Chapter 9: Educational Offerings and General Education

Overview

As articulated in earlier mission statements and emphasized in the recent Going Forward Plan, the University strives to provide a high quality education that will allow students to become productive and creative employees, leaders, and global citizens. UAlbany also works to provide high-quality graduate training. This chapter begins with an assessment of how well the University is meeting its vitally important goal of providing undergraduate and graduate students with the discipline-based knowledge and more general skills and experiences, including research skills and experiences, appropriate for a research University. The second section analyzes how UAlbany provides students with an appreciation of diversity in its many facets and the capacity to be engaged global citizens. The third section examines the General Education program, which was developed in response to a mandate from the SUNY Board of Trustees designed to create greater uniformity, and thus enhance transferability of courses, across the SUNY system. The fourth section examines how well the University supports educational offerings with learning resources such as library collections and information technology. The final section looks at how well the curriculum, as well as the faculty and learning resources that support its delivery, respond to changes both within and outside the academy. Throughout, consideration will be given to how well the University has responded to curriculum challenges and whether the University is prepared to ensure a coherent and relevant set of educational offerings in the future. Specific recommendations for improvement are included.

Quality of Educational Offerings in the Major

The first priority of both the graduate and undergraduate programs at UAlbany is to provide a rigorous and well-rounded educational experience. At the graduate level, excellence is more discipline-based, while, at the undergraduate level, the University strives for discipline-based excellence joined with core skills such as analysis and reasoning, oral and written communication, and information literacy.

The current array of doctoral offerings addresses the mission and goals of the University at Albany as a research University. Programs, particularly in the sciences, tend to be generalist programs (e.g., there are doctoral programs in Biological Sciences and Biomedical Sciences, but not separate doctoral programs in, for example, Botany, Cell Biology, Ecology, Entomology, Molecular Pharmacology, and Pharmacology). Undergraduates, too, are invited into the research enterprise at the heart of the University’s mission. There is an annual University-wide research conference, departmental research conferences, a University program that helps match Honors students with research mentors, undergraduate participation in faculty research projects, participation in national conferences, and co-authorship. In addition, the University's mission encompasses the needs of the public sector, and the institution does very well in training students in professional doctoral programs; most programs enjoying strong national reputations are professional programs.
Content, Rigor, and Depth

To examine with rigor, depth and breadth both graduate and undergraduate programs for evidence of coherent learning experiences, the University weighed department self-studies prepared for program reviews (see Chapter 5. Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment of Student Learning), the assessment of outside evaluators, and student opinion surveys. A sample of self-studies conducted within the last seven years to assess quality of instruction throughout the University was closely examined. A review of the materials provided by departments and the evaluations by outside experts confirm that current degree programs contain sufficient content, rigor, and depth, and that there is a clear distinction between graduate and undergraduate programs. While the purpose of regular review and assessment is to identify areas of strength and weakness, the external reviews have been predominantly positive and speak to the quality of instruction throughout the University. Without exception, external reviews in the sample noted that graduate and undergraduate programs are sound. For example, in assessing the merits of one department, external reviewers noted that undergraduate and graduate students were “overwhelmingly positive” about the program, and that it is a “rigorous program with nice balance between research and teaching.” Similar praise was offered of another undergraduate program: “a stable and healthy program that attempts to be responsive and responsible to emerging concepts in [the field’s] pedagogy and practices.” Several academic units could rest on their laurels, but continue to seek improvement. For example, external reviewers commended the faculty in the School of Criminal Justice for their drive to continually improve despite their strong national ranking, which has placed the School “ahead of the curve” and which they felt will serve the School especially well during these difficult times.

At the graduate level, academic units strive to advance their national and international distinction through faculty and student recruitment and the maintaining of quality programs. The University has several distinguished graduate programs, as ranked by the *U.S. News & World Report*, which is regarded as a standard measure of reputation. These programs include: Biology; Education; English; Fine Arts; Library and Information Studies; Mathematics; Clinical Psychology; Public Affairs; Criminal Justice (which has consistently ranked second in the nation); Social Welfare; and Sociology. In addition, *Black Issues in Higher Education* (July 2009), which ranks programs by number of degrees awarded, identified UAlbany’s Africana Studies master’s degree program as first in the country. Though there is no category yet for ranking programs offered by the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, the annual college ranking by *Small Times* magazine named it first among colleges for nanotechnology and microtechnology in May 2007.

A ranking of most of UAlbany’s doctoral programs by the National Research Council (NRC) is expected in spring 2010 and will be made public when available. In addition, the University has subscribed to Academic Analytics (AA), a company that assesses and provides comparative data on “faculty scholarly productivity” for doctoral programs nationwide. By agreement with the vendor, these data are not made public. Using the AA data allows the University to assess internal program strength, which NRC has determined is directly correlated with faculty scholarly productivity. For example, the Office of Graduate Studies will be able to see how a particular program ranks in each area against its peers—in terms of book and/or journal publications, both as a group and per capita, and in terms of citations, federal research funding, and professional honors/awards. Although there are unavoidable gaps in data for both NRC and...
AA (industry grants and local/state government grants are not readily accessible via Web-crawling software, and the two companies that supply journal and citation information are rivals, which occasions some gaps in the humanities data at the moment), each type of program will be evaluated along the same dimensions (and limitations of data, if any exist) as every other similar program in the country.

In developing the self-study report, difficulties associated with evaluating department and faculty quality were consistently raised. In particular, NRC and Academic Analytics attempt to quantify snapshots of faculty productivity in terms of activity, but these measures do not necessarily reflect quality. Both represent a trend away from the use of “reputational” measures in evaluating graduate programs. Concern was raised that the Academic Analytics data are flawed, and faculty who met with AA representatives took issue with their methods and the fact that the data are not made publicly available. Academic Analytics has been given stringent scrutiny by UAlbany faculty, who have made useful suggestions for improving the scope of the product and clarifying its use of statistics (e.g. z-scores). One additional problem that may arise when the NRC study is finally published is that it will be based on faculty who were at the University in 2006. Thus the study may already be dated, though it is likely that the NRC will be considered the most reliable program ranking within the disciplines.

It is extremely important to continue campus-wide discussion on key topics: what measures are being used and why; what those measures do and do not show about departments and faculty; and what other kinds of data may be needed to supplement these outside evaluations. For example, other possible indicators of graduate program quality include, but are not limited to: publishing with graduate students, effective graduate teaching and mentoring, professionalization, preparing graduate students to teach, and graduate student placement upon degree completion.

Currently, doctoral programs are being reviewed by a Graduate Student Support (GSS) Doctoral Review Panel. Prior to that, a review of these programs had not been conducted since 1997. The GSS Doctoral Review Panel is analyzing data supplied by Institutional Research, evaluating program quality in terms of national ranking information (AA and NRC), looking closely at additional data and contextual discussions supplied by individual departments, and assigning each program a numerical value. Data gathering took place during summer 2009, analysis occurred during the fall 2009 semester, and a report was provided to the provost in December. An important goal of the GSS Doctoral Program Review is to identify those programs which can clearly be designated as ones of quality. It is likely the Review will demonstrate a fairly broad array of high-quality programs or programs with potential to become of high quality (as did the 1997 study). The study will also likely point to quality heretofore not recognized, as well as point out weaknesses in programs that may need a fair amount of resources to remedy.

**Recommendation:**

- Faculty should be encouraged to discuss how graduate quality is being assessed; the correlation between productivity and quality should be examined, and the possibility of collecting internal data that assess other possible dimensions of quality evaluated.
Critical Thinking and Active Learning for a Coherent Educational Experience

As noted above, a key goal at UAlbany is to provide students with the critical thinking and analytic skills that will allow them to apply and create knowledge, rather than simply absorb it. At the undergraduate level, in addition to critical thinking skills that are taught within each major, several General Education requirements, discussed later in this chapter, focus directly on the development of these skills.

The University also provides numerous and growing opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in their own learning. Classroom activities and assignments, service learning opportunities, University-wide and departmental internships, and research experiences are among the major ways that students increase and apply their knowledge. There is course credit for internships involving off-campus participation in the work of an agency, institution, or corporate body beyond the University, with collateral academic study. The 2008 Middle States Survey shows that 47% of undergraduate students feel that sufficient internship opportunities exist at UAlbany. Of those who have pursued internship opportunities, 70% find that high quality placements exist, and 73% find such placements relevant to their programs. Of course, the availability of such opportunities does not indicate how these internships contribute to student learning experiences. While 56% of students who had participated in an internship program answered “somewhat” or “very relevant” when asked how useful their internships had been to their educational program, a University-wide mechanism for assessing such learning experiences would provide more evidence of students’ learning outcomes. The Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership (ITLAL) offers all UAlbany faculty and teaching staff workshops and consultations on student-centered learning, team-based approaches, and how to design courses and syllabi to emphasize critical thinking. There are also many publications and resources on the ITLAL Website that instructors can use to re-tool their courses or create new ones to help students think conceptually, actively engage in their own learning, and hone analytic skills.

Recommendation:

- The University should develop a more systematic approach for assessing how internship programs contribute to students’ educational experience.

Learning Objectives

At UAlbany, it is generally recognized that learning is maximized when students know what is expected of them, and the creation of clear learning goals also allows assessment of how well UAlbany courses and programs are contributing to the educational mission of the University. Much of the focus, however, has been at the program, rather than at the course, level and, at present, only courses that fulfill a General Education requirement are mandated to list their learning objectives on the syllabus.
To assess how often and how well learning objectives are articulated across the curriculum, a sample of syllabi\(^1\) was examined and put into one of three categories: 1) course goals and objectives clearly stated, 2) mention of course goals or objectives, but not clearly stated, or 3) no mention of course goals and objectives. Though the raw numbers are small, the patterns are instructive. At the undergraduate level, 41% (11) of the syllabi reviewed stated clear learning objectives. Among the 26% (7) of syllabi that fell into the second category, some provided rich description of course topics and essentially embedded goals within them. Whether students discern those goals would likely vary by experience and motivation. Others state general goals, such as expertise in the course content. In the third category are syllabi (9) that do not specify any learning objectives, and provide little to no descriptive information. The majority (66%) of the graduate syllabi reviewed articulate learning objectives clearly.

In 2008-2009 the provost’s office asked for department reviews of learning goals. In addition to results of assessments reported in the self-study, learning objectives are assessed regularly throughout the range of undergraduate and graduate courses taught. Resources and expertise are made available to programs to help them work towards enhancing the validity and reliability of the measures. It should be noted, however, that some faculty have expressed concern about both the time required of faculty to participate in program and General Education assessment and the methods used to assess undergraduate and graduate courses. Systematic data are needed to capture the breadth and range of faculty opinion.

**Recommendations:**

- Because clearly defined goals and linked assessments are important to student learning, it is recommended that the University consider requiring they be included on the syllabus of every course at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

- Systematic data should be collected on faculty perspectives about assessment, including how best to assess learning in faculty’s courses and disciplines.

**Number of Faculty and Quality of Instruction**

The student-to-faculty ratio has been hovering between 20:1 and 19:1 over the past decade, and is currently at 19:1. Peer institutions tend to have lower ratios, with Buffalo at 16:1 and Stony Brook at 18:1. Binghamton, however, is now at 20:1. While the University has increased the number of small courses offered, there are 28 more large lecture courses (100+ seats) than there were 5 years ago; the increase in smaller sections likely corresponds to an increase in discussion sections for large lecture courses.

Reports by external reviewers reveal that, while quality of instruction remains high, faculty in many departments are overtaxed, striving to cover courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels while maintaining research productivity. While many programs were praised for quality of instruction in the external reviews, some weaknesses were identified, almost always due to resource issues. At times reviewers noted places for development and program expansion, but at

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\(^1\) The syllabi sample was identical to the one used by the Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittee, and is detailed in Table 5.4.
the same time pointed to the problem of resources even for sustaining current programs. This was especially apparent in one department deemed unable to meet programmatic requirements. According to the reviewers, that department had “insufficient faculty” to meet programmatic needs, stemming from difficulty with graduate student recruitment and reduction in faculty lines. Throughout the sample of external evaluations, the reviewers pointed to the critical importance of the ability to hire and retain outstanding faculty in numbers consistent with programmatic needs, to recruit graduate students, and to maintain and update facilities in order to ensure quality educational offerings at all levels.

In some cases, there has been a high level of reliance on part-time labor for instruction. The “Going Forward Plan” recognized this issue, and it is recommended that this discussion continue. Institutional Research chart “Instructional Faculty and Class Size” for fall 2007, for example, reveals that there are 640 part-time instructors to 672 full-time instructors. While degree information is given for full-time faculty, no degree information is offered for part-time instructors, presumably because such information is not collected. While part-time instructors are often outstanding teachers, there is currently no uniform mechanism in place to ensure quality of instruction among part-time instructors. According to the UUP representative for part-time labor, the hiring of adjuncts is not monitored; there is no search procedure, and in many cases there is not even an interview process. In most departments, the adjunct lecturers do not receive support or mentoring. There is also no departmental evaluation procedure for part-time instructors other than student evaluations, which is arguably problematic.

The credentials of full-time faculty necessarily vary across disciplines. In research fields, full-time faculty typically hold the doctoral degree, according to the chart “Instructional Faculty and Class Size.” Though data on the credentials of part-time faculty is not available, anecdotal evidence suggests that many of the part-time faculty also hold the highest degrees in their fields. The professional schools and programs, in particular, routinely draw on experts from the larger community to teach in their respective fields. Because the degree is not the primary criterion for judging merit in the arts, resident writers and artists may not hold an advanced degree, though they are well regarded and well published.

**Meeting Changing Needs through Curricular Change**

Despite severe budget limitations, the University has responded to external changes in recent years by creating new majors, in such fields as public health, journalism, documentary studies, forensic chemistry, financial market regulation and nanoscale science. There are new minors: organizational studies; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) studies; bioethics; informatics; and neuroscience. The new majors and minors reflect growing opportunities, needs and interest at the state and/or national level in educating undergraduates in these fields. In public health, for example, there is growing national interest in undergraduate education, both to create a better educated citizenry and to help address the critical shortage of well-trained public health professionals prepared to confront issues such as health care reform, disaster preparedness, and emerging or re-emerging infectious disease threats. Until recently, the UAlbany School of Public Health (like most such schools in the U.S.) focused entirely on graduate education. Over the past decade, starting with an introductory course, the school has significantly expanded its undergraduate offerings. It now has both a major and a minor in public
health. All of these undergraduate programs help to prepare students for careers and/or advanced education in public health, as well as understand the broader public health context should they decide to pursue a career in a related field, such as medicine, nursing, or law. The other new majors are similarly responding to cutting edge opportunities and needs, preparing students for future study, careers, and engaged citizenship.

