Students**

The College has developed two programs to recruit and then support multicultural students. Since 2011, W&J has partnered with YES Prep Public Schools, a group of charter schools in Houston, Texas, that aims to guide economically disadvantaged students, most of whom identify as Hispanic/Latino, into college. In 2013, W&J launched the Charles West Scholars, which supports African American students academically, socially, and emotionally during their time at W&J. These programs are discussed in Chapter 4 (see p. 81).

The College also supports NEED, a non-profit community-based higher-education assistance program in the Pittsburgh area.

**Efforts of the Athletics Program**

The W&J athletics program encourages ethnic minority student-athletes to apply for the NCAA’s Division III Student Immersion Program. In spring 2018, a W&J student won the national competition for one of the forty slots.

**Multicultural Faculty and Staff at W&J**

In fall 2018, our overall percentage of multicultural employees stood as follows: full-time faculty 17%, part-time faculty 11%, full-time staff 5%, and part-time staff 0% (*W&J Factbook*). In addition, we have several faculty and staff born and/or raised abroad, which further enriches the cultural diversity of the College community.

Many strategies have been undertaken to expand the number of multicultural candidates for W&J searches. To attract faculty applicants, the College networks with organizations like the Black Doctoral Network, places advertisements in journals targeting underrepresented groups, and reaches out to PhD-granting institutions with higher numbers of graduates from underrepresented groups. It has sent representatives to workshops on diversifying faculty and has shared materials on conducting more inclusive searches with department chairs. To attract staff applicants, the College employs online advertising and diversity-outreach services on HigherEdJobs.com; it also places notices in InsideHigherEd.com and ChronicleCareers.com. W&J belongs to the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium, a multistate collaboration to recruit and retain a diverse and talented workforce and to assist dual-career couples.
For all searches, the College has worked on identifying internal biases and adjusted language in job advertisements to better reflect the values of W&J and our quest for greater inclusivity. The Office of Human Resources is researching new initiatives to improve diversity applications, such as adding an applicant-tracking software package to its system to measure the demographics of the applicant pool for each employment opportunity.

**Fair Hiring and Evaluation of Employees**

W&J is an equal-opportunity employer and complies with applicable state and federal laws governing nondiscrimination in employment. This policy is articulated in the *Employee Handbook*, in the *Faculty Handbook*, and on the website of Human Resources.

The goal at Washington & Jefferson College is to recruit and maintain a diverse workforce. The College provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, status as a protected veteran, national origin, or other protected class in accordance with applicable state and federal law. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to: recruitment, hiring, promotion, reduction in force, termination, transfers, leave of absence, etc. It is the responsibility of every employee to uphold this policy.

**Faculty**

W&J has well-defined policies and procedures for the hiring, evaluation, promotion, and separation of tenure-track faculty as outlined in the *Faculty Handbook* (see ch. 17–20). As evidenced by data from the *Middle States Survey Results–Faculty*, the majority of respondents perceive these policies and procedures as fair. Specifically, 72% of faculty reported that they had not observed any unfair hiring practices, and 63% agreed that evaluation, promotion, reappointment, and separation practices were fair.

Although the numbers and percentages of non-tenure-track faculty have increased considerably over the past ten years, the College lacks well-defined policies and procedures for hiring, evaluating, and promoting such faculty. Responses in the *Middle States Survey Results–Faculty* indicate dissatisfaction among the faculty with the effectiveness and transparency of the evaluation process for full-time non-tenure-track faculty.

The College has taken several important steps to address this problem through the joint efforts of the Faculty Executive Committee, the Faculty Review Committee, and the Office of Academic Affairs, who have issued several documents designed to clarify expectations and procedures, and additional steps are being taken by the Academic Planning Council, the president, and the VPAA. However, further efforts are necessary to ensure that the policies and procedures regulating the hiring, evaluation, and reappointment of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty are equitable and clear.
STAFF

The College strives to engage in fair and impartial practices regarding the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of staff. According to the Middle States Survey Results–Staff, 83% of respondents agreed that the College’s procedures were effective in preventing unfair hiring practices. The majority (59.7%) also agreed that there was a well-defined process for their performance evaluation; however, 35.1% expressed dissatisfaction with the process.

EVALUATION AND RAISES: FACULTY

Each faculty member submits an information form to the department chair and the VPAA. The department chair rates the faculty member and forwards the rating to the VPAA to use in the next level of review. Expectations for instructional activities, scholarly and creative activity and professional development, and service are outlined in the Faculty Handbook. The VPAA determines the annual raise. Increases in compensation are based on available money in the overall budget and employee performance.

Responses in the Middle States Survey Results–Faculty suggest that faculty members may not be fully confident about the clarity of expectations for their performance and the effectiveness and transparency of the evaluation process. Although the majority of faculty respondents (59%) agreed that there was a well-defined process for their annual evaluation, 33% expressed dissatisfaction with the process. Moreover, only 56% of faculty respondents agreed that they received helpful feedback in the process.

EVALUATION AND RAISES: STAFF

Staff are reviewed by immediate supervisors in their departments. Human Resources provides online employee-evaluation training for staff supervisors and a performance-evaluation tool. The vice president determines the annual raise. Raises are based on available money in the overall budget and employee performance.

The majority (60%) of respondents in the Middle States Survey–Staff agreed that there was a well-defined process for performance evaluation; however, 35% expressed dissatisfaction with the process. The breakdown is similar in terms of staff perception of the process’s transparency and its effectiveness in contributing to the improvement of their performance and career growth: 59% of staff respondents reported that they received helpful feedback in the process, but 35% of respondents reported that they did not.

Honesty in Advertising

The College is committed to being truthful and honest in its internal and external communications. The W&J Factbook, College Catalog, census snapshots, and IPEDS get their data from Colleague by Ellucian and are the main sources for statistical information used by the Offices of Admission, Financial Aid, Development & Alumni Relations, and Marketing & Communications; every effort is made by the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research to
ensure all published and internally and externally communicated information is accurate and up-to-date.

**OFFICES OF ADMISSION AND FINANCIAL AID**

The Office of Admission’s source for data is the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research. Any information the office distributes has already been published in various sources.

The Office of Financial Aid promotes affordability and accessibility through the College’s many endowed scholarships and grant programs. In promotional materials, it draws from the *W&J Factbook* and IPEDS data to ensure accuracy. To assist students in making informed decisions about incurring debt, the U.S. Department of Education requires all first-year students to participate in entrance counseling, which reviews all aspects of loans, interest, and future payments. The Office of Financial Aid offers workshops and explains the cost of attending the College honestly in its Bottom Line Form, in which prospective students can enter their financial information to determine their family’s financial responsibility for their college education.

**OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI RELATIONS**

The Office of Development & Alumni Relations tracks volunteer engagement and activity through iModules and uses Colleague by Ellucian for all alumni and donor statistics. All gifts to the College are recorded in Colleague by the gift processor and acknowledged.

The office also adheres to numerous procedures. For example, staff must seek approval from the associate vice president for any communication, whether internal or external, requesting a donation. To ensure accuracy, published numbers for alumni participation rates come directly from a report run in Colleague.

**OFFICE OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**

Marketing & Communications uses the *W&J Factbook* as its primary source of information. It also obtains information directly from the source—the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research, a program director, or a recorded interview with a featured alumnus—to eliminate hearsay in press releases and other communications. The College has sufficient policies and procedures to ensure that internal and external communications are honest and truthful.

**Compliance**

The College has made every effort to report accurate information on its consumer-information website in compliance with the Higher Education Act of 1965. It includes all required disclosures of information, such as up-to-date statistics on graduation and retention. The College has also complied with the Middle States Commission’s Requirements of Affiliation and related policies.
Observations on Standard II

W&J meets Standard II. Ethics and integrity are central to our mission, practices, and policies, and our policies and procedures are published and regularly assessed. W&J is committed to academic freedom; works to maintain a climate of respect for faculty, staff, and students; and is fair, impartial, and open in its hiring practices for faculty and staff. Its offices ensure that information is accurate, that students understand funding sources and debt, and that the College complies with all applicable reporting policies, regulations, and requirements.

Strengths, Suggestions, and Institutional Priorities, Standard II

Strengths

- The College expects all members of the community to maintain the highest ethical standards.
- The College has well-documented policies on ethical conduct and grievance procedures that are regularly assessed.
- The College has increased the diversity of its faculty, staff, and students.
- Faculty and staff are invested in providing education inside and outside the classroom on diversity and inclusion.
- Students are also promoting a culture of respect.

Suggestion

- Ensure that all supervisors provide helpful written feedback on annual reviews.
- Evaluate policies and procedures for the employment of non-tenure-track faculty.
- Study the timing and nature of training about sexual-assault prevention and education.

Institutional Priority

- The College needs to continue to enhance the diversity of faculty, staff, and students.
3. An Effective Curriculum for the Twenty-First-Century Student (Standards III and V)

Standard III

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

W&J offers an undergraduate curriculum leading to a bachelor of arts degree and has recently added a very small postgraduate program leading to a master’s degree and a certificate (W&J also offered the master’s degree from about 1880 to 1984).

Since the last self-study, W&J revised its undergraduate graduation requirements with an eye to promoting a more coherent learning experience. The multiyear process started with College-wide discussions about outcomes that we wanted students to achieve through their W&J experience; the faculty voted on this aspirational statement in May 2010.

W&J’s Student Outcomes Statement

W&J graduates demonstrate:

- intellectual curiosity, grounded in interdisciplinary thinking (lifelong learning; connecting natural and social sciences, arts, humanities, to make meaning from experiences in the world);
- informed analysis and decision-making (finding, evaluating, using information appropriately; effective reasoning; independence of thought; depth of knowledge; innovation);
- integrity (ethical reasoning; accepting responsibility; taking failure as opportunity; courage to lead; teamwork; empathy)
- and individual agency (initiative; self-awareness; motivation; self-direction; taking responsibility for physical and emotional health);
- the ability to communicate ideas (quantitative reasoning; oral and written communication; critical and creative thinking; adaptability; textual, visual, and artistic literacies; information technologies; the study of languages);
- a commitment to local and national communities (*juncta juvant*\(^5\); respectful of diversity; spirit of service; responsibility; knowledge of community expectations; political and social engagement; environmental conscience; civility in discourse)

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• paired with responsible global citizenship (understanding difference and commonality, at home and abroad; seeing one’s place in the larger world; able to practice everyday diplomacy).

This aspirational statement reflects the faculty’s interpretation of how the mission of the College manifests itself in the educational objectives of the institution, and it appears near the start of the College Catalog (pp. 16–17) to indicate its value to the College and its structural importance for the curriculum.

W&J’s Graduation Requirements

Next came a multiyear, highly collaborative process led by a subcommittee of the Curriculum and Program Committee, which developed models of requirements, administered surveys, and held open meetings. In February 2015, the faculty voted upon and approved revised graduation requirements (CPC1415–23) for students entering in or after fall 2016, briefly summarized here:

Each student must complete 32 semester courses, 2 Intersession courses, and 1 physical-activity/wellness course-equivalent with an overall grade-point average of 2.0 or better and a grade-point average in the major of 2.0 or better; also, each student must complete the Foundations, Breadth, and Depth requirements.

Early in 2018, the faculty voted to drop the two required Intersession courses because adjustments to the academic calendar made a three-to-four-week term in January unworkable. Intersession has, therefore, been replaced by an optional JayTerm, which preserves an immersive space for innovative, experiential learning but runs for two weeks. It offers students the chance to take half and quarter courses, either on campus or abroad.

I. Foundations. These courses promote liberal learning and prepare students for further study. Each student completes the following:

• First Year Seminar (1 course); transfer students are exempt
• First Year Composition (1 course)
• Diversity (1 course from any discipline)
• Foreign Language (1 to 2 courses, depending on starting level)
• Writing (1 writing-intensive course from any discipline)
• Physical Activity and Wellness (the equivalent of a half course in each; these are on top of the 32 courses)

II. Breadth. These courses promote understanding within and among disciplines. Each student completes nine courses (one from each of the six categories plus three more, each from a different category).