Many of the external reviews commend the high quality of faculty and instruction, and the University continues to seek ways to improve course delivery to ensure appropriate content, rigor, and depth consistently at all levels. There are mechanisms in place to support instructors, as will be discussed in the next section, and awards at the college, university and chancellor levels to recognize excellence in teaching at all ranks. According to the 2008 Middle States Survey, most teaching faculty, including part-time instructors, are committed to course development, even when their academic units do not provide any form of material support or recognition for such innovations.

Results of the 2008 Middle States Survey, however, indicate some areas of concern regarding support for improvements to educational offerings. While satisfaction with the University’s overall “support for teaching” had a somewhat favorable mean rating of 3.61 (scale of 1 – 5; 1 being “most negative” and 5 being “most positive”), the mean rating from those with experience as faculty at other universities skews toward the negative at 2.75. This suggests that adequate support for teaching may not be at a desired level in comparison to other universities. With regard to encouragement, rewards and resources provided by academic units for new course development, curricular improvement (what is taught), and instructional improvement (how it is taught), findings indicate some potential concerns. Faculty indicate that they are likely to engage in new course development, and perceive this to be encouraged and rewarded by their academic units, with adequate resources provided by their units to fulfill their efforts. However, perceptions regarding curricular and instructional improvements suffer by comparison. While 71% of the faculty indicate that they are likely to engage in both activities to some degree, the percentages of faculty perceiving encouragement, reward, and available resources to support these activities skew negatively, in some cases by large margins. Open-ended responses indicated that leading factors influencing whether or not faculty would develop new courses or make improvements to existing ones included student demand and available time.

Graduate students teach an increasing number of undergraduate courses on campus, which may have implications for the quality of instruction and graduate students’ ability to complete their degrees, though data on this are not available. A central tension exists in using graduate students to cover undergraduate courses and ensuring these students get through their programs in a timely manner. A review of graduate course offerings for 2008 showed that 18 departments offer courses on teaching; 12 of these are in the College of Arts and Sciences, where the bulk of undergraduate teaching occurs. In addition, the Office of Graduate Studies is currently working on an initiative to offer an internal certificate for graduate students from any program interested in developing their teaching profile and competence. This is a collaborative project between the Dean of Graduate Studies and ITLAL, with the cooperation and support of the School of Education. Some difficulties with logistics remain to be worked out so that courses can appear on transcripts as 0 or 1-credit courses. The fact that enrollments have been steady (10-15 in each
course) suggests that there is demand for such courses, even though they are optional and for minimal credit.

Results from the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) and answers to the 2008 Middle States Re-Accreditation Survey indicate that students believe the quality of faculty instruction could be improved. Answers to an open-ended question from transfer students about their UAlbany experience suggests that though there are “good and bad teachers” at the University, the large class sizes and faculty approaches to teaching compare negatively to their experiences at other schools. Respondents report that “teachers are hard to get in touch with” and “many teachers do not really care about their students” and that teaching seems “like an imposition” on many faculty. Of course there are many faculty members who are committed and effective teachers, but the student opinion results point to a central tension at a major research university – how can quality instruction be ensured from faculty who prefer or feel pressure to focus primarily on their research? The “Going Forward Plan” suggests that teaching effectiveness is not stressed as highly as it might be and acknowledges a need to clarify the degree to which teaching counts toward tenure and promotion. The plan also recommends increased recognition and support for teaching effectiveness and innovations.

Recommendations:

Regarding large courses, analysis by department of faculty-student ratios and teaching effectiveness should be carried out to ensure that quality of instruction is not compromised and that the faculty-student ratio be maintained, or even decreased, despite increasing enrollments.

- Because undergraduate instruction depends increasingly on adjunct labor, the University should undertake a review assessing: hiring practices; greater support and mentoring; systematic reporting of degree data; and a formal departmental evaluation process. The review could also examine the possibility of creating a category of “tenured instructors,” which exists at other SUNY institutions, as a way to offer stability to those upon whom the University relies so heavily for teaching, while providing these instructors with greater purpose as they serve this institution.

- A committee should be convened to gather systemic data from departments about how well graduate students are being prepared to teach effectively and to balance teaching and their own learning responsibilities. The committee could also identify best practices, such as graduate co-teaching internships, and make suggestions for campus-wide and departmental changes, keeping in mind faculty workload and resource issues.

- The University should examine how encouragement and resource availability for curricular/instructional development could be enhanced. Departments should be enabled to assign resources to develop and implement new courses or innovations to compensate for the time faculty must expend.
Producing Global Citizens

A second major mission of UAlbany is to provide students with an appreciation of diversity and the capacity to be engaged global citizens. The University recently chose as its overarching theme “The World Within Reach,” reflecting the importance it places on preparing students for life and careers in the global community. One way to achieve this is by bringing global and diversity issues and interdisciplinarity to coursework. Another major conduit is study abroad, and a third is access to out-of-classroom experiences that engage students with the diverse wider world.

Bringing Global Awareness and Interdisciplinary Opportunities to the Curriculum

Student responses to the 2008 Middle States survey and data gathered from Websites and key personnel suggest there are quality opportunities for interdisciplinary and global study available at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Interdisciplinary Studies Committee (ISC) of the Undergraduate Academic Council reviews and coordinates serious independent study, research, and internships not provided through other course offerings, as well as specific courses taught by faculty from more than one school. Though there is a long tradition of cross-listing undergraduate and graduate courses between departments, in 2003 the College of Arts and Sciences strategic plan called for enhancing the coherence of curricula within and across departments by increasing the number of cross-listed courses. There is also a generous cross-registration policy if UAlbany does not offer what a student needs: students may register for courses off campus and have them covered by tuition. In addition, students can initiate their own interdisciplinary major or minor, subject to the approval of the aforementioned committee.

Analysis of course offerings indicated that global issues are integrated across both undergraduate and graduate curricula; 31 undergraduate departments fulfilled the General Education requirement for Global and Cross-Cultural Studies and/or had courses whose titles suggested content focused on other cultures. There is also a new Globalization Studies major, originally recommended by the President’s Task Force on Sweatshop Labor. The task force was formed in response to student activism over working conditions around the world. There are several other majors that offer international and multicultural studies as an integral part of the curriculum, including: Africana Studies; Anthropology; East Asian Studies; Art and Art History; Geography and Planning; Judaic Studies; Latin American, Caribbean and U.S. Latino Studies; Women’s Studies; Languages, Literatures and Culture (LLC); and Medieval/Renaissance Studies. The University also instituted a new minor in LGBTQ studies which spans several departments and whose courses include: gay and lesbian studies; classism, racism and sexism; sexual politics in Chinese history; anthropology of gender; and law, civil rights, and sexual orientation.

Using graduate course titles, found 36 departments that offer graduate courses on global topics. At the graduate level, especially, these are spread across the college and professional schools. In addition, several research centers offer opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in international and multicultural research, e.g., The Institute for Mesoamerican Studies, The Center for Social and Demographic Analysis, The Institute of Cypriot Studies, and the Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities.
Of the students who responded to the 2008 Middle States survey, 12% were somewhat or very satisfied with available opportunities to pursue interdisciplinary majors/minors, and 38% were neutral or did not know how they felt. It is unclear whether the students in the second group had no interest in interdisciplinary study or no information. This would be a goal for advising, which will be discussed below. Only 3% of responding students currently in interdisciplinary majors/minors were somewhat or very satisfied with how well the program meets their needs.

It may take increased vigilance and creativity to preserve interdisciplinary strengths, such as the globalization major, during periods of economic downturn. Scarce resources have been noted by interdisciplinary departments in compact plans and self studies as an impediment to greater vitality and visibility. Yet global and interdisciplinary studies are important to the University’s mission. In addition, foreign languages are an important component of a global and liberal education, and the University should pursue mechanisms to strengthen students’ facility with other languages.

**Recommendation:**

- Future assessment of interdisciplinary opportunities should include questions about how the experience could be improved.

**Encouraging Cultural Diversity and Global Awareness in Student Learning and Activities**

In 2006, a grant from the Ford Foundation created a Difficult Dialogues network of faculty and instructional support personnel across campus to identify options for enhancing diversity in course content. The network generated more ideas than could be implemented because of budget constraints. Yet through focus groups, panel discussions and workshops given by outside experts, the Difficult Dialogues network provided instructors with practical and social support to help address the challenge of incorporating into course content the diversity of religious, racial, cultural and sexuality perspectives that are a cornerstone of a 21st century education. The network also instituted conversation cafes, where faculty and students get together in an informal setting to discuss important hot button topics. ITLAL collaborated with the network and continues to provide workshops and materials to help faculty develop course content that brings multicultural awareness and enhances sensitivity to the diversity of student backgrounds.

As noted in Chapter 7, Student Support Services, the University is a member of the National Coalition Building Institute, and each year UAlbany’s NCBI chapter does about a dozen training sessions for different departments and units. These include specific undergraduate and graduate classes at the request of professors. In spring 2009, a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Advisory Committee was formed by the provost’s office and the Division of Student Success to identify and define concerns of the LGBTQ community. The committee will produce a final report with recommendations in spring 2010 that will go to the provost and the vice president for Student Success, as well as the president’s office.
Study Abroad

During the past decade, the University has intensified its global efforts under the leadership of the Office of International Education (OIE). The student body includes over 1100 international students from more than 95 countries. The OIE helps foreign students make the transition to life in Albany, offering a comprehensive orientation program, information about health insurance, housing, taxes, and visas, and a full program of social activities. The OIE also oversees a study abroad program that allows students to choose from more than 65 University programs and earn major, minor and General Education credit. Students also have access to more than 300 programs in more than 50 different countries through the State University system. As Appendix 9.2 shows, more than 200 students have studied abroad each year since 2001, with a high of 412 in 2008.

The academic rigor of study abroad programs is ensured by internal and external oversight. New study abroad partnerships, whether with an institute, another university, or just a private contractor offering courses overseas, are reviewed in the SUNY provost’s office by the same office that reviews new campus-based programs. Courses taught by UAlbany faculty are approved in the same ways that new courses are approved by departments on campus. The Office of International Programs (OIP) has recently taken over faculty-led study abroad courses from the Office of Summer Sessions, and is creating a standard course approval form to ensure that quality of instruction for those courses will be as rigorous as what is required for a new course offered on campus. Each individual course for which a student receives credit in the major or minor is evaluated by the student’s faculty advisor.

A strong majority (70%) of the students responding to the 2008 Middle States Survey said there are sufficient opportunities for study abroad, 54% think students can study where they want, and the vast majorities of those who went abroad report the programs to be of good quality. As was the case with off-campus internships, the availability of such opportunities does not indicate how these experiences contribute to student learning experiences. Moreover, while only 1% of student respondents say they think studying abroad is not very useful and 32% say it is very useful, the majority of students responding are not sure about the usefulness of international study. A clear pattern did emerge in responses to an open-ended question about whether there are barriers that prevent UAlbany students from going where they would like to study. Far and away, the primary perceived barrier is financial. Other perceived barriers included finding high-quality programs, trying to complete major and General Education requirements, limited offerings during winter and summer intercessions, and inadequate advising. Again, more systematic assessment of these experiences would provide specific evidence of the impact of these programs.

Recommendations:

- The University should develop a more systematic approach for assessing how study abroad programs contribute to students’ educational experience.

- Interviews with OIE personnel suggest that while some programs are so expensive that financial aid will not cover the cost, there are many that cost only the plane ticket and incidental expenses beyond the cost of studying at Albany. There are always students who cover all the usual costs of being an Albany student out of financial aid, suggesting that the
use of financial aid should not keep students from a period of study abroad. There are also students who study abroad multiple times and still graduate on time. Planning is essential to overcoming perceived problems with scheduling or requirements.

- OIP should work with departments to explore options for students to fulfill requirements while abroad. In addition, OIP should offer regular information sessions for representatives of departments so that advisors have up-to-date information, especially about the financial component.

**Advising**

The undergraduate curriculum can provide an excellent and coherent learning experience only when students are able to easily navigate their way through requirements and opportunities. Through effective advising, students are made aware of UAlbany’s many and varied programmatic opportunities and are given the support to realize these opportunities. Quality advising can enhance the student experience, increase retention rates, and improve student satisfaction.

Understanding that advising is integral to student success, an ad hoc task force on advising was formed in 2004 in connection with the Undergraduate Academic Council. The task force then made recommendations to the Faculty Senate which were adopted in November 2005. In its recommendation to the Senate, the UAC noted: “The University community as a whole has responsibility for ensuring that academic advising is provided as a coherent continuum of services that supports and facilitates a student’s progress through the various stages of the academic program, and his/her development as a self-directed learner and independent decision maker” (Appendix 9.3, Senate Bill No. 0506-04).

While external reviewers indicate that some programs in the sample advise their students very effectively, NSSE results indicate that there is definitely room for improvement. Review of the self studies suggests that large departments should be a beginning focal point for improved advising. Various models exist on campus, including having office staff or graduate students do routine advising. A model that might be considered by a number of departments is provided by the English department advisement office, which is supervised by a full-time professional staff member and staffed with one graduate assistant and two undergraduate interns each semester. The implementation of the developmental model of advisement advocated by UAC and adopted by the Senate requires time and care, and many faculty already feel overwhelmed by the advisement process. A central advisement office for larger departments would ensure consistent, quality advisement for all majors. In the Department of English, this centralization appears to have markedly improved the quality of curricular advising and freed up faculty for mentoring and other student-oriented activities, thereby improving student success and satisfaction.

**Recommendation:**

- The University should conduct a comprehensive assessment of departmental advising, including comparison to peer institutions that showed, based on the NCSE survey, more student satisfaction with advising. It is also recommended, following Senate Bill No. 0506-
04, that to the greatest extent possible more emphasis be placed on implementing changes and allocating resources in support of initiatives that improve the quality of departmental advising.

**General Education**

The General Education program is a key feature in advancing the University’s mission to provide high quality liberal arts education. As the rationale for the University at Albany’s General Education program explains, it “proposes a set of knowledge areas, perspectives, and competencies considered by the University to be central to the intellectual development of every undergraduate.” The program encapsulates goals of providing students with diverse perspectives and awareness of the global community and their role as citizens in it. The requirements include specific attention to active learning and critical oral, thinking, research and writing skills.

**Number and Variety of Courses for Timely Completion**

The General Education program at the University at Albany is expected to be an integral part of students’ academic experience, encompassing coursework from the time they begin their undergraduate degree to the completion of their major program. Students’ General Education coursework, together with their academic major and minor requirements, are a significant portion of their academic plan for graduation. The number, variety, and availability of General Education course options are critical to students’ timely completion of the degree. Moreover, the program needs to be flexible enough to accommodate a wide array of situations: highly-sequenced academic programs; traditional or non-traditional students; international students; and students whose plans include full-time internships, study abroad or joint degree programs with other colleges/universities.

The General Education program includes 15 separate learning requirements (Appendix 9.4). In addition to the SUNY-wide requirements for General Education, the University at Albany includes local campus requirements. Students graduating from UAlbany take one additional Natural Science and Social Science course, an additional course to develop their writing skills, satisfy their foreign language competency at the Beginning II level, and complete a campus-based requirement in Global and Cross-Cultural Studies and in United States Diversity and Pluralism. The SUNY-wide General Education program requires that students complete at least 30 credits of academic work. Most University at Albany students complete over 40 credits of coursework in the General Education program.

General Education course proposals originate in departments or programs, pass through college and school curriculum committees where appropriate, and are reviewed by the General Education Committee, which is a committee of the Undergraduate Academic Council. The composition of these committees is determined by the University Senate. It is the responsibility of the vice provost for undergraduate education and of the General Education Committee to ensure that course proposals meet the values and criteria of the General Education program. New course proposals must also be approved by the Undergraduate Academic Council of the University Senate. Revisions designed to qualify existing courses for the General Education program will be reviewed only by the General Education Committee.
There is universal application of the program requirements for students who enter as freshmen; students from every school/college and discipline share the General Education classroom and engage the same foundation. (By SUNY policy, transfer students may have requirements met at their prior institution, even if the requirement is less than the UAlbany requirement.) In this manner, the University at Albany has given first priority to the integrity of the General Education program as a key component of its liberal arts mission. The addition of local requirements in Global and Cultural Studies, Foreign Language, and United States Pluralism and Diversity underline the institution’s commitment to the preparation of informed global citizenship. Required coursework beyond the SUNY-mandated minimum in the Social Sciences and Natural Sciences ensures that students are amply exposed to the tools associated with the creation of knowledge and scientific standards for discovery, explanation, and critical evaluation.

The introductory courses of almost all disciplines satisfy General Education requirements as well as provide a gateway into potential academic major fields. Over 1,600 courses at UAlbany are designated as fulfilling at least one General Education requirement, and many satisfy more than one requirement. Every school/college and most academic departments offer coursework as part of the General Education program.

Table 9.4 reports the number of seats offered in each General Education category across the last four years and indicates the level of change in General Education seat availability. The data show that the supply of General Education seats has grown at a pace commensurate with changes in the undergraduate population. In most categories, the number of seats offered has grown, along with efforts across the institution to add courses that are appropriate to the General Education program. In a typical semester, the academic schedule includes more than 30,000 seats in which students can engage some element of the University’s General Education program.

Students recognize the place of General Education as part of the broad liberal arts foundation of their University at Albany experience. The 2008 NSSE asked students, “To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas….acquiring a broad General Education?” The mean response was 3.1 among first-year students and 3.2 among seniors, with a top score of ‘4’ equivalent to “very much.” The contributions of the General Education program received the highest mean scores among the different dimensions of Educational and Personal Growth.

One key way in which the General Education program is integrated into and complements the more specialized knowledge within the diversity of academic programs is through the practice of allowing a General Education requirement to satisfy major or minor requirements. This flexibility allows students to obtain a broad-based introduction to the Liberal Arts while exploring their own interests. For example, students studying Biology can easily satisfy their Natural Sciences General Education requirement within the context of their major, but must take courses outside their major to complete most other requirements. Alternatively, History majors can satisfy their U.S. History, Europe, Regions Beyond Europe, and a few other requirements in the context of their major, but study elsewhere to satisfy the Social Science and Natural Science requirement. Thus, the program is designed to ensure a breadth of study consistent with the University’s mission of a strong liberal arts foundation.
Integration of General Education Skills and Major Study

As noted above, the fact that virtually all departments contribute to the General Education Program and that most introductory courses across the University are designated as fulfilling a General Education requirement reflects one level of integration of the program with students’ academic majors. However, beyond the disciplinary requirements, the General Education program is designed to embed the delivery of specific skills across the curriculum, including skills in writing, oral discourse and information literacy. In addition, the Mathematics and Statistics requirement functions as a skill in many disciplines. These competencies are best delivered in small classes and provide a key opportunity for students to practice and develop communication and reasoning skills essential to their chosen disciplines. The degree to which these requirements are also integrated into academic majors, however, varies across departments.

There are 760 approved writing courses (upper and lower) with some 50 academic departments and majors represented in that approved list. At both the upper and lower levels, these courses are usually small classes. In some cases, such as with Anthropology, Philosophy and History, departments offer opportunities for students to satisfy both the upper and lower-lever writing requirements in the major; and some, such as Biology, have required courses in the major that satisfy both levels of writing. Almost every major in the University offers a course or courses to satisfy the upper-level writing requirement, and most academic majors require that students complete the upper-level writing within the discipline. However, not all programs have that requirement and many do not offer enough seats to meet the needs of their majors, forcing students outside their core disciplines to complete their upper-level writing requirement.

The lower-level writing requirement is among the hardest General Education category to satisfy. There are too few courses and seats available. In the 2007 Report of the Provost’s Task Force on Undergraduate Writing Instruction, the central place of writing development within the University’s mission was emphasized, and it was noted that writing is a “cognitive and social process by which students come to know themselves and the world around them” and “a means by which students gain access to the academic discourses that characterize intellectual inquiry in postsecondary institutions” (Report of the Writing Task Force). The research conducted by the Task Force also revealed high levels of dissatisfaction with the writing curriculum among faculty across the campus; instructors often feel ill-prepared to teach writing and believe that students come to upper-level disciplinary coursework lacking basic preparation. The Task Force recommended that the campus establish a University Writing Seminar that would be required of all entering freshmen students and taken in the freshman year. Leadership transitions and a developing fiscal crisis at the University contributed to a tabling of the Task Force report. However, many reports document the concern over the state of writing instruction on campus. As a key component of the General Education curriculum, linking communication, critical thinking and disciplinary discourse, the institution should reconsider the recommendations of the Task Force.
Like the writing requirement, Oral Discourse courses are small and could be most easily delivered in conjunction with a senior seminar in the major. This requirement is not well integrated into many of the majors (there are 193 approved courses representing 39 degree programs) so that students often practice and develop their oral discourse skills in a non-major context. Finally, the Information Literacy requirement is the least well-integrated into major degree programs. The University Libraries developed two popular courses, Information Literacy and Information Literacy for the Sciences, that introduce students to resources for the research process and instruct on how to locate and assess information. The Department of Informatics also teaches courses that satisfy this requirement. Since both of these programs are particularly well-suited to meet the Information Literacy requirement, other academic departments might want to consider using them to meet their own students’ academic needs, if they are not already being met by the departments’ curricula.

The General Education program also includes a Mathematics and Statistics requirement; the disciplinary-specific implementation of this skill may be a model for how the skills discussed above should be implemented. Twenty-two different courses have been designated as satisfying this requirement, and while the majority of students meet this standard with a course in statistics or calculus from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, there are applied statistics courses in sociology, psychology, business, criminal justice, and political science that attract students studying in those degree programs. In philosophy, majors satisfy this requirement with a required logic course. Indeed, most majors that include a statistics course require their students to complete it as part of the major.

To accommodate changes in SUNY-wide assessment practices, the academic programs that teach courses designated as fulfilling the Mathematics and Statistics requirement are currently engaged in translating how their distinct treatment of the requirement (e.g. logic, calculus) maps to the broad learning objectives of the category. Ultimately, assessment of these General Education learning outcomes will be tied more closely to these discipline-specific standards. This may be a model that oral discourse, information literacy and upper-level writing can follow in the context of either academic programs or more broadly conceived disciplinary perspectives.

The evaluations of students on the 2008 NSSE support the conclusion that these skills need more concerted attention in the General Education program and may well be better developed if folded into the smaller classes available within a student’s major. Their evaluation of the extent to which their coursework supported key areas — writing clearly and effectively, speaking clearly and effectively, thinking critically and analytically, using computing and information technology, and analyzing quantitative problems — were all below SUNY and Carnegie peers at statistically significant levels.

**Recommendations:**

- The University should explore whether each academic major should be required to develop coursework and offer sufficient seats in upper-level Writing Intensive sections to meet the needs of its own majors.
The University should re-engage the Recommendations of the Task Force on Writing Instruction as soon as the resource environment supports the consideration of new initiatives.

The Undergraduate Academic Council and the General Education Committee should examine different models for delivery of the information literacy and oral discourse requirement, including a closer alignment of this requirement with a student’s planned academic path.

Faculty Participation in the General Education Program

While the General Education curriculum has grown, the proportion of courses taught by tenured and tenure track faculty has declined. Indeed, a larger proportion of all the University’s educational offerings may be currently met by part-time adjuncts, graduate students, and non-tenure track full-time faculty. But as Table 9.1 indicates, in the spring 2008 semester 35.1% of the courses in the General Education program were taught by tenured or tenure track faculty. This proportion has declined steadily in the last several semesters. The fact that a little better than a third of the General Education coursework — largely introductory courses — is taught by full-time faculty may reflect the necessity of balancing the demands of graduate instruction with academic majors and the broader liberal arts curriculum. This may be a situation that warrants further attention.

Recommendation:

Governance committees should discuss the current makeup of instructors in the General Education program and decide whether the mix of tenure track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, graduate students, and part-time faculty should be monitored — and, if so, by whom.

Major Advising and the General Education Program

The integration of General Education program requirements into a student’s major academic plan is achieved by giving students tools to help them plan and monitor their progress toward degrees. The mandatory advisement policy reflects the expectation that a student actively engages his or her progress and plans before registering for courses. Colleges and departments plan their schedules in light of their curricular responsibilities and student demand. The availability of General Education courses is monitored at the institutional level, using information on student and departmental plans.

Beginning in 2006, the academic Advisement Services Center has worked with the colleges and academic majors to produce Major Academic Pathways (MAPs), which incorporate all of a student’s General Education program requirements in a sequence specific to each academic program. In addition, the General Education Web page includes a more generic planning tool that provides students with an idea of when, during their academic planning, they should have completed each General Education category. Finally, each student has online access to their Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) audit, an individualized report that charts their progress in completing their academic requirements, including their General Education requirements.
Appendices 9.5 and 9.6 provide examples of student MAPS for two distinct programs. These plans are among 87 distinct MAPS available to students pursuing the full range of disciplinary majors. They are available to faculty and students at the Advising Service Center’s Website (http://www.albany.edu/advisement/). They are introduced to all incoming students by their academic advisors and are used widely by departments in major advising. As the MAPS illustrate, successful completion of the General Education program may be more difficult for students pursuing specific academic programs — in particular, highly sequenced science programs and programs in the School of Business. Those supervising the academic programs that face particular hurdles are aware of this challenge; these programs bear the responsibility of advising students to plan effectively.

**Institutional Planning**

The DARS software is also used to inform academic planning at the institutional level. Tables 9.2 – 9.4 illustrate the information available. Table 9.2 aggregates the DARS audit information for all registered students and indicates the number of students with unmet General Education requirements in each class (e.g., senior, junior), separating transfer students from native students. Table 9.3 represents a snapshot of the General Education seats available in the proposed fall 2009 schedule. These tables illustrate key stress points in the General Education program and can be used to describe a variety of ways the campus has responded to the clearer informational picture these resources provide.

A Course Enrollment Management initiative organized by Academic Affairs developed these tools. A Course Availability Group, initiated by the Office of Enrollment Management and including personnel from Academic Advising, the Office of Undergraduate Education, and the College of Arts and Sciences, uses this information and the Schedule of Courses to supplement planned departmental offerings with General Education coursework. Table 9.4 is an example of how the data are used, combining knowledge of student majors and the expected size of the new freshman and transfer populations to project demand. On the basis of this information, more than 3,000 additional seats were added to the schedule of classes for fall 2009, with funding from the provost’s office supplementing departmental plans. While many of these seats are identified and defined in terms of their contribution to the General Education program, they are planned in light of students’ disciplinary major intentions. For example, given what is known from the degree audit about student intentions to pursue a degree in biology, the number of seats required in the introductory biology courses can be estimated and course sections added, if necessary.

Using the type of information reflected in Tables 9.2 and 9.3, the General Education Committee took an active approach to addressing some of the shortages. For example, in 2005 the General Education Committee targeted the Regions Beyond Europe, Europe, and Global Cross-Cultural requirements. In these areas, there were fewer seats and a higher degree of students who needed the requirements, with some likelihood that a single course could be used to meet the learning objectives in two categories. Using the Undergraduate Bulletin, an examination of the coursework used by other SUNY campuses to meet these requirements, and knowledge of the UAlbany curriculum, the committee asked academic departments to consider submitting specific courses for approval as part of the General Education program. Another effort focused on the upper-level writing requirement. Using these data at the departmental level, each academic
department was informed as to whether or not it was meeting the student demand for upper-level writing seats. Upper-level writing is one of the few General Education requirements broadly suited for completion in the major. More fine-tuned information about students in the major was helpful in encouraging some programs to develop or add upper-level writing courses.

Meeting the seat and course demands of the University’s local Foreign Language requirement is a continuing problem. As Table 9.2 shows, this is among the highest “unmet” General Education requirements of both freshman and transfer students at every academic level. UAlbany allows incoming students who receive a score of 85 or better on the New York State Regents exam to waive out of this requirement; this leaves the requirement with a remedial quality that falls heavily on those who were not successful in their language studies in high school. These students are seeking very specific General Education seats, most often the second semester of beginning Spanish. Every semester additional seats are requested from the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures to meet the needs of seniors attempting to graduate. (The rule that prohibits seniors from preregistering for 100-level courses necessitates a flurry of administrative action across the University to accommodate these students). To offset this demand, students are allowed to use post-matriculation transfer credit of a first semester language course to satisfy second semester course requirement. Arguably, this imposes a serious inequity on students who are not informed of this language loophole or who cannot afford to fill this requirement at another institution. At the same time, concerted efforts have been made by LLC and the Office of International Education to create innovative study abroad programs that students can use to satisfy their language requirements during the winter and summer sessions.

It should be noted that the General Education Committee and the Undergraduate Academic Council have passed or debated at least three major proposals to alter the character of the General Education program in the last four years. Each proposal has been partially motivated by a desire to reduce the size of the program and the number of requirements students must meet; each included a change in the Foreign Language requirement. The most recent of these proposals, soundly defeated in the Senate, called for an elimination of several of the local requirements of General Education program. Yet there remains some level of dissatisfaction, among faculty and students, with respect to the number of requirements and the resources available to expand seats in the General Education program.

It may be useful to ask the Undergraduate Academic Council to again consider whether the current Foreign Language requirement is appropriate the student population. A broader recommendation would be one that encourages more widespread consideration of the information presented here. The General Education Committee should regularly report the data presented in Tables 9.2 and 9.3 to the Undergraduate Academic Council for inclusion in its regular report to Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate. The findings may be more useful for University governance bodies in the evaluation of the General Education Program and allow a clearer reading of how widespread faculty support is for the comprehensive program.
Recommendations:

- The Undergraduate Academic Council should again review the University’s current Foreign Language Requirement in light of the University’s overall mission and goals and in the context of the entire General Education program.

- The General Education Committee should report the data discussed here annually to the Undergraduate Academic Council for more widespread faculty consideration.