• Artistic. These courses teach students to create or understand works of art as expressions of imagination, technique, or historical and cultural context using the tools of creativity or performance, formal analysis, or comparative study.
• Behavioral. These courses teach students to explore the functions of society through examination of individual, collective, and institutional behaviors using the tools of observation, qualitative and quantitative modeling, and data analysis.
• Historical. These courses teach students to investigate the past through the study of primary and secondary texts and artifacts in an effort to construct explanatory narratives important to the present.
• Literary. These courses teach students to explore the meaning of human experience as represented in texts using the tools of close reading, comparative study, contextual inquiry, and critical analysis.
• Logical. These courses teach students to investigate the world through the use of abstraction and axioms using the tools of deduction, modeling, or quantifiable or formalized systems of reasoning.
• Scientific. These courses teach students to investigate the natural world and the means by which scientific principles are assembled using the tools of observation, experimentation, theoretical inquiry, modeling, and data collection and analysis.

III. Depth. The academic major promotes depth of understanding within one or more disciplines. It also develops writing, oral-communication skills, and information-technology skills appropriate to the discipline and includes a capstone that promotes integrative thinking. Each student completes a major.

Enhancing Coherence in Education

Compared to our previous requirements, the revised ones more clearly and coherently promote liberal education, align with the W&J Student Outcomes, and develop in our students the essential skills specified in the Standards for Accreditation.

Coherence is particularly reflected in the following ways:

• Restructuring the requirements into three categories—Foundations, Breadth, and Depth—communicates to students how course requirements work together to accomplish the broader curricular goals of laying a foundation for intermediate and advanced coursework, developing integrative thinking skills across disciplines, and mastering the content and skills of a single discipline in depth.
• Revising the Breadth requirement shifts the focus to shared learning outcomes and modes of thinking among courses in a category, regardless of discipline.
• Articulating a more explicit role within the curriculum for the major by requiring skill-development and integrative-thinking components creates connections among all courses.

Departments and programs offering Foundation or Breadth courses have revised their offerings to align to the College’s new requirements. Programs satisfying the Depth category have done the same (Subcommittee on Curriculum Review wiki page).
Achieving this coherence in practice also requires effective, personalized advising. This starts in all sections of the required First Year Seminar (FYS), where instructor-advisors ensure that students understand the mission of W&J, the goals of a liberal arts curriculum, and how the pieces fit together to create a whole. These efforts have been effective. In fall 2016, FYS assessed its student-learning outcome “Understand the W&J curriculum” through a twenty-question Curriculum Quiz. The programmatic benchmark of 75% correct responses on each question was met, with an average of 85%. Further, students reported that their primary source of information on these topics was FYS (2017–2018 Annual Report–FYS). Transfer students are exempted from the FYS requirement; they gain their curricular understanding through conversations with their assigned open-major faculty advisors. Advisors in the major continue the work and also guide students through the Depth part of the graduation requirements.

Alumni, best placed to reflect upon holistic questions, affirm that W&J students experience curricular coherence. Of alumni recently surveyed, 96% of alumni agreed that the courses they took at W&J worked together to create a coherent learning experience, and 93% agreed that courses in their major worked together to create a coherent learning experience within the discipline (Middle States Survey Results—Alumni). Strong advising ensured coherence under the previous graduation requirements, and will still do so under the new ones.

Synthesis of Learning

Synthesis of learning grows out of both program coherence and the requirement that each major include an integrative capstone, which serves as a culminating experience drawing on skills and knowledge so that students have a space to practice and reflect more largely upon their learning (Integrative Thinking in the Major). Capstones range from seminars and research projects to recitals and art shows.

The capstone experiences most departments already offered under the pre-2016 graduation requirements achieved these goals. Our survey of recent alumni shows that 91% agreed that the capstone within their major linked learning they had done previously in their major courses. (Middle States Survey Results—Alumni). In addition, major programs are now required to integrate and assess written communication, oral communication, and technology, further connecting skills taught in the Foundations courses with the Depth courses (Curriculum Resources wiki page).

Available Courses of Study

W&J offers courses open to all students in many disciplines; in addition, it offers opportunities for structured focus.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

At W&J, departments are administrative units of faculty overseen by a department chair (every faculty member has a home department); programs are administrative units that offer majors,
minors, or concentrations (a very few programs, like First Year Seminar, offer only courses). Most departments and programs overlap completely (for example, History, Philosophy), but some departments house several programs (for example, the Department of Modern Languages oversees French, German, Spanish, etc.). Some programs are freestanding, overseen by a director or coordinator based in a department and assisted by an interdepartmental steering committee (Environmental Studies or Gender and Women’s Studies, for instance).

There are several kinds of courses of study. A major typically consists of an organized grouping of eight to ten courses, with some including additional courses from other departments; some majors offer an optional emphasis, that is, a thematic or topical focus. A minor is an organized grouping of five to seven courses. A concentration is an organized grouping of four to five courses; it must be interdisciplinary (EPC-2). All courses of study are published in the College Catalog.

Students must complete one major; many, however, supplement their education with additional courses of study. In the class of 2017, for example, 44 students had more than one major, 109 had a minor, and 32 had a concentration.

*An asterisk indicates a new or a restructured and renamed offering since 2009.

### Majors (33)

| 7. Business Administration     | 18. Gender and Women’s Studies*      | 30. Public Policy*          |
| 9. Child Development and Education |                                   | 32. Spanish                 |
| 10. Communication Arts*        | 20. History                         | 33. Thematic Major (self-designed) |
|                                | 22. International Studies           |                            |
|                                | 23. Mathematics                     |                            |

### Minors (34)

| 1. Accounting                  | 10. East Asian Studies              | 19. Gender and Women’s Studies |
29. Professional Writing*  32. Religious Studies  
30. Psychology  33. Sociology  

**OPTIONAL EMPHASES WITHIN MAJORS**

Business Administration                          Economics
1. Entrepreneurship*                             1. Economic Development*  
2. Finance*                                      2. Financial Economics*  
3. Human Resources Management                   
4. Marketing*                                    
5. Operations Analytics*                         

Communication Arts                              Music
1. Film Studies*                                 1. Literature/Theory*  
2. Public Relations*                             2. Media*  
3. Theatre*                                      3. Performance*  

Computing and Information Studies               Psychology
2. Computer Science*                             
3. Digital Media*                                
4. Interaction Design*                           
5. Web and Mobile Technologies*                 

**CONCENTRATIONS (8)**

1. African American Studies*                    5. Entrepreneurship*  
3. Computational Science*                        7. Professional Writing  
4. Conflict and Resolution Studies*              8. Russian Area Studies*  

**TEACHER CERTIFICATION**

1. Early Childhood Certification (PreK–4)       
2. Specialty Education Certification (PreK–12) in Art Education, French, German, Spanish  
3. Upper Elementary Education Certification (4–8) in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies*  
4. Secondary Education Certification (7–12) in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics  
5. Dual certification in Special Education (PreK–8, 7–12)*  

**PRE-PROFESSIONAL AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

1. Engineering (dual degree)                    3. Pre-Law  
2. Pre-Health Professions                       4. Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC)  

**OTHER ACADEMIC OFFERINGS**

1. Arabic                                      4. First Year Seminar  
2. Earth and Space Science                     5. Physical Activity and Wellness  
3. Russian                                     6. Elective courses
The five most popular majors for the class of 2017 were psychology, business, accounting, English, and biology. The five most popular majors for the class of 2018 were business, psychology, accounting, political science, and (tied) biology and English.

Since our last self-study, we have added seven majors and removed three, added nine minors and removed two, added six concentrations and removed two. Many additions—for example, Public Policy and Financial Economics—resulted from student demand or programmatic need. A removed major, minor, or concentration has rarely been lost; rather, it has usually been replaced by a related one, often because of departmental or program restructuring and renaming. The trend has been toward expansion, not contraction. We are aware that we need to be strategic in our new offerings in a time of limited growth, so we have added another layer to the program-approval process—study by the Academic Planning Council—to ensure serious investigation of resource implications.

Approval of Courses and Courses of Study

Academic courses and programs are the heart of the College, and faculty members are careful in planning and approving all parts of the curriculum. The faculty take seriously their charge to “fix the requirements of the courses of study” (W&J College Bylaws, Article VII).

The procedure for approval at W&J is thorough. Using curriculum mapping, assessment data, or other means, a department or program first determines what is needed to support student-learning outcomes, enhance a course of study, or meet student demand. The department chair or program director submits a request for a new or revised course or course of study to the Curriculum and Program Committee (CPC). The request includes a consideration of the place of the proposed offering in both the program and in the larger curriculum. After clearing CPC and other required committees, the new offering is put up for vote at a regular faculty meeting. If approved, it enters the College Catalog.

This rigorous review procedure guarantees quality and adherence to mission and ensures that all faculty members are acquainted with each new offering and its content. This is an area (faculty-to-faculty) in which communication has always been stellar.

The Syllabus

Faculty members maintain independence balanced by oversight when it comes to courses. Faculty members design their own syllabi within parameters laid out by departments and programs, which have collaboratively developed student-learning outcomes, and with an eye toward recommendations published in the Faculty Handbook (ch. 8). Faculty make their syllabi available to students either in hard copy or through Sakai, W&J’s electronic course-management system. In addition, the Office of Academic Affairs maintains an electronic collection of syllabi, and department chairs and program directors have access to them for review.
Pedagogy

W&J faculty employ a variety of instructional methods in their courses. The most frequently mentioned methods faculty report using at some point in a typical year are the following (Workgroup Reports–III):

- lecturing (91% of respondents)
- using active learning with small-group student problem-solving (76%)
- employing Socratic discussion (73%)
- using active learning with individual student problem-solving (69%)
- conducting or showing demonstrations, experiments, simulations, videos, etc. (64%)
- doing illustrative problem-solving on board, projector, etc. (61%)

Faculty across the College also work hard to design innovative and significant learning opportunities. In addition to tests, essays, and research papers, faculty assign active-learning activities like Reacting to the Past (historical games informed by classic texts in the history of ideas) or research projects. Others “flip” their classrooms. For instance, the biology department recently moved pre-lab instruction for its introductory course to YouTube to free up time for students to pursue discovery-based, rather than cookbook-type, laboratory experiments.

Yet others have students work on digital platforms. Students collaborate on written projects using Google Docs, which also allows instructors to monitor both progress and the distribution of work. History majors curate museum displays using Omeka, a sophisticated platform for creating media-rich online exhibits, and English majors maintain blogs in WordPress. These online platforms allow students to share their work with a wider audience, as does the end-of-semester Student Projects Poster Session, which showcases academic work by students in the sciences and in other fields.

Some learning opportunities have a strong outreach component. In spring 2018, for example, students in HIS 410 curated an exhibit for the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, about baseball and national identity in the aftermath of 9/11. Their work was funded by the National Park Service, and the exhibit ran for eight weeks in 2018. CIS Students undertook technology-centered service-learning projects in partnership with local non-profit organizations, bringing together town and gown. The chemistry department’s ChemFest allowed the campus community a chance to sample a variety of lagers and ales brewed by students. The work of identifying, learning, and expanding the use of new and relevant pedagogical approaches is ongoing, especially in response to changing student demographics and student learning styles.

A Personalized Education at W&J

W&J also offers students opportunities to meet their own goals in addition to those the College has for them. All students are encouraged to think deliberately about links among their coursework, academic opportunities, and campus-life experiences so that they graduate with
intentional, multidimensional experiences, not just transcripts. Students are guided through such deliberation even before they arrive on campus for the first time through initial questionnaires.

These are some academic options that W&J students can consider:

- study-abroad semesters
- honors projects
- independent studies and research opportunities
- internships
- pre-professional programs (pre-health professions, pre-law, teacher certification)
- thematic majors

There are also programs that lead directly to other educational opportunities:

- Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC)
- dual-degree (3–2) engineering programs with Case Western Reserve University, Columbia University, and Washington University
- dual-degree (3–2) biostatistics program with West Virginia University
- dual-degree (3–4) programs with Salus University/Pennsylvania College of Optometry and Sidney Kimmel Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University
- guaranteed-admission agreements with Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University and Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine’s programs in osteopathic medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy
- reserved seats in Chatham University’s graduate programs in physical therapy, physician-assistant studies, and occupational therapy

We have students succeed in competitive postgraduate programs. In 2017–18, for example, we had two students in the corps for Teach for America, seven students on Fulbright student awards (making us one of the “top producers of Fulbrights,” according to the Chronicle of Higher Education), and two students awarded National Science Foundation graduate research fellowships. Many non-credit or extracurricular opportunities come into play to help students meet their goals.