Availability of Information on the General Education Program

Information regarding the General Education program has improved with widespread access to the Internet, but more could be done to help students become better informed about their options. The Undergraduate Bulletin includes a description of the General Education program, its rationale, and the substantive content associated with each of the categories. However, it no longer lists all of the General Education courses that satisfy requirements in a separate section. The size of the program and its dynamic nature relative to a static paper bulletin made that information outdated before it was widely available. Instead, the General Education Web page has a “lookup” function that is updated as a function of changes in the PeopleSoft catalog. For students, the General Education plan and sequencing information is prominently linked from the Advisement Services Center Website and included in all of their online registration tutorials.

Senate legislation requires that course syllabi include information regarding the General Education status of each course and the learning objectives associated with each learning requirement. Syllabi are collected by the General Education Committee and reviewed as part of the General Education Assessment Committee’s work; departments and faculty instructors are reminded of this necessity when the category in which they teach undergoes assessment, but this reminder might occur more regularly. Results from the 2008 Middle States Survey indicated that 21% of the students were dissatisfied with the information available to them about General Education courses in advance of their enrollment and 29% were neutral. If typical course syllabi were made available by departments on their Websites and long-term scheduling plans (discussed below) made more transparent, students could be better informed before choosing their General Education courses.

Recommendation:

- At the end of each semester, the General Education Committee should contact all instructors teaching General Education Courses in the following semester, reminding them of the appropriate information to include in their course syllabi.

Expanding Curriculum and Student/Faculty Petitions

The General Education program at University at Albany is flexible and dynamic. As a research campus, new courses and academic majors and minors are approved annually. When appropriate, these new opportunities are designated as part of the General Education program. In the last year,
the program has expanded to include courses from the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, the School of Public Health, the Documentary Studies program, and the Honors College. New faculty and expanded curriculum have added to the General Education curriculum such courses as the Politics of Southeast Asia, the Search for Life Beyond Earth, and Introduction to Bioethics. Table 9.5 provides a list of additions to the General Education curriculum submitted to SUNY system administration in the course of the last calendar year. The range of departments and schools/colleges represented in the table supports the finding that the General Education program is involved on an institution-wide level; 21 distinct departments and five schools/colleges added General Education courses in a single year. The table does not include more than 30 other courses that only need campus approval to satisfy a local requirement or to be offered in the categories of Writing Intensive, Oral Discourse, and Information Literacy.

The General Education Committee also reviews petitions from students who believe they have met a General Education requirement with a course outside of the designated curriculum. Well over 100 petitions are submitted each semester, a majority of which are granted. These petitions vary widely. The most commonly granted petition is from a student taking an upper-level course that clearly meets the General Education requirement but is not designated as such. Many of the categories of the General Education program are expected to be explored at the introductory level and many departments reserve enrollment in advanced courses for their majors; however, if a student takes an upper-level course that fits the requirement, the petition will be approved. Whenever possible, if a student petitions for a General Education requirement to be satisfied in a lower-lever course, whose syllabus reflects content well-matched to the category’s learning objectives, the exception is extended for all the students in the course.

Adopted by the General Education Committee in spring of 2007, this petition and exception process is relatively new. It represents an untapped informational resource on the effectiveness of the General Education program. While the General Education Committee does glean important anecdotal information about student perceptions from the requests it reviews, these impressions could be informed with better systematic data analysis. Moreover, both the availability of the petition option and the results of past requests need to be more widely publicized to students and faculty. Currently, departments agree to the changing General Education status of the course, the student who submitted a petition is informed, but all other students affected by the change would need to consult their degree audit to discover that a change in the course’s status had taken place. Sometimes these changes take place from a previous semester, making it impossible for a faculty member to notify students in a classroom setting of the change. Moreover, when a department declines the request to consider submitting a course to fulfill a General Education requirement, the General Education Committee does not ask again, nor does it approve subsequent petitions. Sometimes these requests come for very reasonable courses and the repeated requests take up everyone’s time needlessly. One recommendation, if enacted, would establish a central informational place, on a highly visible, well-trafficked page, that would inform students of changes in the status of courses, and increase student and faculty knowledge and understanding of the process.

In addition, the Office of Undergraduate Education works with and assists students in satisfying requirements when the program presents a barrier to graduation. For example, students with disabilities that present obstacles toward satisfying specific requirements — in particular, Math
and Statistics and Foreign Language — are provided with alternative courses; and students who can meet the Foreign Language requirement with proficiency in a language not reflected in the curriculum are provided an alternative means to demonstrate equivalency. The General Education Committee accepts departmental requests to designate one-time offerings of topical courses as well as individual faculty petitions which would allow work that individual students have done in upper-level independent studies, colloquia, or honors tutorials to satisfy General Education requirements. Study abroad work is very often accepted as part of a student’s General Education program.

Advisement by the Academic Advising Service Center and within a student’s major are key resources to assist students in understanding how the General Education program requirements complement academic programs. This planning is a major factor in determining whether students can complete all of their academic requirements and graduate in a timely manner; it is especially critical for students in more specialized, combined degree programs, where coursework within the academic program is sequenced.

Each academic program employs a longer time horizon for internal course scheduling than the schedule of classes makes apparent. If these longer range plans were more transparent to students and academic advisors, students would have better decision-making resources. Thus, one recommendation would be that each academic program make available on its Website its planned curriculum for the next two years, including the associated General Education status of designated courses. However, given the dynamic nature of course schedules, students would need to be well apprised of additions and deletions in those plans.

The University has no systematic data on the extent to which students are delayed from graduating because of General Education requirements. In the spring 2009 initial run of degree candidates, 560 out of 2,142, or 26.14%, were found deficient for some reason (e.g., not enough credits, GPA issues, missing requirements in their major, minor or General Education program). Of those 560, only 41, or 7%, were deficient solely on the basis of a missing General Education requirement. The Registrar’s office notifies the students and the Office of Undergraduate Education about these deficient degree candidates (it notifies the student and the academic program when the deficiency is a function of a student’s major requirements). The Associate Dean for General Education and the General Education Committee review the student’s academic record to try to resolve as many of the deficiencies as possible.

Results from the 2008 Middle States Survey suggest that the General Education program is perceived as a barrier to timely graduation by some students. Among the freshman through junior respondents, 4% reported they would be unable to complete General Education requirements on time and 20% were not sure. Of the seniors, 11% said General Education courses were a barrier and 7% were not sure. Respondents citing difficulty identified the number one barrier as a conflict between their major program and available General Education courses. The open-ended responses indicate that the restrictions surrounding course requirements in addition to lack of adequate advising were the primary reasons for difficulty in completing General Education requirements. Time, other non-school obligations, and difficulties meeting grade requirements were additional issues.
Recommendations:

- The General Education Committee should consider ways to publicize information from the petition and exception process.

- The data available from the General Education Committee’s petition and exception process should be analyzed more systematically and added to other informational resources being used to evaluate student demand and the General Education program requirements.

- Curriculum planning information that departments develop should be available to students so they can engage in better long-term planning.

- The General Education Committee should review the academic progress of students in highly-sequenced degrees or combined programs to evaluate whether their total requirements pose a hardship that should be modified to facilitate timely graduation.

Learning Objectives, Information Resources and Assessment

The learning objectives for the entire General Education program were defined in the Implementation Guidelines of the Provost’s Advisory Task Force on General Education. UAlbany learning outcomes and objectives were developed by focus groups of faculty teaching courses in a given category; the groups augmented the learning objectives (defined in the Implementation Guidelines) for that category. This enhanced set of objectives and outcomes was subsequently restated in the recent (2008) Triennial Update of Campus General Education Assessment Plans and Reports on Closing-the-Loop Activities; they are detailed in Appendix 9.6.

The learning outcomes and objectives are listed in the *Undergraduate Bulletin* and are available on the General Education Website (http://www.albany.edu/gened/). Faculty proposing new courses for the General Education program must explicitly address these learning objectives and incorporate them into the course syllabus. This information is accessible to faculty and both current and prospective students. Furthermore, the outcomes and objectives frame the evaluation questions presented to the students in the course assessment forms.

The General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) has responsibility for:

- Reviewing the assessment methodologies employed in courses in their respective categories by examining the assignments and narrative explanations supplied by faculty along with the numerical data of outcomes; ensuring that assessment methods are reported for each objective; identifying effective and ineffective assessment methods; making concrete suggestions for improvement, wherever possible.

- Reviewing the report of the Director of Program Review and Assessment on the Student Perceptions of General Education Program Course Survey to identify strengths and weaknesses in each category; recommending areas in need of improvement in communicating the goals and objectives of the General Education program and its courses to students; reviewing the survey itself and making recommendations as to its continuance or discontinuance.
- Reviewing the locally developed learning objectives developed for their respective categories to determine if they are indeed assessable.

- Reviewing the relation of courses selected for assessment to those not chosen, in order to determine what problems, if any, would emerge from going to a system of random selection.

- Submitting an annual report on the General Education assessment to the General Education Committee and to the Council on Academic Assessment, which would summarize the committee’s findings and recommend policy and/or procedural changes based on assessment results.

- On the basis of its analysis of the assessment information, recommending for each course that it be: 1) continued for another three years; 2) revised in order to be continued; or 3) discontinued as a General Education course.

**Support for Current Educational Offerings**

The evolving nature of 21st century teaching and learning has changed expectations for instructional support. Academic and administrative instructional support units have endeavored to align resources and services accordingly. Key facets of educational support are library collections and facilities, instructional and classroom technologies, and faculty instructional support and development.

**University Libraries**

The University Libraries’ mission is to “strengthen and enhance the teaching, research, and service of the University at Albany. The Libraries promote intellectual growth and creativity by developing collections, facilitating access to information resources, teaching the effective use of information resources and critical evaluation skills and offering research assistance.” The Libraries support the University’s educational offerings through an extensive array of services, collections and facilities.

The University Libraries are housed in three buildings: University Library, Science Library, and Dewey Graduate Library. The University Library’s collections and services focus on social sciences, humanities, education and business, and the Science Library focuses on sciences and health. Dewey Graduate Library serves the four graduate professional schools on the Downtown Campus (Social Welfare; Criminal Justice; Information Studies; and Public Affairs and Policy). Each library houses collections and provides reference and circulation services. The Libraries’ staff comprises 72 FTE faculty, 49 FTE support staff, and 30 FTE student staff.

The Science Library is a modern facility, built in 1999, with sufficient wiring and data for PCs, group study spaces, adequate shelving space, and extensive storage areas. The busiest of the three libraries, the University Library, was built in 1965, and so predates modern technology; it has inadequate data, wiring, and HVAC, as well as other issues. Planning for its renovation began in spring 2008. Dewey
The University Libraries collection supports research and study for faculty, students and researchers affiliated with the University. It includes books, journals, electronic journals, electronic books, databases, government documents, microforms, special collections, archives, software, CDs, DVDs, videos, and maps. The Libraries own 2,174,741 print volumes, 2,914,518 microforms and 77,390 e-books (including government publications); receive 39,005 print and electronic journals and serials; and subscribe to 297 databases. Virtually all electronic materials can be accessed from on or off campus 24/7.

The University Libraries Website\(^2\) is the research portal that provides access to the University Libraries’ collections and services. This is a complex site developed and maintained by Library Systems staff and a committee of public services librarians. It provides a gateway to all collections and resources including: the online catalog (Minerva); databases and online journals; services such as reference, tutorials, Interlibrary Loan and circulation; and news and information about the Libraries. The Libraries have extensive technical software, equipment and expertise to provide access to not only this complex Website, but to its online catalog and extensive collection of online journals and databases. The Technical Services and Library Systems Division acquires and arranges access to all information resources selected by the Collections Division in a user-centered, cost effective, and efficient manner. A “Journal Finder” (on the Website) and link resolver assist users in finding online journals and accessing the full text of articles. Features in the Minerva Online Catalog are continually reviewed and updated.

Collections are managed by 17 bibliographers whose subject expertise enables them to work closely with the teaching faculty in building collections that address research and curriculum needs. Library priorities and policies are documented in the Collection Development Policy.\(^3\) Bibliographers also provide in-depth reference assistance, make presentations to classes on library research topics, and prepare Web-based bibliographies and research guides in subject areas of interest to their assigned departments and programs.

The M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, a repository for manuscripts and archives of original research materials, provides students with opportunities to consult and study collections of primary source materials, some of which are internationally known. The Department’s most important collections are the Archives of Public Affairs and Policy, The German and Jewish Intellectual Émigré Collection, and the University Archives. The Department is actively engaged in digitizing selected collections related to the history of the University.

During the 2008-09 academic year, visits to the University Library totaled 890,897, the Libraries’ Website was visited 2,712,900 times, its 139 most heavily used databases were searched 1,533,064 times, reference staff answered 62,930 questions, users checked out 906,698 items, Interlibrary Loan borrowed 22,371 items from other academic libraries for UA students and faculty, and the Libraries’ intra-campus document delivery service delivered 12,691 items directly to library users. During the

\(^2\) [http://library.albany.edu](http://library.albany.edu)
\(^3\) [http://library.albany.edu/subject/cdp/](http://library.albany.edu/subject/cdp/)
period before and during final exams, the University Library was open 24/7 during the week and 16 hours/day on weekends.

The Interlibrary Loan Department supplements the University Libraries’ collection by providing electronic article delivery and loans of books and other types of materials from a vast network of libraries on a local, statewide and international basis. State-of-the-art software is utilized to manage requests and deliver materials efficiently. Relationships with several consortia (SUNY libraries, ARL RAPID libraries, and Capital District Library Council libraries) enable the department to maintain cost effective resource sharing. The Preservation Department coordinates efforts to prolong the useful life of the University Libraries’ collections and the information they contain. An on-site storage facility houses nearly 340,000 volumes of less frequently used materials that are available by paging.

The Libraries are a hub of support for undergraduate and graduate students. Reference Services are available at all three libraries. The reference desk in the University Library is staffed up to 69 hours per week, with the Science Library and Dewey Library offering fewer hours. Service is also available by phone, e-mail, IM, and texting. Individual appointments with reference librarians and subject specialists are available for students and faculty who have more complex research projects. Reference services are analyzed according to difficulty of questions, time of day and week, and communication medium (i.e. in-person, IM, etc.). Staffing patterns are based upon this information.

Librarians play an important role in the campus-wide effort to teach students how to access and evaluate information, and how to use it ethically. The Libraries offer two one-credit courses that meet the University’s Information Literacy General Education requirement. While a decline in the number of librarians who teach these courses has had an impact on how many sections can be offered, 30 sections were taught in the 2008-09 academic year. Librarians also contribute to discipline-based instruction through course-related instruction, development of tutorials and guides, and individual consultation with students. The Libraries’ interactive tutorials include Plagiarism 101 (addressing a major campus concern), Researching 101, and Evaluating Internet Sites 101. For classes and tutorials see http://library.albany.edu/usered/.

The Interactive Media Center offers an array of multimedia and Web-design tutorials. This Center, unique on campus in assisting students to develop their competency with new media, was upgraded in 2008/09. It provides digitizing, equipment for loan, scheduled instruction, lectures to academic courses and an open lab with on-site consultation in the areas of audio and video digitizing and Web-development applications.

In addition to these services, librarians attend orientations for freshmen, graduate students, transfer students, international students, and parents. The Libraries’ largest outreach event, Library Palooza, is held on the opening weekend of each fall semester. In 2009, almost 1,500 students attended this event. Librarians also go “on the road” to residence halls to offer programming. Outreach is provided for transfer students by offering on-site programming and reference service in the transfer student lounge. The Libraries continually reach out to patrons through the Website, blogs, flyers, signs and handouts alerting patrons to research resources and processes, events and services. Each library has a large screen in its lobby where events, services and collections are advertised.

4 http://library.albany.edu/imc/
Each library has a coordinator for services to patrons with disabilities. Software and equipment for students with visual and mobility issues are available in each building and the Libraries provide copying, paging and retrieval, home and office delivery, as well as orientations and reference assistance for patrons with disabilities. These services are described in detail in the “Practical Guide to Library Services for Persons with Disabilities.”

The University Libraries have long been a welcoming gathering place for students to study and meet. There are varied settings in the Libraries, including designated quiet study areas, carrels, group study areas (some with white boards), comfortable seating areas, and the Information Commons (IC)⁵. The IC, a nexus of research assistance and computing resources, is a partnership between the Libraries and University’s Information Technology Services (ITS). This initiative provides resources that had not previously been available to such a degree in the University Libraries. Space within the Libraries was repurposed and the Libraries now house more than 550 public PCs that provide access to an extensive suite of software. The majority are owned and maintained by ITS. Library-owned laptops are available for checkout and students have access to networked and wireless printing and wireless access for laptops. The IC encourages and supports the knowledge-centered, student-centered, social, interactive, and technologic aspects of teaching and learning at the University. The Libraries and campus ITS have demonstrated sustained commitment to this partnership. A March 2008 IC Development Task Force report made several recommendations for developments of future phases of the IC.⁶ The Libraries have been following up on many of these recommendations as resources become available.

Libraries faculty strive to be aware of the constantly shifting landscape of library services — new technologies, new techniques, new online public access catalogs (OPACs), new directions from OCLC and library system vendors — as well as changing user needs and expectations. The Libraries have invested heavily in a more complex library management system, including a new OPAC and a new Interlibrary Loan system since the last Middle States team visit. Librarians and staff members have expended extensive time and effort to configure them to best meet student needs. They have also invested in providing new and innovative services. Recent examples from the Reference Department include implementation of IM Reference, Text Reference, and Just Ask! Service (students ask for reference assistance to come to them at the computer they are using).

The Libraries collect data to assess how well they are meeting student needs and to help improve services. Evidence from a number of surveys, including LibQual+, the 2008 Middle States Survey on Student, Faculty and Staff Satisfaction, and several internal library surveys, indicates that the Libraries are effective in informing users about available services and that users are largely satisfied with the services the Libraries provide.

The LibQual+ survey, developed by the Association of Research Libraries and used as a way to “benchmark perceptions of library services,” was administered to University at Albany faculty, students, and staff in 2006. A total of 538 people across many departments took the survey,

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⁵ [http://library.albany.edu/infocoms](http://library.albany.edu/infocoms)
⁶ See [https://wiki.albany.edu/download/attachments/14191606/ic+dev+final+rpt.pdf](https://wiki.albany.edu/download/attachments/14191606/ic+dev+final+rpt.pdf)
including 127 undergraduates and 273 graduate students. Student responses show that the University Libraries meet the needs of students, but that additional information resources are desired, and that there are library hours, space, and computing issues that need to be addressed. For undergraduate students all three general areas — Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place — are perceived as adequate, but below the desired level. Particular strengths included a willingness to help users, caring employees, community space for group learning, and modern equipment for information access. Strengths indicated through local questions added by University Libraries, related to providing online course support and teaching information literacy skills. The only areas rated inadequate were “Quiet space for individual activities” in Library as Place, and “Ready access to computers/Internet/software” in response to a locally-developed question. For graduate students, issues of concern were more numerous, and clustered in the category of Information Control. Major weaknesses were access to print and electronic information sources (particularly journal collections), and having access to a Website that enables students to find information themselves. The only question outside of Information Control with a low score was “Library space that inspires study and learning.” Strengths included giving users individual attention, community space for group learning, and teaching information.

The 2008 Middle States survey of undergraduate students indicated that 58% of students felt the Libraries’ services were very effectively publicized, and another 26% felt services were somewhat effectively publicized. Fifty-one percent were very satisfied with the Libraries’ services and 28% were somewhat satisfied. Several comments expressed dissatisfaction with the hours that the libraries are open, particularly the Science Library.

**Recommendations:**

- The University Libraries should explore options to improve access to information for all University library users. Areas targeted for improvement would include online databases and other online materials (both fee-based and open-access), as well as ensuring availability of the staff necessary to process these materials and make them accessible to library users both on and off campus. Improving access also would include providing reference assistance to users in-person/online/by phone and teaching students how to make the best use of available resources.

- In order to obtain a more up-to-date picture of undergraduate and graduate student satisfaction and concern, an instrument similar to, but shorter than, LibQual+ should be administered on a regular basis. Particularly useful would be information about students’ preferred methods of learning about and accessing the resources provided by the Libraries, as well as their needs related to the Information Commons.

**Information Technology Services (ITS)**

ITS is a very strong source of curricula support, despite difficult economic times. Currently, ITS is working on a long range strategic plan (“ITS 2.0”) to provide continued service and

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7 Complete survey results are available at [http://library.albany.edu/about/libqual.html](http://library.albany.edu/about/libqual.html)
maintenance of vital technology infrastructure, and to play a consulting and coordinating role for schools, departments, and divisions. In August of 2006, Faculty Technology Resources (FTR) was added as a support group within ITS to coordinate instructional technology resources and services, provide faculty with the tools needed to incorporate technology into their instruction, and to manage two major transitions: 1) deployment of a new course management system, and 2) conversion from an externally supported online learning platform to an internally hosted program.

**Classroom and Other Course Technologies**

Since 1999, 59 classrooms and lecture halls with a combined total seating capacity of approximately 7,273 have been equipped with computing technology, including seven computer classrooms equipped with workstations for each seat (201 student PCs total; average of 28 PCs per smart classroom) and 27 smart classrooms (Appendix CT provides equipment and software list). There is also a suite of applications, to support teaching, learning, research, and communication.\(^8\)

In spite of these improvements, demand is outstripping availability. In a spring 2005 evaluation, Client Support Services (ITS) found a high demand among faculty that all teaching spaces be minimally equipped with a computer and projector and that there be technology-assisted spaces for occasional instructional uses. Another indication of this increased demand is the increased use of a computer-on-wheels (COW), provided for use in non-computer classrooms. From spring 2008 to fall 2008, COW usage increased by 43%, from 128 to 183 class sessions. These figures likely underestimate demand, because insufficient staffing requires faculty to get and return the COWs. The University has equipped additional classrooms with technology each year as funding has allowed (six new classrooms were slated for summer 2009).

In 2007-2008, ITS/FTR and ITLAL collaborated to launch a pilot project for using student response, or “clicker,” systems. The project was cohort-based and resulted in roughly 24 instructors and several hundred students using the technology over the past two years. Surveys during the first cohort (fall 2007) indicated that, in general, students found the system was easy to use, beneficial to their learning, and its use worth the time and money. In general, instructors have responded favorably, and many have continued their use of the system. Survey data on the clicker project are available at the following links:

- Faculty surveys: [https://wiki.albany.edu/download/attachments/14191606/iClicker+Faculty+Surveys+Round+1.doc](https://wiki.albany.edu/download/attachments/14191606/iClicker+Faculty+Surveys+Round+1.doc)
- Student compiled responses: [https://wiki.albany.edu/download/attachments/14191606/iClicker+Compiled+Results+Survey+Round+1+Anonymous.xls](https://wiki.albany.edu/download/attachments/14191606/iClicker+Compiled+Results+Survey+Round+1+Anonymous.xls)

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8 [http://www.albany.edu/its/software_userrooms_classrooms.htm](http://www.albany.edu/its/software_userrooms_classrooms.htm)
Student open-ended responses:
https://wiki.albany.edu/download/attachments/14191606/iClicker+Open-Ended+Responses+Fall+2007+Round+1.xlsx

Outside the classroom, ITS has helped faculty stay current with other emerging technologies. For example, the 2007-08 instructional Wiki Pilot project resulted in a phased production implementation of the Confluence wiki service hosted on campus by ITS, beginning in 2008-09. From the beginning of the pilot, approximately 52 instructors used wiki spaces for 1,215 enrollments (duplicated headcount). Expanded usage using wikis will be facilitated as experience yields best practices for instructional and learning strategies. It will be important to provide learning opportunities for instructors to effectively use wikis in teaching.

Due to lack of interest, the 2007-08 Blog Pilot project resulted in a decision to discontinue the pilot and not move ahead with a production service; however, ITS/FTR remains receptive to any renewed interest in a University-supported blog service that might be initiated and is prepared to offer consultation on various externally available blogging tools and services. A podcasting pilot project (using iTunes U from Apple, Inc.) began in January 2009; evaluation will determine its potential efficacy, future needs and requirements.

Student perception of the Use of Computing Technology or Media Resources in Their Courses as reported in the 2008 Middle States Survey is only somewhat positive. On a five-point scale, the following mean ratings were received for the four items: Adequacy of Use of Technology or Media, 3.80; Ease of Use of Hardware, 3.87; Ease of Use of Software, 3.87; and Support for Use of Technology and Media in Their Courses, 3.76. The average mean was 3.83. The University should recognize efforts toward effective, facile processes, as well as techniques for integration of technology and media in the University’s educational offerings. Continued (perhaps expanded) dialogue through groups such as the Faculty and Student Advisory committees, the pertinent Faculty Senate councils and committees, and the academic and administrative instructional support units could better facilitate such emerging practices.

Information Access and Online Modalities

To facilitate online information access more effectively, augment traditional instructional strategies, and support online learning modalities, the University has employed course management system (CMS) technology; using WebCT and, later, Blackboard. Additionally, the My UAlbany Web portal allows students and faculty to access their enrollment services and course resources securely and reliably online. Between 1999-2000 and 2007-08, enrollment in Web-enhanced courses increased by 1,000% (from 5,000 to 55,150). In order to address student and faculty needs for course management, an investigation of the interoperability of Blackboard with electronic reserve systems is underway.

FTR has conducted faculty development activities through online self-paced courses, standard classroom workshops, and individual consultation. In 2007-2008, FTR offered 63 workshop events on various course management system features. Although feedback provided by attendees is positive, average attendance at these workshops is very low (roughly two).
As online course offerings steadily increase, the University continues to support faculty in developing and teaching online courses. All instructors scheduled to teach an online course for the first-time (usually 10-15 instructors annually) participate in the Online Course Development Seminar. This program strives to ensure quality course design and effective online pedagogy, which is expected to result in higher levels of student and faculty satisfaction and more effective teaching and learning outcomes. As an increasing number of undergraduate online courses are offered, departments are assigning more instructors to teach online. However, interviews with ITS personnel indicate that there is not a widely applied protocol for how new online courses are identified, instructors assigned, and support requirements determined. Consequently, online teaching assignments have not always synchronized with the availability of course-development support resources, and instructors must sometimes be turned away from already full programs due to resource restrictions.

While fully online courses may fill the needs of some students, considerations involving effective instructional design, pedagogy and learning, management of departmental resources, and applicability across the curriculum need to weigh into plans for offering online courses. It is possible that some disciplines are more readily adaptable for online learning than others. Perhaps courses that can rely on objective-based assessment would be more easily adapted to an online platform, while those relying on essays and discussions pose greater challenges.

**Recommendations:**

- The University must continue to invest in ITS to improve upon the excellent foundation that has been provided, despite difficult economic times. Key priorities include classroom technology (learning spaces) and instructional technology. Classroom technology should be established in all new classrooms and upgraded in all refurbished facilities; this effort would include software for classroom PCs and personnel who can provide support (as with Husted Hall, which comes online in 2010). Instructional technology improvements would involve resources for implementing extensions to Blackboard (the University’s CMS) in order to enhance communication and collaborative learning, and integrate rich media for engaging course content, data, and other campus systems to augment student assessment capabilities. This would entail added personnel to facilitate expanded development of blended and online courses; research on, and development and coordination of emerging technologies, including Web 2.0 and mobile learning; and infrastructure for storage and delivery of audio/video; and other rich media content.

- The University should attempt to enhance staffing to support instructional use of the computerized classrooms or Computers on Wheels (COWs).

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9 Section 496(a)(4)(B) of the HEA, as amended by the HEOA, and effective August 14, 2008, provides that an accrediting agency must require an institution that offers distance education to have processes through which the institution establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit. Consistent with this legislation, all UAlbany students who participate in such classes use secure login procedures for their online courses.
• The FTR should investigate ways to increase faculty attendance at workshops by aligning learning opportunities with faculty schedules or bringing the instruction to groups of faculty (such as departments, new faculty, and the like).

• Additional data should be collected to determine if there are ways to better identify student needs for online courses so that required courses can be planned more effectively for online offering.

• A forum should be instituted for discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of online learning, including identification of best practices in online learning.

• Data are needed from departments to assess resource obstacles to online course offerings. ITS should develop ways to help departments balance the potential “seat deficit” sometimes experienced when offering online courses.

• Feedback on the wiki tool should be gathered through surveys of instructors and students.

• The University should work toward academically effective and facile processes for integrating technology and media into the University’s educational offerings. Continued (perhaps expanded) dialog through groups such as the Faculty and Student Advisory committees that make recommendations to the CIO, the pertinent Faculty Senate committee(s), and the academic and administrative instructional support units, could better facilitate such emerging practices.

The Writing Center

The English Department’s Writing Center Program was begun in the late 1970s as a faculty initiative. The Writing Center is directed by an English Department faculty member and staffed by graduate as well as undergraduate students, not necessarily from English. Unlike tutorial centers at other colleges and universities, which might focus on remediation or specifically serve first-year writing programs, the Department of English’s Writing Center is open to the entire University community. According to the director, for writers, the Center's process-based pedagogy emphasizes critical thinking and disciplinary and rhetorical self-awareness. Tutors offer feedback, support and encouragement, and benefit themselves, since tutorials offer opportunities to study and discuss a wide variety of writing forms and professional or disciplinary conventions. They also offer incentive for tutors to reflect critically on their own assumptions and writing practices. While its core functions are pedagogical, including tutorials, workshops and presentations to University classes and programs, the Writing Center also offers institutional and logistical support to students, faculty, and staff engaged in a broad range of writing, reading and performance projects, and actively promotes programs and events that enhance and elevate writing and literary culture both within the department and across the University.