**Spaces for Teaching and Learning**

Since the last self-study, the College has worked assiduously on building or renovating facilities and upgrading classrooms, laboratories, and other educational spaces. In addition, it has improved its arts facilities (black-box theatre, digital recording studio, upgraded FM-radio station, Kawai pianos in practice rooms) and provided additional after-hours study space in response to student requests, especially during final exams.

Some older educational facilities, however, still suffer from deferred maintenance. The number of regular classrooms has not increased despite the addition of new buildings because older
buildings were simultaneously taken off-line or torn down. Technology tools are not of uniform quality in all classrooms, either. We are keeping up, but not getting ahead.

**Beyond the W&J Classroom**

W&J students learn outside the traditional classroom as well. Students study the structure and function of ecosystems at the nearby Abernathy Field Station, a 57-acre “outdoor classroom.” Students of Shakespeare attend professional performances of his plays in Pittsburgh. On campus, students experience art, music, and theater at the Olin Fine Arts Center, which hosts a professional Arts Series as well as W&J student groups like the Wind Ensemble, Choir, and the Student Theatre Company.

**Visiting Speakers**

Guest speakers come to campus to enrich learning by giving lectures, presenting readings, and running workshops. The J. Robert Maxwell ’43 Visiting Scholar Series brings noted writers, academics, or professionals like journalist Nicholas Kristof and mediator Mary Montague to campus for multiday activities. The newly instituted Symposium on Democracy provides the campus with inspiring programming and international speakers. The Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar Program, hosted by our College’s chapter with financial help from our National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Fund, invites a speaker to campus every year or two.

**Academic-Interest Activities**

Departments and programs arrange lectures, trips, and other enriching activities for their students, and they sponsor academic-interest clubs and support disciplinary honor societies. Such groups encourage engagement with the world beyond W&J. Our student chapter of the American Chemical Society, for example, runs Saturday Science programs for local schoolchildren. Students in the English department edit and publish *The Wooden Tooth Review*, the W&J literary magazine, and visit local high schools to run creative-writing workshops.

Here is a sampling of some academic-interest activities open to all students (some are funded by the Student Government Association, others by the clubs themselves):

- Art Club
- Biology Club
- Franklin Literary Society
- French Club
- Future Business Leaders of America ΦΒΛ
- German Club
- History Club
- Math Club
- Mock Trial Team
- Model United Nations (Model UN)
- Pre-Legal Society
- Public Relations Student Society of America
- Society of Physics Students
- Spanish Club
- Student Association for Neuroscience
There are also many honor societies for specific majors whose members attend professional or academic conferences, often presenting posters or papers at the regional and national level (even the international level, at times). A W&J education is more than just taking courses; it allows for self-direction and connection to others, both inside the College and in the wider community.

**International Academic-Exchange Programs**

While many students come to W&J with no plans to leave the country, in the end, well over half end up studying or traveling internationally at some point during their four years at W&J. The College makes many opportunities available to assist in this transformative experience, facilitating both for-credit and not-for-credit travel.

W&J works with nearly forty approved study-abroad programs; most are open to students in all majors. We rarely do a “W&J in [name of country here]” program; our students enroll for a semester at an international university for greater immersion, and the course credits transfer to W&J. On average, twenty-three students each semester are off-campus studying in at least a dozen different countries. Our international-educational offerings, overseen by the Office of Study Abroad, are robust. We are committed to increasing access to long-term study abroad and have initiated a Study Abroad Travel Fund, which has been able to offer students $1000–1200 for travel expenses. Additional funding is also available through generous donor funds.

**Faculty-Led Travel Courses**

Many of our students go beyond the borders of the United States for the first time when they take a W&J travel course. In January 2018, students went on location for HISTORY 290: The American War in Vietnam, and Spanish-language students took SPANISH 233/322: Cultural Journeys and Service-Learning in Nicaragua. Our students visit England, Italy, France, the Czech Republic, The Gambia, Australia, and other countries. Faculty also lead students to other parts of the United States, such as the Sonoran Desert. Since 2010, an average of 113 students a year have taken a faculty-led travel course. Sixteen travel courses have been approved for JayTerm 2019.

**Supporting Teaching and Learning**

**Faculty Advisors**

W&J prides itself on its close student-faculty connections. Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE Report 2015) shows “student-faculty interaction” at W&J to be “significantly higher” than at the comparison group (Mid East Private). Once matriculated, every student is assigned an advisor to assist with course selection and program planning. For students entering in the fall, First Year Seminar (FYS) instructors serve as advisors; students who enter in the spring are assigned open-major faculty advisors. To the question “My initial advisor (FYS instructor) at W&J provided a useful starting point to my academic advising,” 73% of
students agreed (Middle States Survey Results–Students). Once students declare majors, they choose faculty from the relevant departments to serve as new advisors. Students with two majors choose one from each program; some minors and concentrations also offer advising.

The average advisee count per faculty member is fifteen, and a large majority (88%) of students agreed that there were sufficient faculty to support their academic efforts (Middle States Survey Results–Students). However, the advising load is unevenly distributed, with those teaching in the FYS program in consecutive years or those in departments with large numbers of majors carrying relatively high loads. FYS instructors may shift their students to open-major advisors after the first year if overburdened, but many feel obliged to keep their students until they declare majors; there is no scheme in place for those who teach in popular departments.

Office of Academic Success

The Office of Academic Success provides disability support services and assists students in academic difficulty. It maintains an intense schedule of hands-on work with many students, reporting a case load of 425 in the 2016–17 academic year (Advising–DSS Office Stats). Its work is much appreciated: 58% of current students agreed that their experience with the office was positive; 37% had no opinion (Middle States Survey Results–Students).

Although W&J provides many services to support the academic needs and growth of its students, additional resources are required to assist fully all students needing accommodations (73 in 2017–18) as well as those requiring additional or remedial academic mentoring (Disability Services Numbers).

The PAL (Peer-Assisted-Learning) program provides peer-based academic assistance in writing – and in fifteen academic subject areas. Use varies by discipline, but in a typical semester, forty PAL tutors handle one thousand student visits (PAL Number of Visits Per Tutor).

U. Grant Miller Library

Five full-time librarians, one part-time librarian, and four full-time staff are available to work with students on individual projects or with entire classes in instructional sessions on how to find and judge information, both print and electronic. Librarians meet with First Year Seminar faculty and student mentors, offer customized classes in research methods, and provide research help, either in person or through the electronic “Ask a Librarian” service.

In 2017, the library received a grant in collaboration with four other colleges (McDaniel, Ursinus, Goucher, and Washington Colleges) from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to develop best practices to ensure that information-literacy-education programs enhance the success and persistence of the at-risk first-year student.
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

This unit comprises the offices of Study Abroad and of International Student Initiatives. It provides information for W&J students seeking an educational experience abroad and support for W&J students from other countries. An English as a Second Language specialist is available.

The W&J Faculty

Faculty positions fall into the following categories:

- Tenured. These full-time positions are governed by the provisions for tenure as addressed in the Faculty Handbook.
- Tenure-track. These full-time positions are eligible for tenure under the provisions addressed in the Faculty Handbook.
- Non-Tenure-track. There are two tracks, “continuity” and “teaching.” These full-time positions are not eligible for tenure. They are contracted for a fixed period, confer faculty benefits, and may or may not be renewable.
- Adjunct. These part-time positions are generally contracted by the course and do not confer benefits nor are faculty that hold them eligible for tenure. The nature of the position is specified in the original appointment letter and any subsequent contract letters.

FULL-TIME FACULTY

W&J’s dedicated and competent faculty design, deliver, and assess the student-learning experiences at the College. Of its 114 full-time members in 2018–19, 106 hold terminal degrees in their disciplines (Faculty Information [Full-Time]). They are hired through national searches coordinated by the Office of Human Resources and the relevant department chair, and they are reviewed according to procedures laid out in the Faculty Handbook (ch. 17–19).

With an increasing number of non-tenure-track hires, the Faculty Review Committee recently proposed uniform procedures for the periodic review of faculty in these lines. In 2018, expectations and review procedures for the two categories of non-tenured track faculty (“continuity” and “teaching”) were adopted and reviews commenced.

The faculty work hard. They are excellent teachers who know their subjects, keep up in their fields, and pursue pedagogic innovation. Students give strong ratings to faculty on course evaluations, and alumni speak highly of them. The quality of W&J graduates speaks to faculty efforts. The standard teaching assignment is six courses per academic year or an equivalent; it was seven courses per year (3–1–3) until 2010–12, when a two-year transition began to the current load in response to concerns about a lack of time for faculty development and one-on-one work with students. Some faculty members get course releases and/or stipends for significant administrative duties, such as serving as a dean, program director, or department chair or for undertaking a major project for the College.
Faculty members do the work of their departments; handle program creation, development, and assessment; and serve on College committees. A typical faculty member serves on a governance or other College-wide committee each year; some serve on several.

They also take advantage of internal opportunities for professional development and pedagogical innovation. The following are the major sources of support:

- Faculty Travel Fund ($2000 per faculty member in each two-year cycle; ninety-one faculty used this fund in the cycle ending June 30, 2018 [FDC Travel Fund Expenses])
- Sabbatical program (tenured faculty only: about eight a year granted)
- Class of 1970 Fund for Faculty Development (varying numbers of awards totaling $6000 per year)
- Kenneth M. Mason, Sr., Summer Grants for Faculty Research (two $4150 grants per year)

Many faculty members maintain a commendable scholarly or professional profile to complement their teaching by publishing books, articles and creative works; by winning competitions, awards, and grants; and by presenting at international, national, and regional academic conferences. For example, between 2014 and 2017, at least 64 faculty presented at 264 conferences or other venues (Scholarly Almanacs). In September 2016, three faculty received Fulbright awards; faculty have also won grants from other agencies. Others are practitioners in their fields.

Many also provide service to their professions by serving as journal editors, editorial-board members, and officers in learned or professional societies; by peer reviewing books and articles for publishers and scholarly journals; and by chairing panels at or organizing regional and national scholarly conferences. The faculty define their work broadly and take it seriously.

**Gender Balance**

The percentage of women on the full-time faculty has risen from 44% in 2011–12 to 50% in 2018–19. Perhaps more significantly, the percentage of women among full professors rose from 30% to 39% over the same period. As a whole, W&J has become more balanced—appropriate since nearly half its enrolled students are women—but individual departments are not necessarily balanced; in fact, several are overwhelmingly one-sided. Imbalance within departments will limit the range of possible role models and may well discourage some students from pursuing certain majors or minors.

Also of concern, new faculty lines are not gender balanced. In 2016–17, for example, three of the eleven (27%) tenure-track assistant professors were women; in contrast, there were nine women (60%) among the fifteen assistant professors not in tenure-track lines (Faculty Information [Full-Time]). A shortage of women in tenure-track lines does mean a shortage of them for leadership roles at the College further down the line.
PART-TIME (ADJUNCT) FACULTY

W&J has thirty-eight part-time faculty members as of fall 2018, which allows the College to maintain some flexibility to hire practitioners and visiting experts (for example, instructors in applied music), address fluctuating enrollments in introductory courses (English composition, foreign language, and mathematics, in particular), and fill in for faculty on sabbatical. Part-time faculty members are hired through searches coordinated by the Office of Human Resources and departments, and their teaching is supervised by chairs or designated department members. Some are provided office space, computers, library and database access, email accounts, and the assistance of building administrative assistants. There is also an orientation each semester for incoming faculty to which all adjuncts are invited. Review processes vary by department.

Department and Program Budgets

For the year ending 30 June 2018, the College provided $4,885,335 in academic support (Audited Financial Statements). Supplemental funding for special pedagogical opportunities—visiting speakers, scholars, performances—can be drawn from the NEH Fund, which offers about $20,000 per year, or from endowed departmental funds.

There are not enough resources, human or financial, to address all the needs of departments and programs. In most, if not all, academic departments, budgets have been flat for at least a decade and were reduced by 10% in 2016–17, where they have remained. Here are some relevant responses from department chairs culled from the Middle States Survey Results—Faculty:

- Statement: “We have enough information about our projected department budget to develop long-range plans for our curriculum.” Results: slightly disagree: 7%, disagree: 35%, strongly disagree: 38% (total of 80%).
- Statement: “Our current department budget allows us adequate resources to fulfill the College’s mission and goals.” Results: slightly disagree: 12%, disagree: 27%, strongly disagree: 21% (total of 60%).