In addition to ongoing Writing Center support for two student creative writing groups, recent program initiatives included the addition of an ESL consultant from the School of Education to the tutorial staff, and a significant upgrade of the Web design software and user-room computers.
In addition, the Center hosted the 2007 SUNY Council on Writing Annual Conference. Currently the Center is working on a Writing Center blog and some research and planning around the potentials and possibilities of online peer-writing workshops for advanced classes, as well as peer discussions which would focus on specific genres of creative writing, such as screenwriting, fiction writing, and poetry.

**Recommendation:**

- While the Writing Center collects data on tutorials and class visits conducted, the data have not been reviewed in recent years, perhaps ever. The Writing Center therefore should undergo a regular formal assessment process so that effectiveness of its practices and pedagogical principles may be gauged.

### Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership (ITLAL)

During the self-study process, ITLAL consistently emerged as a vitally important resource on this campus. Formerly the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, which was in operation during the most recent Middle States team visit, CETL was reconstituted and its mission and resources expanded in 2006-2007. The vice provost for undergraduate education asked for a nationwide search for a director and, under the new director’s leadership, the center became ITLAL, a vital hub of faculty development designed to serve as an agent for instructional innovation and transformation, instigating cultural change to put the student at the center of the educational experience. In its first year of operation, ITLAL built up a Website of teaching resources (reporting over 21,000 hits), initiated the Instructional Leadership Academies, continued management of multimedia digitization and Web streaming services (approximately 6,500 audio and video items hosted), implemented a midterm course survey service, launched two print-publication series on teaching at UAlbany, and initiated the clicker project.

Through these initiatives, along with individual instructional consultations with faculty, ITLAL has supported hundreds of faculty and graduate students, encouraging active learning, interactive experiences, and team-based learning approaches. Unsolicited positive feedback on ITLAL programming and services is documented on the ITLAL Website. Institute personnel also collect anonymous feedback from participants at each ITLAL workshop. ITLAL is quite new, so these data have not yet been fully analyzed, but the director plans to use them to improve services offered to faculty and graduate students.

FTR and ITLAL collaborate on periodic faculty development programs designed to encourage and support innovation using instructional technologies. The Instructional Leadership Academies include learning opportunities for Web-enhanced and blended learning course design (11 and 22 participants, respectively, in 2008-2009), teaching large classes (new in 2009), and development of teaching portfolios (10 participants). Most of these opportunities were initiated in 2008-09 and have provided a basis for their expansion. A model for faculty development is taking shape, whereby the two units will facilitate a phased program for uptake of the tools and techniques required by faculty for effective Web-enhanced, blended, and online teaching and learning. ITLAL’s move to a newly renovated location in spring 2009 will better accommodate its ability

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10 [http://www.albany.edu/teachingandlearning/](http://www.albany.edu/teachingandlearning/)
to support faculty innovation in the 21st century, including providing increased computing resources and corresponding programming, and consultation for instructional design and pedagogic development.

**Responsiveness of Curriculum to Changing Needs**

The University has responded well to changing needs and opportunities that are presented by the changing demographics, abilities and needs of its students. This chapter has already discussed the importance the University places on preparing students for life and careers in the global community. This section discusses responsiveness in terms of student subpopulations and the provision of online learning options.

**Transfer Students and Non-Traditional Students**

Since the last Middle States accreditation review, the number of transfer students at the University has increased. Nearly half of the students who graduate from UAlbany have transferred to the University, most commonly from one of the community colleges or four-year campuses within the SUNY system. Transfer students face special challenges in meeting both General Education and major/minor requirements for graduation. As noted in Chapter 7, Student Support Services, the University created the position of Transfer Experience Coordinator in 2007 in response to a number of concerns about transfer students’ experience. The coordinator works with the student advisement staff and major departments to guide them in assessing whether students’ past coursework meets UAlbany requirements. Advisors in turn work individually with transfer students to evaluate their past coursework and to develop their plan of study.

An important resource for transfer students is the transfer equivalency data bank, which identifies courses at hundreds of other colleges and universities that are roughly equivalent to UAlbany courses and/or that meet specific General Education distribution requirements. Equivalents for upper-level courses required by most majors are also catalogued.

According to the 2008 Middle States (student) Survey, transfer students report highly varied experiences with transfer advisement services, with some expressing very positive experiences and others fairly negative ones in comparison to their former college/university. Approximately 18% of transfer students reported that the advising here is somewhat or much worse than advising at their previous school; the survey’s open-ended questions elicited a variety of negative comments about the advising system and almost no positives.

A number of the transfer students would be identified as non-traditional students, i.e., students who are older than the typical college-aged (18 to 22 years old) student, and often are balancing college with parenting, work, or other responsibilities. Currently, the University does not have a specific location to meet the needs of these students, and so it is difficult to examine how the University approaches the needs of these groups. Responses to the 2008 Middle States (student) Survey indicate these students do have some unmet needs. Some students noted the need for better advisement, more flexible and variable class schedules and office hours and other related services; some pointed to the difficulty in getting to advisors during office hours or getting other help from University personnel because of the limited times when they can get to campus.
Historically Underrepresented Students

As the NSSE results show, the University has a much higher share of students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups as well as first-generation college students. The University at Albany, which defines itself in its “Principles for a Just Community” as “an academic community dedicated to the ideals of justice” and the principles of diversity, has been successful in reaching out to non-traditional students with diverse social backgrounds and low income. Undergraduate programs such as the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), Project Excel, Collegiate Science Technology Entry Program (CSTEP), the University at Albany Summer Research Program (UASRP), and Science & Technology Entry Program (STEP), will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 10, Related Educational Activities.

At the graduate level, the State University of New York Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (SUNY AGEP) “provides an important means of access to qualified underrepresented minority students who are interested in graduate study and careers in the professoriate in science, engineering, and mathematics. SUNY AGEP seeks to enrich students’ academic experience by creating an effective network of faculty, students, and administrators who embrace academic excellence and diversity.” SUNY AGEP is funded by the National Science Foundation’s Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (http://www.albany.edu/agep). Among the services offered are: mentoring by the AGEP program staff; the Summer Research Institute for undergraduates; summer head-start for incoming graduate students; travel to professional conferences; financial incentives; faculty mentoring; book allowance, business card, student membership in professional organizations, campus visits, and stipend supplement.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are served by The Disability Resource Center (DRC), which provides educational programs and activities to enhance students’ development and well-being, and to create an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity, engagement, and learning. The DRC works with all members of the University community from faculty to alumni. In 1980, 88 students were registered with the office now known as the Disability Resource Center. In 2000, there were 340 self-identified students with disabilities. In the fall of 2006 there were 565 and in the fall of 2007, 575. This growth can be attributed to UAlbany’s commitment to diversifying the student and faculty bodies to advance scholarship and foster a more global learning environment. This growth also reflects the impact of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which made the public more aware of their rights and their needs. The office’s Website states that students who are documented to have “any recognized disability or condition that causes a substantial limitation in a major life activity” can receive services. Chapter 7, Student Support Services, provides additional information about the DRC.

Online Learning

Between the summers of 2006 and 2008, enrollment in undergraduate online courses grew by a total of 185%, from 200 to 570. Online offerings during winter session began in 2007 and
continued in 2008 with an enrollment increase of 73%, from 170 to 290. While these trends point out the success of the online initiative, further analysis suggests that offerings may not be meeting demand. Since 2007 the number of students on the waiting list for online courses in the summer and winter terms has increased by 477% for summer and 73% for winter, from 80 to 462 and 256 to 443, respectively. In an effort to avoid putting students in a position of getting a late start on their course work in the time-compressed summer/winter terms, current policy prohibits adding students after the term has begun. Since some students drop courses after the term has begun, and those slots cannot be filled, total enrollment for the summer/winter term is on average 21% below the total enrollment cap for all courses in the term, while there is a waiting list that is 85% of the total term enrollment cap.

At the graduate level, online courses extend the University’s reach to students with full-time careers, both locally and outside this area. Examples include teachers or local health department staff in distant parts of the state who need additional education in their field but cannot relocate to pursue a full-time in-person degree. Some of the graduate students in online courses are full-time, local students, taking a few online courses to increase their time flexibility, experience a different learning approach, or take specific courses that are only available online.

Fully online learning poses challenges in student retention and advising. Students may take an online course assuming it will be easy. Yet because online learning requires greater student engagement in learning, it may be more challenging than in-class learning. The importance of advising is reinforced once again. Effective advising is needed to help ensure that students have appropriate expectations.

**Recommendations:**

- The Transfer Experience Coordinator should work with the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness to identify appropriate means to examine transfer students’ educational experience on a regular basis.

- Systematic data should be collected from both historically underrepresented students and non-traditional students in order to improve their college experience. The University needs to know the extent of difficulties and elicit suggestions to improve the college experience of these groups.

- The University should consider ways to provide more online options for students, including more sections of high-demand courses, e.g., by preparing more instructors for online education, developing innovative teaching-load or compensation options to permit instructors to develop online courses; or increasing the enrollment cap where feasible (because of experienced instructors, more efficient teaching strategies).

- ITS/FTR and ITLAL personnel should do presentations or provide advising material for departments to ensure effective guidance about online courses. This should include suggestions for advising distant students, which poses special challenges because it must be done via telephone or online.
APPENDICES

Appendix 9.1 Summary of Recommendations

- Faculty should be encouraged to discuss how graduate quality is being assessed; the correlation between productivity and quality should be examined, and the possibility of collecting internal data that assess other possible dimensions of quality evaluated.

- The University should develop a more systematic approach for assessing how internship programs contribute to students’ educational experience.

- Because clearly defined goals and linked assessments are important to student learning, it is recommended that the University consider requiring they be included on the syllabus of every course at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

- Systematic data should be collected on faculty perspectives about assessment, including how best to assess learning in faculty’s courses and disciplines.

- Regarding large courses, analysis by department of faculty-student ratios and teaching effectiveness should be carried out to ensure that quality of instruction is not compromised and that the faculty-student ratio be maintained, or even decreased, despite increasing enrollments.

- Because undergraduate instruction depends increasingly on adjunct labor, the University should undertake a review assessing: hiring practices; greater support and mentoring; systematic reporting of degree data; and a formal departmental evaluation process. The review could also examine the possibility of creating a category of “tenured instructors,” which exists at other SUNY institutions, as a way to offer stability to those upon whom the University relies so heavily for teaching, while providing these instructors with greater purpose as they serve this institution.

- A committee should be convened to gather systemic data from departments about how well graduate students are being prepared to teach effectively and to balance teaching and their own learning responsibilities. The committee could also identify best practices, such as graduate co-teaching internships, and make suggestions for campus-wide and departmental changes, keeping in mind faculty workload and resource issues.

- The University should examine how encouragement and resource availability for curricular/instructional development could be enhanced. Departments should be enabled to assign resources to develop and implement new courses or innovations to compensate for the time faculty must expend.

- The University should develop a more systematic approach for assessing how study abroad programs contribute to students’ educational experience.
• Future assessment of interdisciplinary opportunities should include questions about how the experience could be improved.

• OIP should work with departments to explore options for students to fulfill requirements while abroad. In addition, OIP should offer regular information sessions for representatives of departments so that advisors have up-to-date information, especially about the financial component.

• The University should conduct a comprehensive assessment of departmental advising, including comparison to peer institutions that showed, based on the NCSE survey, more student satisfaction with advising. It is also recommended, following Senate Bill No. 0506-04, that to the greatest extent possible more emphasis be placed on implementing changes and allocating resources in support of initiatives that improve the quality of departmental advising.

• The University should explore whether each academic major should be required to develop coursework and offer sufficient seats in upper-level Writing Intensive sections to meet the needs of its own majors.

• The University should re-engage the Recommendations of the Task Force on Writing Instruction as soon as the resource environment supports the consideration of new initiatives.

• The Undergraduate Academic Council and the General Education Committee should examine different models for delivery of the information literacy and oral discourse requirement, including a closer alignment of this requirement with a student’s planned academic path.

• Governance committees should discuss the current makeup of instructors in the General Education program and decide whether the mix of tenure track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, graduate students, and part-time faculty should be monitored — and, if so, by whom.

• The Undergraduate Academic Council should again review the University’s current Foreign Language Requirement in light of the University’s overall mission and goals and in the context of the entire General Education program.

• The General Education Committee should report the data discussed here annually to the Undergraduate Academic Council for more widespread faculty consideration.

• At the end of each semester, the General Education Committee should contact all instructors teaching General Education Courses in the following semester, reminding them of the appropriate information to include in their course syllabi.

• The General Education Committee should consider ways to publicize information from the petition and exception process.
The data available from the General Education Committee’s petition and exception process should be analyzed more systematically and added to other informational resources being used to evaluate student demand and the General Education program requirements.

Curriculum planning information that departments develop should be available to students so they can engage in better long-term planning.

The General Education Committee should review the academic progress of students in highly-sequenced degrees or combined programs to evaluate whether their total requirements pose a hardship that should be modified to facilitate timely graduation.

University Libraries

The University Libraries should explore options to improve access to information for all University library users. Areas targeted for improvement would include online databases and other online materials (both fee-based and open-access), as well as ensuring availability of the staff necessary to process these materials and make them accessible to library users both on and off campus. Improving access also would include providing reference assistance to users in-person/online/by phone and teaching students how to make the best use of available resources.

In order to obtain a more up-to-date picture of undergraduate and graduate student satisfaction and concern, an instrument similar to, but shorter than, LibQual+ should be administered on a regular basis. Particularly useful would be information about students’ preferred methods of learning about and accessing the resources provided by the Libraries, as well as their needs related to the Information Commons.

Information Access and Online Modalities, Writing Center, and other Aspects of Educational Offerings

The University must continue to invest in ITS to improve upon the excellent foundation that has been provided, despite difficult economic times. Key priorities include classroom technology (learning spaces) and instructional technology. Classroom technology should be established in all new classrooms and upgraded in all rehabbed facilities; this effort would include software for classroom PCs and personnel for providing support (as with Husted Hall, which comes online in 2010). Instructional technology improvements would involve resources to implement extensions to Blackboard, the University’s CMS, in order to enhance communication and collaboration aspects of learning, integrate rich media for engaging course content, data and other campus systems for robust student assessment capabilities; this would entail added personnel to facilitate expanded development of blended and online courses; research on, and development and coordination of emerging technologies, including Web 2.0 and mobile learning; and infrastructure for storage and delivery of audio/video; and other rich media content.
• The University should attempt to enhance staffing to support instructional use of the computerized classrooms or Computers on Wheels (COWs).

• The FTR should investigate ways to increase faculty attendance at workshops by aligning learning opportunities with faculty schedules or bringing the instruction to groups of faculty (such as departments, new faculty, and the like).

• Additional data should be collected to determine if there are ways to better identify student needs for online courses so that required can could be planned more effectively for online offering.