The trend has been for support to diminish rather than increase. This reality makes it challenging for departments to plan or think creatively or proactively. In addition, in the past, department chairs had no information about how budgets were determined; that lack of transparency is abating under current leadership.

With that said, academic departments and programs have made many resource-neutral changes. Accounting, Biology, Business, Communication Arts, Computing and Information Studies, Economics, Financial Economics, Music, and Physics, to name a few, significantly modified their offerings and courses of study because of the changing needs of students and expectations in their fields. Assessment data guided these modifications. In addition, interdepartmental and interdisciplinary programs have been created—such as African
American Studies, American Studies, Art Conservation, and Russian Area Studies—to enrich offerings at minimal expense. We have managed to do more with less.

Departments have been requesting more resources for student conference attendance. In 2018, the College set up the Dr. Haring-Smith Grants for Uncommon Students, which will support honors or other programs that offer selected students out-of-the-ordinary educational opportunities and provide individual grants for bright students to engage in unique opportunities outside the classroom, whether on campus or far from home. The fund is now fully endowed.

An Evolving Graduate Program

Although our focus is on undergraduate education, W&J recently developed a modern graduate program to provide opportunities for both our own graduates and the larger community and a revenue stream. It offers both the master’s degree and the certificate in areas of local need identified by consultants Tripp Umbach (Tripp-Umbach Final Report). The faculty shaped the parameters of the new programs, and program directors largely drawn from the faculty oversee its day-to-day activities.

**Approval Process**

Any proposed certificate or master’s program must document (GPC New Graduate Program Proposal Form) how it meets the definition of its degree type, including content and minimum requirements of the degree:

- Master of Arts: at least eight 3-credit graduate courses; students are required to have completed a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution.
- Certificate: at least three 3-credit graduate courses; students are required to have completed a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution.

The proposal is reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee and voted on by the faculty as a whole, as is each new graduate course.

**Programs**

At this time, two programs have been launched: (1) Professional Writing and (2) Applied Heath Care Economics. Each program offers courses on a regular schedule.

The Professional Writing program comprises ten courses for a master’s degree and five for the certificate. It has offered thirteen courses over the past six terms (there are three terms each year: fall, spring, summer). The program includes classroom-based required and elective courses. Four students have earned the certificate, and two have received the master’s degree.

Applied Heath Care Economics offered a ten-course master’s degree and graduated one cohort. The multisite program combined on-campus instruction, a residency in Boston, and online modules. It started with five students in the initial cohort, but one withdrew from the program.
because of the time commitment. Two students in the cohort quickly received job promotions based on their work in the program; three students received the master’s degree in spring 2018. This program is unlikely to continue in the future unless reconceived in a way that connects more logically with our undergraduate curriculum and faculty.

Because these graduate offerings are new to W&J, they are considered works in progress for the purposes of this self-study. The strategic-planning process will consider how the College might offer more such programs but designed more carefully to extend and integrate with the undergraduate curriculum.

FACULTY

Faculty for the graduate programs are appropriately experienced and credentialed (Graduate Faculty and Credentials). Some are adjuncts with specialist skills and terminal degrees who teach only in the graduate program. Of the seven faculty in the Professional Writing program, four are full-time members of the W&J faculty with PhDs who teach in the graduate program in addition to their undergraduate teaching, and three are adjuncts with master’s degrees and relevant professional experience. Faculty in the Applied Health Care Economics program are adjuncts with terminal degrees in their fields.

Observations on Standard III

W&J meets Standard III and Requirements of Affiliation 8, 9, 10, and 15. It provides undergraduates with a systematic, rigorous, and coherent program of study leading to the degree of bachelor of arts. The liberal arts program is designed, delivered, and assessed by a qualified faculty who are sufficient in number, maintain their skill and knowledge levels through professional development, and who are regularly evaluated according to documented processes. The College Catalog describes all courses of study, and the general-education component of the graduation requirements offers opportunities for exploration as well as the acquisition of the essential skills mandated by the Middle States Commission. Graduate students pursue rigorous, structured programs approved by the W&J faculty at large, described on the College’s website, and taught by qualified instructors.

Strengths and Suggestions, Standard III

STRENGTHS

- The College provides a rigorous program of study relevant to twenty-first-century undergraduates that also aligns with the College’s aspirational outcomes statement.
- A dedicated, well-qualified, and competent faculty design, deliver, and assess student learning at the College.
- Students have opportunities to meet their own goals through both academic and campus-life experiences so they graduate with multidimensional perspectives.
**Suggestions**

- Scale up student-support services to meet the needs of students.
- Augment department and program budgets to support the work of faculty and the needs of students.
- Reconceive the graduate program in a way that will better serve W&J students and complement undergraduate majors.

**Standard V**

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

**Evaluating What We Do**

The College has long assessed course-level student-learning outcomes, individual courses, the work of its graduating majors, all-College required courses, and some department-based introductory courses. Departments and programs have also been reviewed periodically.

But we needed a more centralized approach. In June 2015, a few months after the revised graduation requirements were voted in, four faculty members and the director of the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research attended an institute on general education and assessment sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Thanks to the knowledge gained, the group was able to enhance our processes. Our newly appointed Academic Affairs Assessment Committee and the General Education Disappearing Task Force, along with the director of the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research, organized Friday-afternoon workshops on refining program mission statements and goals, curriculum mapping, writing student-learning outcomes, designing program-assessment plans, and designing and using rubrics, among other topics. This faculty development helped put the pieces into place for the assessment of general education.

**General-Education Assessment**

From the aspirational outcomes statement, the General Education Disappearing Task Force developed a set of assessable institutional student-learning outcomes (SLOs); it also laid out a plan and schedule for assessing general education.
These institutional SLOs were voted upon and approved by the faculty:

1. written communication
2. oral communication
3. technology
4. scientific reasoning
5. logical and quantitative reasoning
6. critical analysis and reasoning
7. information literacy
8. ethical reasoning
9. diverse perspectives
10. integrative thinking

Each year, the College assesses three or four institutional SLOs, cycling through them all in three years. Because of recent changes to the graduation requirements, these assessments establish a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of our revised requirements in future years.

We use both survey data and student coursework as artifacts. Rubrics developed by either the General Education DTF or the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee, in consultation with specialist faculty members, align to our SLOs and are used by all departments when possible. The Faculty Assessment Manual, a ready reference for faculty, documents all policies and procedures. It also contains rubrics and educational information on assessment practices.

**TABLE 3.1 ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE FOR REVISED GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

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The director of the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research coordinates assessment activities among faculty, departments, and other College entities; collects and stores the data in Weave, a suite of assessment- and accreditation-management software packages; and generates analytical reports. The Academic Affairs Assessment Committee disseminates the results through presentations at faculty meetings and results are communicated to the board’s Academic Affairs Committee. When necessary, the Curriculum and Program Committee proposes curricular revisions based on assessment findings.
YEAR ONE OF THE CYCLE

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

- Assessed through student work graded in all departments using a common rubric with eight categories.
- Goal: 80% of students sampled will meet expectations.
- Results: over 80% in five categories; 72 to 79% in three categories. We fell short in: analysis, mechanics, and documentation in the discipline.

Conclusion: the pre-2016 graduation requirement (“take two W courses”) worked somewhat, but we anticipate that the revised one will work better. Requiring discipline-specific writing instruction should help, but those faculty in programs offering writing-intensive courses for the Foundations need to be mindful of the three categories that fell a bit short.

NSSE 2015 data showed 83% of W&J seniors self-reporting perceived gains of “very much” or “quite a bit” in writing clearly and effectively, which corroborates the writing assessment in the next year. We are pleased students are aware of improvement in their writing skills.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

- Assessed through student presentations graded in all departments using a common rubric with six categories.
- Goal: 80% of students sampled will meet expectations.
- Results: over 80% in all six categories.

Conclusion: we did well, and the pre-2016 graduation requirement (“take one C course”) worked. We anticipate that the post-2016 requirement (assessed within the major) will work as effectively since many departments developed courses emphasizing oral communication to satisfy the requirements of the previous curriculum, and they are still in place.

NSSE 2015 data showed 76% of W&J seniors self-reporting perceived gains of “very much” or “quite a bit” in speaking clearly and effectively, lower than the assessment results showed the following year. Either our students are not confident about their speaking skills or they feel their skills were already strong when they matriculated.

TECHNOLOGY

We assessed technology use through student self-reporting on course evaluations, departmental surveys, and department-specific rubrics. We first tried to determine common expectations. Based on student reporting on course evaluations in in 2016–17, 74% of courses at W&J utilized technology (Institutional Tech Assessment from 2016–17 Course Evaluations—“Did you use technology in your course?”). A variety of tools was used: roughly 25% of these courses used Microsoft Office components, 25% used search engines/databases, 15% performed data analysis using software, 20% used multimedia software, and 15% used a
discipline-specific form of technology such as a scientific instrument, for example (Institutional Tech Assessment from 2016–17 Course Evaluations—“What technology did you use in your course?”). There seemed to be no consensus. Departmental surveys also revealed no uniformity of expectations.

We finally chose to have departments assess technology use and skills based on their own expectations and department-generated rubrics.

Technology skills:

- Assessed in departments using a department-specific rubric.
- Goal: 80% of departments will meet expectations.
- Result: 73% of departments met their goals.

Conclusion: we fell short. Before 2016, W&J did not teach technology skills consistently across the College since there was no requirement; results show that this casual approach was not very effective. Departments that fell short were advised to close the loop by adjusting their SLOs, their assessment process, or their educational methods, as relevant. We hope the current requirement, which requires discipline-specific technology instruction, will help.

YEAR TWO OF THE CYCLE

SCIENTIFIC REASONING

- Assessed through student work (presentation of scientific inquiry in written or oral form [e.g., lab report, poster, PowerPoint slides from a presentation]) prepared for these courses carrying the SCIENCE designation: first course in a departmental-major sequence and courses for non-majors. Graded in departments using a common rubric with four categories.
- Goal: 70% of students will meet expectations.
- Results: 59 to 63% in four categories. We fell short in all four.

Conclusion: although the percentages look disappointing, the actual results are less dramatic. Some departments just missed the target, finding the rubric overly ambitious. Several departments found that the artifacts selected did not allow for the level of detail needed, which affected scores; that will be remedied the next time this assessment comes around. The rubric and the process will be reevaluated.

LOGICAL & QUANTITATIVE REASONING

- Assessed through student work (presentation of logical reasoning in written form on a test, quiz, or exam) from these courses carrying the LOGIC designation: first course in a departmental-major sequence and courses for non-majors. Graded in departments using a common rubric with two categories; a third category is assessed alongside Scientific Reasoning and appears on its rubric.
• Goal: 70% of students will meet expectations.
• Results: 73 to 79% in three categories.

Conclusion: we did well. The courses assessed came from disparate departments so the rubric ended up being customized. As with the Scientific Reasoning assessment, selecting suitable artifacts proved to be learning process for some departments; that will be remedied the next time this student-learning-outcome assessment comes around.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS & REASONING

• Assessed through work submitted by seniors (written presentation of argument or analysis). Graded by a team of faculty from different departments using a common rubric with six categories (five with one subdivided).
• Goal: 80% of students will meet expectations.
• Results: over 80% in four categories; 62 to 78% in two categories. We fell short in: consideration of the opposition and clarity of argument.

Conclusion: we did well. As the written artifacts were supplied by students who chose what material to submit, not all worked equally well for assessing all the categories. Next cycle, we will focus the artifacts more carefully and clarify how to handle categories that need to be omitted.

INFORMATION LITERACY

• Assessed through responses (first-years and seniors) to the HEDS Research Practices Survey, administered spring 2016 and spring 2018.
• Goal: seniors will score higher, showing greater knowledge of research practices, than first-year students.
• Results: In 2018, first-year students answered correctly at a rate of 60%, and seniors answered correctly at a rate of 64%. In 2016, first-years answered correctly at a rate of 61% and seniors answered correctly at a rate of 65%.