• A forum should be instituted for discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of online learning, including identification of best practices in online learning.

• Data are needed from departments to assess resource obstacles to online course offerings. ITS should develop ways to help departments balance the potential “seat deficit” sometimes experienced when offering online courses.

• Feedback on the wiki tool should be gathered through surveys of instructors and students.

• The University should work toward academically effective and facile processes for integrating technology and media into the University’s educational offerings. Continued (perhaps expanded) dialog through groups such as the Faculty and Student Advisory committees that make recommendations to the CIO, the pertinent Faculty Senate committee(s), and the academic and administrative instructional support units, could better facilitate such emerging practices.

The Writing Center

• While the Writing Center collects data on tutorials and class visits conducted, the data have not been reviewed in recent years, perhaps ever. The Writing Center therefore should undergo a regular formal assessment process so that effectiveness of its practices and pedagogical principles may be gauged.

Responsiveness of Curriculum to Changing Needs

• The Transfer Experience Coordinator should work with the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness to identify appropriate means to examine transfer students’ educational experience on a regular basis.

• Systematic data should be collected from both historically underrepresented students and non-traditional students in order to improve their college experience. The University needs to know the extent of difficulties and elicit suggestions to improve the college experience of these groups.
The University should consider ways to provide more online options for students, including more sections of high-demand courses, e.g., by preparing more instructors for online education, developing innovative teaching-load or compensation options to permit instructors to develop online courses; or increasing the enrollment cap where feasible (because of experienced instructors, more efficient teaching strategies).

ITS/FTR and ITLAL personnel should do presentations or provide advising material for departments to ensure effective guidance about online courses. This should include suggestions for advising distant students, which poses special challenges because it must be done via telephone or online.
Appendix 9.2 Study Abroad Enrollments

Number of Albany students who went abroad and where they went.*

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<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>% 08-09</th>
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<tr>
<td>% 08-09</td>
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*It’s too early to have confirmed 08-09 data but the numbers are fairly accurate.

Albany only compared by region Open doors type sort for 0001-0809.xls 7/7/09
Appendix 9.3 Senate Bill No. 0506-04

UNIVERSITY SENATE
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduced by: Undergraduate Academic Council

Date: November 21, 2005

POLICIES AND PRACTICES CONCERNING
UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC ADVISING AND MENTORING

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the attached “Proposed Policy on Academic Advising” be adopted as University policy and that the philosophy and definition of advising and mentoring contained therein be endorsed by the University.

2. That these policies be forwarded to the President for approval.

Rationale:

In 2004, an ad hoc Task Force on Academic Advisement was formed in consultation with the Undergraduate Academic Council to develop a framework for academic advising at the undergraduate level – a University-wide shared understanding of, and vision for, academic advising that reflects the many practices of academic advising across the University. The Task Force’s goal was to inventory current practice; to formulate a coherent set of policies that emerged from that practice where possible, i.e., to make explicit what has been implicit, or develop recommendations where practices vary; and to identify ways to improve the experience for advisors and advisees.

The Task Force met weekly from July through October and made its initial report to the Undergraduate Academic Council in November 2004 and offered a draft policy statement. The Task Force report also included a series of areas for improvement in practice that its members continue to work on, in consultation with the UAC.

The Task Force recognized a major impediment to effective academic advising is the scarcity, or perceived scarcity, of seats in many courses. Limited course availability often makes building a schedule a difficult task; it prevents students from enrolling in courses discussed with advisors; and finding an open course that “fits” and meets the students’ requirements consumes much “advising” time that could be spent more productively on other matters. The Task Force concluded, however, that resolving the issue of course availability would require a far more extensive examination than it was able to provide. The Task Force raised the issue to UAC to
encourage faculty and administration to explore ways to address this characteristic of the undergraduate experience at Albany.

The Council has carefully reviewed both the report and recommendations of the Task Force and has solicited and considered faculty feedback concerning that document. The following policy on academic advising codifies and clarifies many extant practices. Particularly in view of current concerns about student satisfaction, course availability, and retention and graduation rates, the UAC asserts that these recommendations are timely and important.

The policy has also been modified in response to comments offered by the University Planning and Priorities Committee. A joint committee, composed of members of UAC, UPPC, and task force members, met during the summer to review and revise this proposal to respond to both policy and resource and implementation questions.

I. POLICY

A. DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic advising at the University at Albany represents a vital component of the undergraduate program that encourages a student’s active engagement in his/her education, supports his/her development as a self-directed learner and independent decision maker, and promotes participation as a member of the University’s learning community.

The principal objectives of academic advising are to provide guidance to the student that promotes: 1) intellectual development and engagement; 2) awareness of the range of academic and co-curricular opportunities available; 3) understanding of the requirements and development of a plan to complete a degree; 4) development of self-direction and independent decision making; and 5) awareness of post-graduation careers and opportunities appropriate to the degree.

Academic advisement is mandatory for students each semester in order to register. Before providing access to course registration to a student, each academic advisement unit must ensure that it has met its responsibility to provide advisement to the student as outlined below.

B. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING

Each academic department has responsibility for advising students with declared majors in their disciplines. This responsibility includes ensuring that each student understands the courses in the major as well as sequencing, grade point average, and special circumstances that comprise requirements for successful completion of the major; and requirements of the minor and General Education, as well as overall graduation requirements. Each department must also ensure a student is apprised regularly of his/her progress in meeting these requirements. Toward these ends, academic departments must develop routine and effective procedures for monitoring a student’s progress through the degree program and create contexts in which this information is communicated so that a
student has time and opportunity to make the best decisions about how to satisfy the technical requirements for completing the degree.

The Advisement Services Center and the Educational Opportunity Program (for academic advising of EOP students) have the primary responsibility for the advising of students prior to declaration of a major. This responsibility includes developing effective methods for supporting a student’s transition into the University at Albany, and his/her growth and development as a self-directed learner and independent decision maker, as well as providing information about University requirements, including General Education, major, and minor. Further, this responsibility includes assistance with major and career exploration, information about various major options, information about enrichment opportunities within the University, use of the University tools and resources that support academic progress, and remediation or special assistance. These units also bear responsibility for ensuring students’ progress toward one or more majors and minors and for creating contexts in which information is communicated so that a student has time and opportunity to make the best decisions about his/her educational program. These units are also responsible for facilitating contacts of advisees with faculty and other department-based resources as appropriate to the student.

The University community as a whole has responsibility for ensuring that academic advising is provided as a coherent continuum of services that supports and facilitates a student’s progress through the various stages of the academic program, and his/her development as a self-directed learner and independent decision maker.

The Undergraduate Academic Council is the governance body with oversight responsibility for policies related to academic advising. School/college deans and academic administrators are responsible for ensuring compliance with these policies.

C. STRUCTURE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING AND MENTORING

In fulfilling the responsibility to provide academic advising to students, a department may establish structures and procedures and strategies that best fit its resources and curriculum, while accommodating the needs of all advisees. Each department will provide academic advising of new students, both freshmen and transfers, during scheduled planning conferences, as required.

Every department will provide the opportunity for contact with an advisor for every student each semester and will include opportunity for the following:

**Academic Advising**
- Discussing each student’s academic plan and goals
- Using the University’s Degree Audit, reviewing the student’s progress toward degree, including major, minor, and General Education requirements
- Reviewing semester course selection, including evaluating whether course load and course choices are appropriate for the student for each given semester
- Reviewing the student’s overall plan for future semesters, especially for programs with specific timetables, and plans for summer study at UAlbany or elsewhere
• Reviewing plans for improving academic success for students on academic and terminal probation.
• Reviewing, discussing and signing off on Academic Improvement Form as necessary
• Advising the student on coordinating General Education, minor, unrestricted elective courses and extracurricular activity choices with the major, career, lifelong satisfaction and other interests as appropriate

**Academic Mentoring**

Beyond technical administration of the major, academic departments also bear responsibility for addressing the needs of students for growth and development, i.e., for mentoring and career advice, such as special research and learning opportunities, honors programs and accelerated degree options; independent study, interdisciplinary opportunities, professional academic or artistic organization chapters or career clubs, research, internship, study abroad options, and career or graduate school options, and for participating in the community of learners; for recognizing demonstrated potential for honors, national scholarship competition and other relevant special opportunities and giving or referring the student to mentoring for them as appropriate; and for remediation or special assistance.

While advising and mentorship are provided by both academic professionals and teaching faculty, and can occur in many different settings, academic mentorship is a special responsibility of the teaching faculty.

**Advising in General Education**

The University’s General Education program has been established as a four-year experience required of all students (including transfer students). It is the responsibility of all advisors to have basic knowledge of the General Education program structure and requirements and to ensure that advisees are making progress in completing requirements.

Responsibility to advise freshmen and other pre-majors in the purpose, structure, requirements, and options for General Education rests with advisors in the Advisement Services Center and Educational Opportunity Program and should occur early in a student’s University career. For declared majors, including transfer students, academic departments will provide ongoing monitoring of progress toward meeting General Education requirements using the Degree Audit Report. Substantive questions regarding course equivalents for General Education and access to General Education courses are the shared responsibility of the Office of Undergraduate Studies and the department in the disciplinary area of the course.

**Advising in Minor or Second Major**

University policy requires that all students have a minor or second major (except students in combined major-minor or similar programs). Responsibility for advising regarding the minor or second major is as follows: 1) the primary department has responsibility to provide basic information about the requirements for a minor or second major, and for ensuring that students make progress in completing these requirements; and 2) the
department offering the minor or second major has responsibility to address substantive questions regarding course content, sequencing, etc., as well as providing access to courses.

**Assessment**
For the purpose of improving academic advising, University-wide surveys of the student experience should measure student satisfaction with academic advising and report to the University community via the deans and governance bodies. In addition, each department or unit should make provision to measure student satisfaction with advising in connection with the academic program review for the purpose of improvement.

**Recognition and Reward**
Participation in academic advising and mentoring activities by faculty and professional staff must be recognized and rewarded by the University and by the academic and administrative units to the greatest degree possible. In addition to the number of students advised, the University Faculty Activity Report shall include, in the section for Teaching, a line item for a narrative report of Advising and Mentoring Activities.

Departments are also expected to include information on individual faculty advising activity as part of the review processes for renewal, promotion and continuing appointment, discretionary increases and appropriate departmental, college and University recognitions and awards.

**D. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACADEMIC ADVISING**
Each student is expected to be an active participant in academic advising, just as he/she is expected to be an active participant in his/her education. While it is the responsibility of the department to ensure that students receive accurate and timely assistance in choosing courses and in developing and implementing an academic plan, it is ultimately the responsibility of each student to ensure that he/she understands and is actively engaged in monitoring his/her academic progress in order to plan, undertake and qualify in a program of study in order to graduate under the academic regulations of the University.

Early in the academic career, a student is expected to focus on becoming acquainted with the requirements of the academic program, including policies and procedures, and to master the tools that support active participation in his/her academic progress (including the use of the Undergraduate Bulletin, the degree audit, and the student registration system).

As a student advances through the academic program, he/she is expected to assume responsibility for acquiring the information needed to complete the degree requirements, and for preparing for academic advising sessions by reviewing the degree audit, formulating questions, and developing preliminary plans for the semester and beyond. Additionally, each student is expected to follow up on referrals made by advisors. A student experiencing academic difficulty is expected to meet with his/her academic advisor to discuss the details of a plan for academic improvement.
A student who transfers from another institution directly into a major must be given early opportunities to become familiar with the policies, procedures, and tools that support their academic progress at the University at Albany.

E. INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR ADVISORS AND STUDENTS

Information Resources for Advisors in Support of Academic Advising

A dynamic educational environment such as the University at Albany requires that academic advisors have access to a wide range of information resources and tools as well as opportunities to enrich their ability to deliver academic advising. Development and maintenance of these resources to help students and advisors meet their responsibilities will be the responsibility of the Advisement Services Center and the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. To the greatest extent possible, Academic and administrative units are expected to collaborate to develop and share such resources through electronic and paper means.

Information Resources for Students in Support of Academic Advising

Similarly, the responsible departments and units shall provide for their advisees the necessary information resources and tools to support their academic participation in their academic advising. The Advisement Services Center will provide resources for entering students.

F. ONGOING OVERSIGHT

As the governance body with responsibility for policies related to undergraduate academic advising, the Undergraduate Academic Council and the provost shall convene an advisory board to monitor University-wide implementation of this policy, to provide feedback and advice to academic departments and other units that deliver advisement services, to monitor and verify that the information resources for faculty and students fully support effective advising, to review and encourage assessment for the purposes of improvement, and to further explore and promote methods to improve and enhance advising. The board will provide an annual report to UAC, the Deans, and the provost regarding the state of advising at the University.

II. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

A. RESOURCES FOR ADVISING

As this policy codifies and clarifies much extant practices related to academic advising, the resources that each department or advising center currently devotes to academic advising represent a baseline resource investment.

If academic departments and advisement centers conclude that current resources are not sufficient to meet their obligation to provide effective academic advising, or if they seek additional resources to improve their advisement services, existing budgetary mechanisms should be employed. Among the options academic units may consider as they seek to enhance their academic advising resources:

- Encouragement and recognition of teaching faculty involvement in advising as a departmental service or teaching contribution or University service contribution
- Reallocation of resources (e.g., staff and instructional resources) to advising
- Allocation of resources to support stipends for 10-month faculty fulfilling academic advising responsibilities in the summer
- Petition through the School/College resource allocation process for additional advising resources to the department
- Petition through the University’s budget allocation process for additional advising resources to the department or School/College

The resources necessary to prepare the University-wide advising information materials will be supplied within the current staff of the Advisement Services Center and the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. The Advisement Services Center will also ensure ongoing training opportunities for faculty and staff on elements of the undergraduate program.

Resources in the form of expertise and assistance are also necessary to support the preparation and maintenance of advising information resources in academic departments, both print and electronic. These may be provided by Advisement Services, Undergraduate Studies, CETL and/or ITS.