Conclusion: we met our goal but wish that senior scores had been higher. Departmental and program assessments of related SLOs corroborate these results. Many of our students are challenged by finding, evaluating, and citing sources. Programs are closing the loop in various ways: creating research-methods courses (History), designing scaffolded assignments on finding and evaluating sources (Neuroscience, Music), working more closely with librarians teaching information-literacy workshops (First Year Seminar), and developing writing guides to improve citation practices (Mathematics).
YEAR THREE OF THE CYCLE

The third year of the cycle will address the remaining institutional learning outcomes—ethical reasoning, diverse perspectives, and integrative thinking—with results forthcoming in June 2019.

Course Assessment through Student Evaluations

As noted earlier, the College has long assessed student reactions to individual courses. These were formerly done on paper; they are now done electronically using SmartEvals in the final two weeks of the semester. We made this move to save money and staff time. Most significantly, however, the turnaround time for results changed from months to days.

The evaluations explore student perceptions on the effectiveness of instruction through questions that pinpoint specific elements of the course. Students also can write responses outlining which course experiences were effective in supporting learning. In addition, faculty can add their own questions to the evaluations.

Faculty receive summaries of their results a week or two after final grades for a course have been submitted. This speed makes it possible for a faculty member to make use of the results in the next semester. The summaries are also distributed to department chairs and/or program directors. Instructors, chairs, and the VPAA all receive a guide to interpreting evaluation results.

The course-evaluation process can help a faculty member assess the effectiveness of teaching and instructional styles, the success of the course and effectiveness of its execution, and the impression the course made on students. This, in addition to regular review by the department chair or program director, allows W&J to improve course design and logistics to enhance student learning. The committee designing the evaluations took considerable pains to minimize student bias in the instrument.

Department and Program Assessment

All departments and some programs evaluate themselves on a regular basis in order to assess their offerings, enrollments, staffing issues, and budgets and to take stock of the accomplishments of their faculty and students.

ANNUAL REPORTS

At the end of each academic year, each department and program prepares a summary report (2017–2018 Annual Reports [Academic Department & Programs]). The vice president for academic affairs provides written feedback on curriculum health, academic advising, budget health, faculty engagement, and program health (2016–2017 Annual Reports VPAA Response [Academic Department & Programs]). The director of the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research and the associate dean in the Office of Academic Affairs respond to the assessment section of the report using a rubric.
PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT

W&J performs ongoing assessment of student-learning outcomes at the program level. Programs that offer a major select two to three of their SLOs each year to assess, then design a plan and implement it. They report the results as part of the annual report and, when needed, develop a plan to address shortfalls. Programs assess coursework produced by their students as well as poster presentations, art shows, music recitals, and capstone presentations.

Programs whose assessment results identified opportunities for improvement did so. For example, the history major now includes a required course in historiography to enhance student skills in analysis of evidence. Public Policy determined that students needed more in-depth practice on analytic methodologies before embarking on their own analysis projects. Music identified problems with students’ understanding of intellectual property and copyright and devised specific assignments to help students comprehend the issues. Neuroscience created sample assignments for faculty to incorporate into classes to help those students taking a non-standard track through the major develop their skills in evaluating scientific literature.

SELF-STUDIES

Periodically, programs undertake a self-study to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges over a longer term (typically ten years). The College recently completed a cycle of these reviews. Psychology undertook a self-study and external review in 2018–19.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Biochemistry, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics use the Major Field Tests from the Educational Testing Service as external measures for assessment (ETS Test Summaries).

The teacher-certification program requires students to pass tests in basic skills for program admission. Passing scores are determined by performance on either the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators tests, the Pre-Service Academic Performance Assessment (PAPA), the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the American College Test (ACT), or a combination of them. Thereafter, students take either the Praxis assessments or the Pennsylvania Educator Certification Tests (PECT) to demonstrate subject-matter competency. Typically, five to ten students a year achieve certification.

GRADUATE-SCHOOL ACCEPTANCE

Many programs consider acceptance to graduate or professional schools as a measure for assessment. For example, our pre-professional programs have high acceptance rates.
### TABLE 3.2 NUMBER OF STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO PRE-HEALTH-PROFESSIONS SCHOOLS AND LAW SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional School</th>
<th>In 2014</th>
<th>In 2015</th>
<th>In 2016</th>
<th>In 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health professions</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law School</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are proud of the success our students have in being admitted to professional schools and see it as a testament to the rigor of our educational programs and personal advising.

Other students also attend graduate and other professional schools, but their numbers are not tracked as carefully since admittance often comes after students have left W&J. The Office of Career Services administers a First Destination Survey that helps collect information from the approximately 80% of students who respond.

### TABLE 3.3 NUMBER OF STUDENTS SELF-REPORTING GRADUATE- AND PROFESSIONAL-SCHOOL ACCEPTANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Class of 2014 (242 responding)</th>
<th>Class of 2015 (239 responding)</th>
<th>Class of 2016 (165 responding)</th>
<th>Class of 2017 (154 responding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepted and attending</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted and deferring admission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking additional undergraduate courses</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently applying</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

In certain fields, optional certification takes place, which can serve as program assessment. The American Chemical Society, for example, annually examines our chemistry program for status as an ACS-approved program (*American Chemical Society Reports*).

In other fields, an external review is required. Every ten years, our Education program goes through an extensive review by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) that also involves all departments participating in subject-area certification. We have recently completed materials in preparation for a Spring 2019 review. W&J has always passed its PDE reviews.

### Graduate-Program Assessment

There are too few graduates from the two graduate programs to provide an adequate sample size for assessment that also maintains student anonymity. All programs are required to
provide evidence that student-learning outcomes are being met, but for now, directors will collect student artifacts until an appropriate sample size is reached. The assessment plans will be expanded when degree conferrals increase, but for now, they consist of the following:

- Continue collecting instructor résumés, course syllabi, and sample student assignments.
- Create rubrics for select courses that address course SLOs and two to three related program SLOs.
- Send the aggregate data and a reflection statement to the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research.
- Administer a student-satisfaction survey for graduates completing master’s degrees.
- Professional Writing: Assess, using a rubric, final portfolios of students graduating with master’s degrees.

**ISSUES WITH STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY**

Students are reluctant to complete course evaluations in small courses, believing they will be too easily identified by instructors. As a result, for graduate courses with fewer than four enrolled students, evaluations are not sent to the instructor, only to the program director (or another designated party, if necessary).

**Non-Curricular Assessment of Students through Surveys**

The Office of Assessment & Institutional Research oversees other means of assessing student learning by coordinating the administration of external survey instruments that provide direct and indirect assessment of W&J’s general-education program.

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+) assesses critical thinking and was last administered to entering students in fall 2015 and seniors in spring 2016. Results (*CLA+ 2016*) indicated that:

- W&J students improve from first year to senior year in skills tested by CLA+.
- W&J students start at a higher point in their mastery of the test content but also end at a higher point when compared to national averages.
- Based on the Value-Added score, W&J is doing more than expected for its students.

The National Survey of Student Engagement, last administered in 2015, showed that, relative to our comparison group, Mideast Private Colleges, W&J seniors spent more time (*NSSE 2015*):

- completing a culminating (capstone) experience (+37);
- talking about career plans with faculty (+22);
- working with faculty members on activities other than coursework (+18);
- discussing academic performance with a faculty member (+18).

Overall, these are satisfying results that demonstrate the value and success of our strong student-faculty academic and advising relationships.
Other external direct and indirect measures of student performance and impressions are collected periodically; tabulated results for many are published in the *W&J Factbook*.

**Observations on Standard V**

W&J meets Standard V and Requirements of Affiliation 8, 9, and 10. Our assessable student-learning outcomes at the institutional and program levels align with the College’s mission and aspirational outcomes statements. To measure student achievement, we have orderly assessment plans in place for both general education and for programs offering a major; graduate programs have plans that will be fully implemented when there are more students to assess. We have designed rubrics, collected data, analyzed results, and closed the loop when needed by revising relevant programs, courses, and methodologies. Our graduates are prospering, with high levels of acceptance to graduate and professional schools.

**Strengths and Suggestions, Standard V**

**Strengths**

- The College has a well-laid-out plan for assessing all components of general education on a reasonable schedule.
- The *Faculty Assessment Manual* outlines our procedures and collects all relevant documents in one place.
- Faculty members have undergone extensive professional development on a variety of assessment topics through workshops sponsored by the Office of the President.
- Departments and programs have assessment plans, include their results and comments on closing the loop in an annual report, and receive regular feedback from the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research.

**Suggestions**

- Continue offering professional-development workshops about assessment.
- Improve the dissemination of assessment results.
- Expand the utilization of Weave for sharing assessment results more widely.
4. The Comprehensive Student Experience from Recruitment to Graduation and Beyond (Standard IV)

Standard IV

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

The W&J Student

First-Time Undergraduates

W&J’s typical student is an 18-to-22-year-old from Pennsylvania starting college for the first time. We have students from other parts of the United States and, increasingly, the world, creating a more diverse community, but numbers of in-state students remain about the same.

Table 4.1 Percent Geographical Distribution of Entering First-Year Students, Fall Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-state % of student body</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-state % of student body</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International % of student body</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Admission to W&J is competitive. The following chart shows recent trends in application numbers, acceptance rates, and enrollment rates for degree-seeking first-time students.

Table 4.2 First-Time Student Admission Statistics, Fall Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied for admittance</td>
<td>3649</td>
<td>3708</td>
<td>3977</td>
<td>3928</td>
<td>2806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance rate</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matriculated</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applications have been strong, but 2017 saw a smaller entering cohort. The number of applications was down due to a move from a two-part to a one-part application; the low yield, however, was not predicted by modeling even as late as April 20 of that year (Enrollment-update report to faculty, 5 May 2017).

Nevertheless, we have not dropped our standards to fill our seats. Our students have good academic records, and the average unweighted high school GPA of all degree-seeking first-time students has been steadily on the rise.

**TABLE 4.3 AVERAGE GPA OF ENTERING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS, FALL SEMESTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school GPA</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 2010, W&J has been a score-optional institution; standardized-test scores are only one factor in our admission process and serve to affirm a student’s academic potential in conjunction with high school performance. Among those who submit scores, either with their application or after admittance, the middle 50% range on the SAT Math and the SAT Evidence-Based Reading & Writing sections (combined) is 1060–1260 and on the ACT composite, 24–30.

**TRANSFER STUDENTS**

W&J welcomes applications from transfer students from both two- and four-year accredited institutions. The College offers them the same merit-award opportunities as students who start at W&J. We have also established articulation agreements with the **Community College of Allegheny County** (in 2011) and **Westmoreland County Community College** (in 2012) to facilitate the transfer process.

In 2010, in response to an increased number of applications, W&J hired its first Office of Admission staff member dedicated to working with transfer students throughout the entire admission process. Acceptance rates and yield vary widely; enrollment is trending down.

**TABLE 4.4 TRANSFER STUDENT ADMISSION STATISTICS, FALL SEMESTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied for Transfer</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance rate</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The year 2017 saw a large drop in applications from transfer students, which seems to be a trend. Yield in 2018, however, was strong.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

In a quest to enhance global diversity, in 2010, W&J hired its first director of international recruitment. This person works diligently with key stakeholders to identify target areas, makes visits to grow W&J’s brand recognition, and actively recruits students. Collaboration with the director of international student services yielded positive changes in marketing strategies, such as offering admission information in Chinese and Arabic. As a result, the number of international students has nearly doubled in the past five years. Many come as exchange students admitted through bilateral agreements managed by the Office of International Programs, but an increasing number enroll as degree-seeking students.

**TABLE 4.5 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, FALL SEMESTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree-seeking</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total enrolled</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

W&J has also established institutional memberships in the Council of International Schools, International Association of College Admission Counselors, AMIDEAST, and the Institute of International Education to help with the recruitment of students. We have also partnered with EducationUSA, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, and IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board).

W&J’s English Language Institute (ELI), established in 2013, prepared international students for study at W&J or other colleges and universities in the United States. The program did good work, enrolling 122 students between summer 2014 and fall 2016; however, in 2017, demand fell at W&J, as it did nationwide, due in part to global politics and a strong US dollar. ELI, therefore, has shifted its mission from providing pre-academic English-language training to providing support services for W&J’s growing number of degree-seeking international students; its staff has been folded into the Office of International Student Initiatives.

The Office of International Student Initiatives also supports students from the start of their journey throughout their time at W&J. It serves as a resource for addressing these needs:

- F1-visa guidance
- cultural-adjustment advising
- academic advising
- English as a Second Language tutoring
- peer-mentorship opportunities
- on-campus events
- excursions to local attractions
AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE STUDENT BODY

As described in Chapter 2 (see pp. 45–46), the Office of Admission has been continuously working on diversifying the student body.

In 2011, W&J established YES Prep Scholars, which selects students from the YES Prep Public Schools, a group of open-enrollment charter schools in Houston, Texas, that guides economically disadvantaged students, most of whom identify as Hispanic/Latino, into college. In 2018, eighteen YES Prep Scholars were enrolled; thirty-five students in total have matriculated. In early years, the retention rate for these students was low, but a combination of better cultural preparation by YES Prep and better support from W&J has improved it.

Initiated in 2013, the Charles West Scholars, named after a class of ’24 graduate and the first African American quarterback to play in the Rose Bowl (actually, in any bowl), provides recruitment, scholarship, and programmatic support for invited African American/Black-identifying students. In fall 2018, thirty-six Charles West Scholars were enrolled; forty-one students in total have matriculated.

SUPPORTING AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE STUDENT BODY

The Office of Inclusive Campus Engagement supports the efforts of W&J’s multicultural work with diversity programming, the hosting of campus events and lectures, leadership development, and student-organization programming. The focus of the office has evolved and expanded over time; however, budget restraints exist for staff and programming efforts.

A number of student groups help promote interest in diversity issues and also support students:

- Asian Culture Association
- Black Student Union
- Diversity Programming Board
- Gay/Straight Alliance
- Indian Student Association
- International Club
- Latino Culture Association

These groups are funded by the Student Government Association and are supported by the Office of Inclusive Campus Engagement.

FIRST IN THE FAMILY TO ATTEND COLLEGE

W&J has long attracted many first-generation college students, and it provides support for them (see STEP, p. 84, for an example). In fall 2018, 23% of the first-year students were the first person in the student’s immediate family to attend college (FAFSA).

Financial Aid and Scholarships

In 2018–19, the cost of one year at W&J is $60,640: $47,384 (tuition), $580 (required fees), room ($7,438), and board ($5,238). However, 99% of W&J undergraduate students enrolled in fall 2018 receive some type of aid from the College.
Financial-aid packages are now ready in November; previously, they were not ready until March. This shift in timing helps students make thoughtful decisions about enrollment.

**W&J Scholarships and Grants**

The College aims to the best of its ability to support students who want to enroll at W&J but lack the means. In 2018–19, the average dollar amount of a need-based scholarship/grant was $35,120.

The College also offers merit awards. In 2018–19, the average dollar amount of a non-need-based scholarship/grant was $19,423.

**Good Neighbor Awards**

In 2013, W&J launched a special financial-aid award for accomplished students from southwestern Pennsylvania. The award had been created in response to a drop in applications from local high school students.

If a student meets the academic and financial-need criteria, W&J will use a combination of grants, loans, and work-study funds to meet 100% of demonstrated financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and by W&J. The number of awards offered has trended downward because academic requirements have been raised over the years, but yield has been strong. Seventy-nine matriculated first-year students received awards in fall 2018 (*Good Neighbor Program Enrollment Numbers 2014–18*).

The award has now been opened to all counties in Pennsylvania and those in states that border our area (in Ohio: Belmont, Jefferson, Columbiana, and Mahoning; in West Virginia: Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, Monongalia, and Preston).

**Work-Study**

Many W&J students with financial need supplement educational costs through the Federal Work-Study Program. In fall 2018, 602 students qualified for a work-study award as part of a financial-aid package; 503 students are using one.

Many students use skills developed through their majors in a campus job. For example, the Office of Assessment & Institutional Research hires mathematics majors and minors to help with statistical calculations and data visualization.

**Pell Grants**

The College enrolls a significant percentage of students from low-income families, which enhances economic diversity at the College. In fall 2018, 28% of enrolled students are recipients of federal Pell grants.
MILITARY SCHOLARSHIPS

The Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program (ROTC) has provided nineteen students with scholarships since 2011. Thirteen students have received assistance from the National Guard/Reserves since 2011. Two to five seniors each spring receive active-duty assignments in the United States Army or commissions in the Army Reserve or Pennsylvania National Guard (ROTC Annual Reports; Standard IV Email from C. Shaffer).

Undergraduate Recruitment

Many people are responsible for bringing in a first-year class each fall. While most of the work of recruitment falls on the Office of Admission, coaches of athletic teams, members of the faculty, current students, parents, trustees, alumni, and even the president also play important roles. The following is a sampling of what is done to recruit students.

OFFICE OF ADMISSION

- Identify prospective students, facilitate campus visits, and provide interviews.
- Create on- and off-campus recruiting events for prospective students and their families.
- Visit high schools and attend college fairs to educate prospective students, families, and guidance/college counselors about W&J.
- Create and market application materials: we use the Common Application and, working with EAB (formerly Royall & Company), have developed a proprietary application.
- Read, review, and make decisions on completed applications and communicate admission decisions to applicants.
- Work with consultant to devise and implement a financial-aid plan to include College and outside resources; encourage students and families to complete the FAFSA.
- Enhance the yield of admitted students through social media, calls, texts, and email.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT/COACHES

- Identify prospective student-athletes.
- Attend high school and non-scholastic events or showcases to identify and establish relationships with prospective athletes.
- Give prospects a campus tour when they visit.
- Provide accurate information about admission, financial-aid processes, and deadlines.
- Stay in constant communication with prospects through phone calls, texts, and email.

FACULTY AND STAFF

- Give talks and participate in panels at admission events.
- Attend events and lunches for potential students and their families.
- Meet individually with students interested in particular majors and programs.
- Open classes, laboratories, and studios to visiting prospective students.
TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI

- Staff on-campus recruitment events.
- Host events in their homes for potential students and families.
- Host events for high school guidance counselors.
- Make phone calls to applicants.

In general, the process works smoothly, making W&J known to many potential undergraduates and bringing in a strong class each fall.

The Office of Admission evaluates its progress at the end of each admission season, revising its recruiting plan based on the outcome of the previous year and the needs of the College. For example, it has recently designated an official assistant director of multicultural recruitment.

The Student’s Experience

W&J GATEWAY AND ORIENTATION

The College has a multistep process for introducing new students to the College.

W&J Gateway, launched in 2014, is a personalized online program that starts the transition from high school to W&J. Students complete necessary forms early in the summer that assist in establishing an academic path, a roommate preference, cocurricular interests, and medical and or academic accommodations. In the Middle States Survey Results—Students, 65% of respondents agreed that the W&J Gateway process prepared them well.

Orientation takes place on campus in the days before the fall semester starts and completes the transition; there is also Orientation at the start of spring term for transfer students. Students are introduced to academic expectations, the diversity of the College, and the importance of community. Students learn about resources and services on campus and hear from upper-level students. They also meet their First Year Seminar instructor-advisors, or, in the case of transfers, their assigned open-major faculty advisors.

Many students come to campus in mid-August to take advantage of optional pre-Orientation activities such trips to Western Pennsylvania’s state-park system for nature photography, camping, hiking, canoeing, and fly fishing.

Students from first-generation and multicultural backgrounds can also participate in Supporting the Transition of Entering Presidents (STEP), a summer pre-Orientation program that aims to enhance the academic and social experience of incoming first-year students through cultural exploration, identity development, and social-justice education. Over the course of three days, students are given opportunities to explore their social identity through community service, facilitated workshops, group activities, and college-success strategies.
**LINK Peer Mentors**

All students meet their LINK peer mentors during Orientation. The LINK peer-mentor program, developed in 2014 as a collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Life, matches an upper-level student with a First Year Seminar section. Students joining the College mid-year or as sophomores also have a LINK peer mentor.

LINKs are not teaching assistants; they receive a stipend ($750) and serve as liaisons between instructors and students, but their main task is to guide their group of students through the academic and social transition from high school to college and help prepare them to achieve educational, personal, and career goals. LINKs organize small-group interactions and one-on-one meetings during both the fall and spring semesters, and each receives a programming budget of $75.

In the 2016 Freshmen Experience Survey, 84% of respondents reported having a very positive experience with their LINK peer mentors; the 2017 survey reported 90%, even better. Many students pay back by becoming LINKs themselves in coming years.

**Course Schedules**

W&J diligently oversees incoming students’ academic schedules so that each student gets a good start and is placed in appropriate courses. This is especially important for those considering health-related or education careers. Since 2015, fall schedules for first-year students are built by four tenured faculty members in early summer using information collected through Gateway about academic and program interests. In earlier years, students came to campus in the summer and volunteer faculty helped them assemble schedules. This process changed not only to align with changing student culture but also because finding sufficient faculty for the summer sessions was difficult. Most problematic, it required that students physically come to campus or leave scheduling to just before the start of the semester, which disadvantaged those living outside driving distance. First Year Seminar instructor-advisors help incoming students fine-tune their schedules at the start of the school year, if needed. Anecdotal evidence suggests that fewer adjustments are being made in the first week of class.

After the first term, students and faculty advisors (either first-year, open, or major) develop schedules together. Students are required to meet with an advisor prior to scheduling: faculty advisors check an online box in WebAdvisor to clear the student for registration. This process ensures that each student actually meets with a faculty advisor before scheduling. At W&J, we take student advising seriously.

**Transfer Credit, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate**

We also have clear policies for evaluating and awarding credit for transfer courses from accredited colleges and universities and credit from advanced-placement exams and
International Baccalaureate programs. Granting such credit allows students to explore more widely in the curriculum or graduate early, thereby saving money.

**HOUSING, PARKING, AND DINING**

Most students (93% in fall 2018) reside on the W&J campus. First-year students are paired with roommates and assigned to first-year housing based on the living preferences they submit. For several years, W&J had living-learning communities connected to specific First Year Seminars. Upper-level students can choose to live in student-initiated themed housing, such as Pet House, Makers House, or STEM House. Greek social organizations have individual College-owned houses. All continuing students participate in the spring lottery to secure housing for the upcoming year. Forty-three student resident assistants are selected and trained to work with professional staff to provide support for students in residence halls and to build community.

Housing ranges from traditional residence halls to suites to self-contained apartments in Victorian houses. Many of the facilities are over fifty years old and suffer from deferred maintenance. In the *Middle States Survey Results–Students*, campus housing and parking emerged as the main concerns; a student focus group identified first-year housing arrangements, lack of adequate study space in the residence halls and theme houses, and the general conditions of residence halls as concerns (*Standard IV Focus Group Summary 3*). The College does need to keep student perceptions of living arrangements in mind, and the residences require constant attention.

In Fall 2018, there are 954 student parking spaces; in 2018–19, there are 886 student-registered vehicles. Parking was tighter in earlier years; the recent acquisition of properties adjacent to the College has allowed us to address student concerns in this area by adding 33 spaces. The commuter student population, not included in this vehicle count, uses the Church of the Covenant’s nearby parking lot. **Student parking** is primarily located at the opposite end of campus from student housing. When athletics or special events occur, however, there is minimal additional parking for visitors.

Students living in College housing choose from a variety of meal plans. The Commons, the cafeteria, caters to a variety of tastes and needs and promotes locally sourced food. Additional dining options include George and Tom’s, a snack bar in the Rossin Campus Center that serves deep-fried items, deli sandwiches, made-to-order salads, and grab-and-go items. The Barista in the Ski Lodge offers coffee and tea beverages as well as snack and convenience foods. Meal exchanges can be used at either. A new food-service provider, Bon Appétit Management Company, took over in July 2018 (see p. 26).

**THE LIBRARY**

Renovated in summer 2018, the U. Grant Miller Library, which also houses the Learned T. Bulman ’48 Historic Archives & Museum, serves as the College’s intellectual hub. It provides both print and an ever-growing number of electronic resources to foster critical inquiry and
information-literate skills that will lead to personal academic success and professional
accomplishment and spur curiosity and life-long learning habits.