B. ONGOING ACTION ITEMS

It has been suggested that there are structures and policies that increase the demands on academic advising resources. The Advisement Task Force has already begun to address the following issues, and the advisory board described in this policy will be charged to review these as well as other issues it identifies, and develop recommendations to address them:

- Examination of the resources currently devoted to academic advising in academic departments and development of a recommended standard (e.g. ratio of advisees to teaching faculty member, or advisees to full-time professional advisor) and possible incentives
- Alternatives to the traditional face-to-face meeting each semester to achieve the mandatory advising contact policy, including email and phone advising, or possible longer periods between advising contacts (e.g., annual mandatory advising for some students; this would require that course schedules be prepared on an annual, rather than semester, basis)
- Identification to the General Education Committee of issues that require clarification for departmentally-based advisors
- Better communication and coordination of advising between ASC/EOP and academic departments and increased involvement of faculty with freshman and pre-major advising, especially in support of earlier identification of appropriate honors options, national and international scholarship competitions, and bachelor’s-masters or other accelerated degree options. Exploration of earlier admission to the major, other alternatives to increase student-faculty interaction in the development of the student’s academic plan, and alternatives to the “advisement center” model for freshman and pre-major advising
• In support of improvement of academic advising, development of opportunities for departments to learn from one another and from external sources about various models of advising including the benefits, disadvantages, and costs of these models.
• Development of departmentally-based “Orientation/welcom’e” programs for new majors
• Methods to address the particular “transition” needs and ongoing issues of transfer students
• Revision of the Undergraduate Bulletin to improve its usefulness as an advising tool
• Preparation and continued enhancement of an advising guide for students and a guide for advisors, and workshops and other means for advisors to learn more information, techniques, and strategies for effective advising
• Options to provide easier access to courses – especially of General Education courses -- including the widespread use of “permission numbers” that generates student frustration and runaround
• Examination of institutional processes to eliminate student runarounds, including approvals for waivers, substitutions, etc.; improved communication protocols among major and minor departments and administrative and academic departments
### Appendix 9.4 Requirements of the General Education Program

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<td><em>two semesters of collegiate study, or the equivalent, of a foreign language</em></td>
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Italics indicates requirement that is greater than SUNY System

These requirements are listed at the University’s General Education Web page: [http://www.albany.edu/gened/requirements.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/gened/requirements.shtml)

Also available in the electronic version of the Undergraduate Bulletin at: [http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/general_education.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/general_education.html)

And also available in the printed bulletin (page 52, 2008-2009)
Appendix 9.5: Major Academic Plans (MAPs) for Philosophy and Biology

http://www.albany.edu/advisement/MAPs/PHI.pdf
http://www.albany.edu/advisement/MAPs/Biology_BS_09.pdf

Appendix 9.6: University at Albany General Education Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives for General Education Arts Courses
Courses in the General Education category of Arts enable students to demonstrate:
1. an understanding of the history and/or practice of one form of artistic expression
2. recognition of the difference and overlap between creative and critical thinking
3. an understanding of the function and meaning of form
4. that they have the vocabulary they need to continue to learn about how art is made and interpreted
5. depending on the nature of the course, arts courses enable students to demonstrate an understanding of how art works are embedded within different cultures at different times and places

Learning Objectives for General Education Humanities Courses
Courses in the General Education category of Humanities enable students to demonstrate:
1. knowledge of the assumptions, methods of study, and theories of at least one of the disciplines within the humanities

Depending on the discipline, courses in the General Education category of Humanities enable students to demonstrate some or all of the following:
1. an understanding of the objects of study as expressions of the cultural contexts of the people who created them
2. an understanding of the continuing relevance of the objects of study to the present and to the world outside the University
3. an ability to employ the terms and understand the conventions particular to the discipline
4. an ability to analyze and assess the strengths and weaknesses of ideas and positions along with the reasons or arguments that can be given for and against them
5. an understanding of the nature of the texts, artifacts, ideas, or discourse of the discipline and of the assumptions that underlie this understanding, including those relating to issues of tradition and canon

Learning Objectives for General Education Natural Science Courses
Courses in the General Education category of Natural Science enable students to demonstrate:
1. an understanding of the methods scientists use to explore natural phenomena, including observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence
2. an understanding of the application of scientific data, concepts, and models in the natural sciences
3. an understanding of the major principles and concepts that form the basis of the knowledge covered in the course and a command of the relevant terminology appropriate for basic discourse in the particular discipline or disciplines of the course
4. that they have become more knowledgeable consumers of scientific information and are prepared to make informed decisions on contemporary issues involving scientific information acquired in the course

**Learning Objectives for General Education Social Science Courses**

Courses in the General Education category of Social Science enable students to demonstrate:

1. an understanding that human conduct and behavior more generally are subject to scientific inquiry
2. an understanding of the difference between rigorous and systematic thinking and uncritical thinking about social phenomena
3. an understanding of the kinds of questions social scientists ask and the ways they go about answering these questions
4. knowledge of the major concepts, models and issues of at least one discipline in the social sciences
5. an understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena, such as observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, employment of mathematical analysis, employment of interpretive analysis

**Learning Objectives for U.S. History**

Courses in the General Education category of U.S. History enable students to demonstrate:

1. knowledge of a basic narrative of American history (political, economic, social, and/or cultural), including an awareness of unity and diversity in American society
2. knowledge of representative institutions in American society and how they have shaped and been shaped by different groups
3. an understanding of the relationship(s) between America and other parts of the world
4. an understanding of various tools and approaches used in interpreting U.S. history

**Learning Objectives for General Education Europe Courses**

Courses in the General Education category of Europe enable students to demonstrate:

1. an understanding of the variety of cultures, regions, and countries that make up Europe
2. knowledge of the distinctiveness of Europe as manifested in the development of diverse histories, institutions, economies, societies, and cultures
3. knowledge of the relationship between Europe and other regions of the world as expressed through political, economic, and cultural contact
4. an awareness of how Europe has been used as a cultural standard against which other cultures are measured
5. an understanding of how the knowledge that becomes the basis of historical inquiry is constructed

**Learning Objectives for General Education Regions Beyond Europe Courses**

Courses in the General Education category of Regions Beyond Europe enable students to demonstrate:

1. knowledge of the distinctive features (e.g. history, institutions, economies, societies, cultures) of one region beyond Europe or European North America
2. an understanding of the region from the perspective of its people(s)
3. an ability to analyze and contextualize cultural and historical materials relevant to the region
4. an ability to locate and identify distinctive geographical features of the region

Learning Objectives for General Education Global and Cross-Cultural Studies Courses
Courses in the General Education category of Global and Cross-Cultural Studies enable students to demonstrate:
1. an understanding of the impact (e.g. economic, political, historical, cultural) of nations, regions, and cultures upon other nations, regions, and cultures
2. an understanding of the reciprocal interactions between individuals and global systems
3. an ability to see cultural groups from their own points of view
4. an ability to use the analytic tools of a specific discipline to engage in comparative analyses of cultures, nations, and regions

Learning Objectives for U.S. Diversity and Pluralism
Courses in the General Education category of U.S. Pluralism and Diversity enable students to demonstrate:
1. knowledge and understanding of the diversity and pluralism of U.S. society with respect to race, ethnicity, and gender, as well as class, sexual orientation, and/or religion.
2. knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural influences that shape the perspectives of various social groups as well as students' own points of view.
3. knowledge and understanding of the contributions of various social groups to U.S. society.
4. knowledge and understanding of the sources and manifestations of controversy or conflict arising from U.S. diversity and pluralism.

Learning Objectives for General Education Information Literacy Courses
Courses in the General Education category of Information Literacy enable students to:
1. locate, evaluate, synthesize and use information from a variety of sources understand and use basic research techniques appropriate to the course discipline
2. understand the various ways in which information is organized and structured
3. understand the ethical issues involved in accessing and using information

Learning Objectives for Mathematics and Statistics
Courses in the General Education category of Mathematics and Statistics enable students to demonstrate:
1. knowledge of concepts, terms, and symbols used to analyze data
2. an ability to formulate problems in abstract form amenable to mathematical, statistical, or logical analysis
3. an ability to perform appropriate operations to draw conclusions from data an ability to interpret and communicate quantitative information

Learning Objectives for Foreign Language
Courses in the General Education category of Foreign Language enable students to demonstrate:
1. proficiency in the understanding and use of fundamental elements of a foreign language
2. knowledge of distinctive features of the culture(s) associated with the language they are studying
### Appendix 9.6: General Education Seats Generated by Different Types of Instructors, Across Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tenured or Tenure Track FT</strong></td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>13,557</td>
<td>11,302</td>
<td>11,773</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13,391</td>
<td>12,361</td>
<td>13,557</td>
<td>11,360</td>
<td>13,302</td>
<td>11,773</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part-Time Adjuncts</strong></td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,329</td>
<td>11,486</td>
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<td>11,810</td>
<td>13,851</td>
<td>13,927</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Students</strong></td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
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<td>6.2%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,151</td>
<td>1,072</td>
<td>1,392</td>
<td>1,827</td>
<td>1,884</td>
<td>2,399</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Non-tenure Track FT</strong></td>
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<td>5.4%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,721</td>
<td>1,513</td>
<td>2,401</td>
<td>2,155</td>
<td>2,079</td>
<td>3,021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,448</td>
<td>1,803</td>
<td>2,489</td>
<td>2,090</td>
<td>2,013</td>
<td>2,436</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 9.7 - Aggregated DARS audit information showing the number of students with unmet General Education requirements.

### University at Albany

**UNMET GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS - UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

**Term: Spring 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Academic Level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>Freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen and Transfers Combined</td>
<td>1462</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1059</td>
<td>722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1317</td>
<td>1096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>815</td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1393</td>
<td>1179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>459</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>929</td>
<td>969</td>
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<tr>
<td>456</td>
<td>274</td>
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<tr>
<td>919</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1065</td>
<td>877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>774</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501</td>
<td>1038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>2689</td>
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</table>

### University at Albany

**UNMET GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS - UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

**Term: Spring 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Academic Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>Freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>1598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1061</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1265</td>
<td>753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>746</td>
<td>580</td>
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<tr>
<td>1261</td>
<td>777</td>
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<tr>
<td>407</td>
<td>167</td>
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<tr>
<td>860</td>
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<tr>
<td>426</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>935</td>
<td>444</td>
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<tr>
<td>1050</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1451</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>465</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>544</td>
<td>152</td>
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<tr>
<td>1464</td>
<td>1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>1726</td>
<td>1993</td>
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</table>

**Transfer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Academic Level</th>
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</thead>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>Freshmen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>214</td>
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<tr>
<td>58</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>117</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>325</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>153</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>92</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>217</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>255</td>
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<td>11.06</td>
<td>1218</td>
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</table>
### Appendix 9.8 Fall General Education Seats offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Cap Enrl Course Level</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen Ed Category</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH-EUR</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>2,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH-GLOBAL</td>
<td>1,745</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>2,001</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH-REG</td>
<td>2,056</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>2,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH-USDIV</td>
<td>2,298</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>2,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH-USHIS</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH-USHIS2</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>1,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP-ARTS</td>
<td>2,271</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2,411</td>
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<tr>
<td>DP-HUM</td>
<td>3,836</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>4,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP-NATSCI</td>
<td>5,102</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5,132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP-SOCSCI</td>
<td>7,680</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>7,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANG</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>3,568</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3,598</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>3,176</td>
<td>3,062</td>
<td>34,823</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Discourse</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>2,690</td>
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<tr>
<td>Info Literacy</td>
<td>1,634</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>1,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Intensive</td>
<td>1,499</td>
<td>3,202</td>
<td>4,702</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 9.9 - Example of how the General Education registration data are used, combining knowledge of student majors and the expected size of the new freshman and transfer populations to project demand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Course Offerings</th>
<th>Student Course Needs Estimates</th>
<th>Extrapolating from DARS</th>
<th>FROM DARS DATA (applying formula to meet need of 25% soph; 50% jrs. 75% srs. 100%)</th>
<th>Difference from offerings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Cap Enrl</td>
<td>Course Level</td>
<td>From MAPS</td>
<td>New freshmen course needs</td>
<td>Total New student need</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>CH-EUR</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>2218</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH-GLOBAL</td>
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<td>259</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH-REG</td>
<td>2056</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>2405</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH-USDIV</td>
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<td>240</td>
<td>2538</td>
<td>111</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH-USHIS</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH-USHIS2</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>1182</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>DP-ARTS</td>
<td>2271</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>2411</td>
<td>610</td>
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<td>280</td>
<td>4116</td>
<td>1401</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>7845</td>
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<td>330</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<td>MATH</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>1093</td>
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<td>34823</td>
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<td>Oral discourse</td>
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<td>2690</td>
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<td>info literacy</td>
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<td>1739</td>
<td>416</td>
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<tr>
<td>writing intensive</td>
<td>1489</td>
<td>3202</td>
<td>4701</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Other MAP needs</td>
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<td>970</td>
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<td>520</td>
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<td>phy 126</td>
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<td>Csi 201</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>Doc 251</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Eng 200+</td>
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<td>955</td>
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<td>83</td>
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<td>Glo concentration course</td>
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<td>His 100-200</td>
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<td>1041</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>Jrl 100</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mus 185/186/187/287/289</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thr 135/235/240</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bio 120</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>(392 allocated per dept plan)</td>
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<td>Electives</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 9.10: Courses submitted to SUNY for General Education Approval, 2008-2009

The Arts
AFRE338, French Cinema and Society
AJST458/ATHR458, Jewish Drama and Theatre
ARUS280, Soviet and Russian Cinema

Humanities
AFRE338, French Cinema and Society
ARUS352/ARUS352Z, Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov
TPHI238, Introduction to Bioethics

Social Sciences
NENG/NSCI 102, Societal Impacts of Nanotechnology
NENG/NSCI 103, Economic Impacts of Nanotechnology
NENG/NSCI 104, Disruptive Nanotechnologies
TANT141, Human Rights and Wrongs: Anthropological Explorations
TPOS248, Identities, Boundaries, and Mobilization
TSOC274Z, U.S. Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective
TSSW295, Community Change in a Globalizing World

Natural Sciences
AATM/AENV 200, Natural Disasters
AGEO110, The Search for Life Beyond Earth
HSPH105H, Demystifying Public Health
HSPH231, Concepts in Epidemiology
NENG/NSCI 101, Nanotechnology Survey
NENG/NSCI 110, Chemical Principles of Nanoscale Science and Engineering I
NENG 112, Chemical Principles of Nanoscale Science and Engineering II
NENG/NSCI 120, Physical Principles of Nanoscale Science and Engineering I
NENG/NSCI 122, Physical Principles of Nanoscale Science and Engineering II
TENG/TSCI 124, Physical Principles of Nanoscale Science and Engineering III

Regions Beyond Europe
AANT104, Introduction to Archaeology
AEAC374/AHIS374, Crime and Punishment in Traditional China
AGOG266/AGLO266, India: Development Debates
AJST373, The Arab in Israeli Literature
ARUS280, Soviet and Russian Cinema
RPOS348, Politics of Southeast Asia
TGOG266/TGLO266, India: Development Debates
TPOS348, Politics of Southeast Asia

Europe
AHIS298, Crime and Society in Early Modern England
AITA350, Contemporary Italian Society
ARUS162/ARUS162Z Russia Today
ARUS352/ARUS352Z, Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov
THIS298, Crime and Society in Early Modern England

American History
AHIS276, Technology and Society in America
AHIS277, Culture and History of Food in the United States
AHIS331/AHIS331Z, Capitalism in America
AHIS332/AHIS332Z, Introduction to Public History in the United States
AJRL230/TJRL230Z, The Mass Media and War in U.S. History
THIS277, Culture and History of Food in the United States

Math
AMAT100, Pre-calculus
AMAT104, Topics in Modern Mathematics