Our library is heavily used: there are over four thousand computer logons monthly, about a
hundred librarian-led instruction sessions per year, and an average daily gate count of four
hundred students or faculty members (Standard IV Interview Summary—Library Service).
Student groups also hold meetings, social gatherings, and lectures in the Walker Room, a
reconstructed Victorian study.

HEALTH AND COUNSELING

The Student Health & Counseling Center provides health care and psychological services
designed to foster the academic, personal, and interpersonal development of the student body.
There is a full-time nurse who tends to the usual range of minor injuries and illnesses and a
physician and a nurse-practitioner who hold regular office hours. The College also has a
partnership with the Washington Family Practice Group.

Each academic year, students are provided up to twelve individual counseling sessions at no
cost with a qualified psychologist; off-campus services are available on request. The overall
demand for counseling services and after-hours emergency work has been increasing, so the
College introduced a year-long postdoctoral fellowship in 2015. A full-time staff psychologist
replaced the postdoctoral fellow in August 2018 to provide greater continuity for students.
During 2017–18, 188 students were seen for 1095 counseling-related appointments (Student
Health and Counseling Services Utilization).

Although health care and counseling services are in the same physical location, each maintains
separate records, with Health Services still using paper. Students in a focus group cited as
concerns the lack of health care during evening hours and varied experiences with counselors
(Standard IV Focus Group Summary 2).

Safety

The Office of Campus & Public Safety aims to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff, and
visitors.

ENHANCEMENTS TO CAMPUS SAFETY

In response to off-campus incidents late in 2012, the College hired a new director for the Office
of Campus & Public Safety, who reorganized the office. It includes both sworn police officers
and security officers.

In 2016, W&J implemented a policy approved by the Board of Trustees for the sworn police
officers to carry firearms; they are required to wear body cameras as well. Training for body
cameras, firearms, police tactics, and safety is regularly held and is based on best practices in
the field. In the Middle States Survey Results—Students, 66% of respondents agreed with the
statement “I feel more comfortable and safe on campus now that the campus police officers are armed.”

In addition to conducting regular patrols of the campus, the Campus & Public Safety staff, working with the Safety Committee, have implemented the following:

- 24/7 escort system
- 24-hour card-only access to all residential buildings
- emergency call boxes in easily accessible locations across campus
- lower-cut shrubs and hedges
- safety walks by SGA representatives and the Safety Committee
- security cameras
- strategically placed crosswalks on streets
- support personnel who work with W&J security officers to maintain and inspect the safety of all facilities
- well-maintained exterior lighting around campus buildings and additional street and sidewalk lighting

In the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, a survey given in 2017, students expressed concern about campus safety. Safety and security received the lowest mean satisfaction rating (4.53) among eleven categories; the highest score, by comparison, was 5.90 for academic advising (Student Satisfaction Survey Results 2017–Executive Summary). In particular, officer-response time, lighting, and emergency-phone placement were noted, and a student focus group corroborated these findings (Standard IV Focus Group Summary 1), which warrants further investigation by the Safety Committee and the Office of Campus & Public Safety. The focus group reported positive interactions with Campus & Public Safety officers and with the student escort service.

In spring 2018, most students reported in the HEDS Sexual Assault Survey that they felt safe on campus.

**Crime on Campus**

According to statistics gathered to ensure compliance with the Clery Act, the number of crimes involving students is relatively low, with liquor violations, drug-law violations, and larceny/theft the most common (Crime Statistics).

**Student Behaviors**

The Student Handbook has explicit statements about the use of drugs and alcohol on campus (pp. 71–72). Despite that, our students, like many other college students, are a little naïve when it comes to risky behavior. According to the CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey administered in 2016, many W&J students do not feel that there is a “great risk” associated with trying a drug
just once. This suggests a potential lack of knowledge regarding risks of addiction and other associated negative consequences.

In addition, a majority of students, regardless of age, report consuming alcohol. A point estimate for the proportion of students who use alcohol at W&J is higher than the national average point estimate as given by the CORE aggregate statistics. Substance use does not, however, seem to be associated with particular grade outcomes.

The drug-and-alcohol educational/informational process can be improved. In particular, prevention awareness should be an area of emphasis because approximately 66% of the students surveyed reported being unaware of these services.

**Learning Beyond the Classroom**

W&J students are diligent students in our classrooms, and they also individualize their education beyond the campus.

**TRAVEL**

In addition to class field trips and travel for course credit (see p. 61), students also undertake shorter, optional trips. The Pre-Law Society takes a trip to Washington, D.C., each fall. The art department organizes weekends visiting museums in New York City. Faculty in the education department took two students to Belfast, Ireland, during spring break in 2017.

Some travel has been student-initiated. Each summer, W&J’s student-run and -funded club Presidents Without Borders takes a mission trip to a nation in need, supporting local clinics and medical professionals in underserved neighborhoods. Faculty and/or staff join students on these trips to provide oversight and serve as chaperones. In summer 2018, students and chaperones traveled to San Jose, Costa Rica; the summer before took them to Lima, Peru, for a week.

Presidents without Borders was founded in 2011 by a student inspired by his Magellan Project in the Dominican Republic. W&J students do seem to be “prepared to contribute substantially to the world in which they live,” as our mission states.

**Magellan Project**

The Magellan Project was created in 2008 and provides funding to students to take advantage of the following:

- challenging self-designed projects in international locations
- prestigious internships in cities like New York, Chicago, and the District of Columbia
- research experiences in major laboratories or field stations
During summer 2018, 112 scholarships were awarded, a considerable step up from summer 2009, when 21 students received awards. Students find the program transformative (Magellan Inbound Survey 2016), and the program has drawn broad financial support from our donors.

**FIG. 4.1 TOTAL MAGELLAN PROJECT FUNDING**

The Magellan Project is a signature W&J program and is extremely popular. Several students do more than one; 70% of first-year students expressed an interest in pursuing one (Freshmen Experience Survey Results).

**INTERNSHIPS AND INDEPENDENT STUDY**

W&J students are eager to take advantage of a high-impact practice like a practicum, internship, or independent study. Between summer 2017 and spring 2018, for example, sixty-four students completed internships for course credit, and thirty-nine students completed independent studies for course credit.

Students pursue a range of internships. For example, students in the professional-writing program regularly intern with publishers in Pittsburgh and manage social media for our local farmer’s market. Business students obtain internships in the quality sciences. Psychology majors obtain internships with local mental-health agencies. A political-science and international-studies double major recently interned with the Pittsburgh Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

There is funding to support some summer internships. Science students can apply to the Merck Internships for Excellence in Science program, which supports six students each year. Recent Merck Scholars were awarded support for research at the West Virginia University Cancer Institute and the Institute of Neuroscience at Newcastle University Medical School, England. Maxwell Internship Awards, which support about ten students each year, helped a W&J student travel abroad to Radboud University in the Netherlands to study the biology of schizophrenia in
a mouse model; another Maxwell awardee interned at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, working under the surgeon who had, years earlier, repaired the student’s knee after a football injury. It is not unusual for these internships to lead to publications and opportunities to present at national research conferences.

WASHINGTON FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Washington Fellows Program is a non-credit, merit-based program open to students by invitation only. Over the course of four years, the fellows take part in both shared and personal experiences that represent the program’s values: leadership, integrity, growth, humanity, and thought. In 2017–18, the first year with four cohorts, there were a total of 420 Washington Fellows, and its first cohort graduated in 2018.

Fellows are supported by a community of dedicated and intellectually curious peers and with resources and opportunities that encourage exploration of learning and development. As one summed up, “The Washington Fellows program gave me the opportunity to connect with people I would not have otherwise. It allowed me to better experience a liberal arts college and has aided me in becoming a more well-rounded individual.” Each year, some of the fellows give TOM talks, modeled on TED talks, which always draw large audiences, both in person and through livestream.

Cocurricular Activities, Leadership, and Growth Opportunities

ATHLETICS

Athletics has been important at W&J since it fielded its first intercollegiate football team in 1890. In a typical year, 36% of W&J students play varsity sports. W&J participates in NCAA Division III athletics, which offers no awards or aid on the basis of athletic ability.

W&J has been successful in athletics. Since the last self-study, nine teams have participated in NCAA tournaments. The baseball team reached the NCAA Division III national championships in 2017; the football team has one of the longest runs of being in the top twenty-five Division III teams. There is also success on the individual level. Recently, W&J athletes in swimming & diving, wrestling, cross country, and track & field have competed in NCAA tournaments and championships. In 2015, a student became an NCAA Division III national champion in wrestling.

Our students are also scholar-athletes. Between 2014 and 2017, ten have been named Academic All-Americans by the NCAA, and four have been awarded postgraduate scholarships.
The College offers twenty-four varsity sports for men and women.

Men’s Sports

1. Baseball
2. Basketball
3. Cross Country
4. Football
5. Golf
6. Lacrosse
7. Soccer
8. Swimming & Diving
9. Tennis
10. Track & Field
11. Water Polo
12. Wrestling

Women’s Sports

1. Softball
2. Basketball
3. Cross Country
4. Field Hockey
5. Golf
6. Lacrosse
7. Soccer
8. Swimming & Diving
9. Tennis
10. Track & Field
11. Water Polo
12. Volleyball

Sports have even provided some students with international experiences. In May 2016, forty-five students on the football team traveled to Italy to play against the Ancona Dolphins, and in August 2015, the W&J women’s basketball team traveled to Costa Rica to play three games in an international competition and conduct two youth-sports clinics for underprivileged children.

The program builds good community among student-athletes, coaches, and faculty and has an active mentoring program. A faculty member serves as the NCAA faculty athletic representative and presents regular updates at faculty meetings. In 2014, the athletics program created a Student Athlete Handbook, which summarizes policies and procedures for student-athletes, coaches, and affiliated staff.

W&J offers ten club teams and organizations open to all current W&J students: ice hockey (men), rugby (men’s and women’s), dance, equestrian, cheerleading, Zumba, and soccer (coed) are active; the fencing and Ultimate Frisbee teams are currently quiescent.

There is also a robust intramural-sports program for students of all skill levels interested in competing. This forum promotes health and wellness, social interaction, and teamwork.

While the Henry Memorial Center is largely geared toward supporting varsity teams and credit-bearing courses in physical activity and wellness, other College facilities skew toward club and casual athletes. The new James David Ross Family Recreation Center was constructed particularly with them in mind, and the Swanson Wellness Center, located in the Old Gym, offers a variety of cardiovascular and weightlifting equipment and a three-lane indoor track for walking and jogging.
Many alumni (81%) who participated in a sport at W&J believe that their participation contributed to their learning and personal development (*HEDS Alumni Surveys*).

**Greek Life**

Washington & Jefferson College is home to ten Greek-letter organizations, two of which are alpha chapters started in the nineteenth century (Phi Gamma Delta and Phi Kappa Psi). The six social fraternities recognized on campus are Alpha Tau Omega, Beta Theta Pi, Delta Tau Delta, Phi Delta Theta, Phi Gamma Delta, and Phi Kappa Psi. The four National Panhellenic Conference sororities recognized at W&J are Delta Gamma, Kappa Alpha Theta, Kappa Kappa Gamma, and Pi Beta Phi.

The Greek community at W&J is based on four standards that fraternities and sororities everywhere strive to achieve—academic excellence, leadership, service to the community, and friendship for life. The fraternities and sororities provide educational programming, resources, leadership opportunities, and service events to provide universal growth for the Greek community. Each sorority and fraternity also designates a philanthropy for the year.

The Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life serves as a liaison among the chapters on campus, the College faculty and staff, parents, alumni, and the national leadership.

Of the W&J student body, 373 students were members of a Greek organization in spring 2018.

**Student Groups**

W&J College hosts many clubs and organizations that students can join, such as the newspaper *Red & Black*, the Gaming Club, and the Outdoor & Adventure Club. There are also faith-based groups like the Newman Club and Hillel. Organizations are added and deleted according to student interest, and each has a faculty or staff advisor.

There is also a Student Government Association (SGA) to promote responsible, mature standards among students and to protect the specific interests of the student body at W&J. All students living in College housing as well as commuters have representatives in the governing body; in addition, each class elects ten students to serve as its representatives. The SGA supervises funding for student groups and provides opportunities for leadership.

**Community Engagement**

W&J does not require volunteer service from its students but does facilitate it. The Office of Community Engagement promotes the education of students through engaged citizenship, civic participation, volunteerism, awareness, advocacy, and community involvement. Students agree on the importance of community engagement: in the *Middle States Survey Results–Students*, 69% of respondents reported that volunteerism was an essential part of the W&J experience.

The Office of Community Engagement supports collaboration between the College and Washington for a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of
partnerships and reciprocity. In the 2017–18 academic year, over twenty thousand community-service hours were given to more than forty partners such as Citizens Library, LeMoyne Multicultural Community Center, and Washington Family Center.

Student Retention

Despite all we offer, not every student who matriculates at W&J will stay to graduate. Our retention rate is respectable, but, with increased pressure from market demands, this remains a challenge for W&J. Our typical retention rate from first to second year is 85%; of those students, about 92% will stay for the third year. The most common reasons students give for transferring are: personal (prefer to live closer to home), financial (too expensive), and general academic (hope to have more success at another college) (Student Withdrawal Survey Data).

We are continually working on improving those rates. In the event of lost income, the Office of Financial Aid works with students to re-evaluate financial-aid packages. Students in academic difficulty (on warning or probation) work with staff in the Office of Academic Success to create plans and set goals to improve academically. In 2016–17, the office helped approximately forty such students as well as approximately two hundred not on academic sanctions but experiencing general concerns that were affecting their grades and learning (Advising–DSS Office Stats). We cannot, however, do much about students who leave mainly to be closer to family or loved ones.

The Student Success Work Group, formed in 2013 and comprised of staff from a variety of offices, meets every week to share information about students of concern (that is, potential retention risks) and to develop and execute intervention strategies to best meet their needs. To increase first-to-second-year retention from 85% to 88%, W&J commissioned a study in 2016 from consultants Noel Levitz and have adopted some of their recommendations for the First Year Seminar program (Noel Levitz Retention Report).

Student-success consultants were introduced in fall 2017 to help first-year W&J students. Two student-life staff members moved into these roles, and all first-year students, including transfers, now meet one-on-one with a consultant two or three times in the first year. Topics like navigating the campus, engaging with College resources and staff, getting involved in campus activities, and reducing communication barriers are covered. In 2017, 86% of students reported that the student-success consultants were helpful, and 83% of students agreed that they were a valuable resource for first-year students (Freshmen Experience Survey).

Graduation and Beyond

Of students who do not transfer but stay at W&J to graduate, over 90% do so in four years.

Graduation Rates

At the cohort level, official numbers are comparable to those of our peer schools. The 2013 cohort (class of ’17) had a four-year graduation rate of 68% and a five-year graduation
rate of 74%. Previous cohorts averaged six-year graduation rates of 74%. Our peer schools average 75% for six-year graduation rates (IPEDS Graduation Rates, W&J Factbook).

In general, our alumni find that their experiences at W&J have served them well as they take their next steps (HEDS Alumni Survey 2016). Alumni surveyed one year out of college reported that W&J prepared them for graduate or professional school (80%) and a career (70%). Of this group, 89% expressed satisfaction with their undergraduate education at W&J; of alumni more than ten years out, 91% did so.

**Office of Career Services**

We want our students to engage as active participants in their career development. Students use Career Services for assistance in finding jobs and internships, writing résumés and cover letters, practicing interviews, and networking with alumni. The Office of Career Services assists students in integrating their liberal arts education with their career aspirations by holding workshops and offering advising.

First-year students are urged to register on College Central during Orientation. This network allows students to access job, internship, and alumni-mentoring opportunities, and its database is frequently updated and maintained by Career Services.

Career Services is the primary provider of specific post-graduation information at several time points (e.g., before graduation, six months after graduation, and twelve months after graduation), and it collects information about graduate outcomes (Career Services Reports).

**Jobs, More School, and Lives**

Our graduates do well (HEDS Alumni Survey 2016). They quickly get established in the first stage of their professional lives. Of alumni surveyed one year out who responded, 46% were employed full-time, and 43% were in graduate or professional school; 5% were in part-time or multiple jobs, and 3% in volunteer or national service. Just 3% were “not employed, but seeking employment, admission to graduate school, or other opportunity.”

Many go on to receive advanced degrees. Of alumni five years out who responded to the survey, 13% received or were completing medical degrees, 13% received or were completing PhDs, 10% received law degrees, and 46% had a master’s degree in hand or in progress.

Our graduates find jobs that are satisfying. Of surveyed W&J alumni who had been out for more than ten years, 100% agreed that they had “work I find meaningful” and that “allows me to continue to grow and learn,” in contrast to 80% for the comparison group “All Other Alumni in 10+ Years Cohort.”

**Alumni Activities and Engagement**

The Office of Development & Alumni Relations works to keep graduates connected to W&J. Throughout the year, the office provides activities designed to transition graduating students
into alumni. In the final days before Commencement, seniors share final bonding experiences with each other and present their class gift. To keep the connection strong, the College maintains a lively network of alumni clubs throughout the United States that host gatherings and events that bring together W&J graduates from many class years.

Homecoming weekend draws alumni from different classes back to campus and is a popular event. It has an educational side as well. It features the Dieter-Porter Medical Lecture, fully supported by the Pre-Health Alumni Advising Council, and the W. Edward Sell ’45 Legal Lecture. A psychology panel has recently joined the line-up. These events are generally for continuing-education credit; strong alumni attendance at them demonstrates the effectiveness of our creation of life-long learners. There are also events that honor our alumni, such as the Athletic Hall of Fame induction and the award ceremony for distinguished graduates.

Our hope is to turn each W&J matriculant a loyal alumnus or alumna who will give back to the College. Our current alumni-participation rate is 16.3% as of 30 June 2018, and in August 2018, Forbes Magazine ranked W&J #88 on their Grateful Graduate Index; our alumni-participation rate, however, is lower than that of our peers.

Nevertheless, many alumni give back to the College in both small and large ways. Each matriculated first-year student receives a personal welcome from an alumnus or alumna. Closer to graduation, students receive advice and mentoring from alumni through speed-networking evenings, one-on-one meetings, and off-campus alumni-student networking receptions and dinners. And, of course, alumni donate generously to the College, and many take on major leadership roles as members of the Board of Trustees.

**Assessing our Student Experience**

**Assessment Plans for Administrative Units**

To stay relevant, we adapt and revise our processes regularly. Each unit at the College has outcomes and a plan for assessing two of them each year. Results are included in the unit’s annual report, which also provides information on how the unit closed the loop (2017–2018 Annual Reports [Administrative]). The general process, examples, and how-to guides are documented in the Staff Assessment Manual, and the reports are stored in Weave, a suite of assessment- and accreditation-management software packages.

Assessment has resulted in some changes. Residence Life, for example, redeveloped its resident-assistant training after discovering resident assistants were not retaining some information as well as hoped. The Office of Events & Planning, charged with exploring opportunities between the College and the city of Washington, developed a series of College Days at various local businesses to replace a single co-sponsored event. The library staff who taught information-literacy classes for First Year Seminar sections adjusted their coverage and depth of topics to better meet course objectives.
INTERNAL SURVEYS

We assess our student-support activities with internal surveys to determine how effective they are. For example, the Commons and the Barista have surveyed students annually since 2014 about meals, food, and service. The Freshmen Experience Survey, administered each spring since 2016, evaluates how students managed in their first semester. Information gathered helps determine what to change and what to leave as is.

NATIONAL SURVEYS

W&J regularly administers the following national assessments so we can learn how we are doing in comparison to similar institutions. All these surveys have been given at least once since 2015:

- BCSSE: Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement
- CLA+: Collegiate Learning Assessment
- CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey
- FSSE: Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
- HEDS Alumni Survey
- HEDS Research Practices Survey
- HEDS Senior Survey
- HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey
- Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory
- NSSE: National Survey of Student Engagement

Findings from these surveys have already been mentioned in this self-study. Such comparisons help us see our strengths and distinctions and show us ways in which we might improve.

Observations on Standard IV

W&J meets Standard IV and Requirements of Affiliation 8 and 10. We admit and support a student body whose interests, abilities, and goals are congruent with our mission and goals as a liberal arts college. A dedicated support staff and a rich array of extracurricular experiences augment a strong curriculum and superb faculty-student interactions. Our processes are assessed and adjusted regularly. We have good retention and graduation rates, and our alumni succeed and find meaningful, remunerative work.

Strengths and Suggestions, Standard IV

STRENGTHS

- Admission to W&J is competitive.
- The number of international students has doubled in recent years.
- We are able to attract and retain more multicultural students.
• The College offers cocurricular activities as well as leadership and growth opportunities for its students.

SUGGESTIONS

• Seek out greater diversity in the student body, both geographically and culturally.
• Investigate student concerns about the availability and quality of current counseling and health services.
• Enhance integration of the Office of Career Services into the student experience from matriculation to post-graduation.
• Share assessment information more widely across units.
• Assess student housing and availability of parking.
• Encourage more alumni to give back to the College financially.
Conclusion

During this journey of self-study, the community of Washington & Jefferson College has reflected upon the school’s mission and cataloged its achievements and challenges not only to comply with reaccreditation requirements but also to ensure that we are doing two things successfully so we may better serve our students: continuing to hold true to our liberal arts mission and adapting to changing economic, social, and cultural conditions.

The steering committee ensured an open and highly participatory process from the start of this venture early in 2016. Since then, all members of the College community—trustees, alumni, administrators, faculty, staff, and students—had opportunities to help research this report as part of a work group, provide data by responding to surveys, give feedback by attending open meetings, or shape its content by reviewing drafts. It is the work of many, a truly collaborative document for the College, and it shows who we are and how far we have come since the last self-study.

We have learned much while preparing this self-study report because it made us look broadly and impartially at the institution. Early in the process, we identified three institutional priorities:

- to improve communication among all parties at the College;
- to continue to enhance the diversity of faculty, staff, students, and curriculum;
- to develop a more widely participatory planning and budgeting process.

These have been issues at W&J since the last self-study, but we have progressed in all three areas, and we are determined to keep moving forward. Communication has improved by adding town-hall meetings and responding more quickly and effectively to the concerns of students, faculty, and staff. Several years of deliberate work have resulted in a more multicultural student body, and the student experience is enriched through new programs that emphasize diversity issues. The composition of the faculty, administration, staff, and trustees is also more inclusive. Finally, our president has expressed strong support for participatory planning and budgeting procedures for faculty and administrators. All three of these institutional issues still require serious attention in the future, but we are making headway.

We have also taken stock of our strengths and found they far outweigh the challenges. The following are among our chief strengths.

- Our mission remains well defined.
- The recently revised curriculum builds on traditional strengths in the liberal arts even as it offers new opportunities for developing skills and knowledge essential in the workplace.
• We have developed and enhanced support structures to meet the changing personal needs of current students and their families.
• We have developed comprehensive assessment methods for both academic and administrative systems that ensure continuous improvement in all areas.
• The endowment has increased considerably, and the College manages its finances carefully, so we can weather financial storms.
• Our dedicated Board of Trustees and administration are committed to preserving W&J’s heritage while also charting a course into the future.
• Our accomplished faculty keeps up with new knowledge and pedagogies while preserving traditions that define W&J and demonstrate to students the power of a liberal arts education.
• Our diligent staff works efficiently to ensure that operations run smoothly.
• Our students are learning advanced skills and knowledge as they take advantage of both curricular and cocurricular opportunities to enrich their educations.
• Our alumni are successful in their lives after graduation.

The completion of this self-study report, followed by the Middle States team visit in the spring of 2019, will not mean an end to self-examination or improvement at W&J. The strategic-planning process currently underway and to be completed in the fall of 2019 is building on our self-study work, which showed us the value of inclusiveness. We are already applying inclusiveness to the strategic-planning process. This process is fully participatory and involves over eighty faculty, staff, student and trustee volunteers, plus thousands of survey respondents, and it has important formal roles for all constituencies. The resulting strategic plan will help Washington & Jefferson College continue to adjust to changing times and better support its students. It will provide the College a guide for a successful future and a blueprint for the next self-study. These are exciting times at W&J.

In conclusion, the steering committee wishes to extend its appreciation to all those in the W&J community who helped us during this self-study or provided the leadership that guided us to this fruitful moment in time. The resulting document is a positive contribution to our reaccreditation process and the College’s continued growth and development.