Liberal Education in a Community of Learning

Draft of a Self-Study by

St. John's College

Annapolis, Maryland

for the MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION

on HIGHER EDUCATION

and the AMERICAN ACADEMY for LIBERAL EDUCATION

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PREFACE

The following Self-Study Report was prepared for collaborative review by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the American Academy for Liberal Education. We have chosen the title *Liberal Education in a Community of Learning* to highlight our commitment to deep learning through conversation and shared inquiry, and to a whole way of life that nourishes these activities and holds them dear. Our goal was to come up with an evaluation that would accurately convey the character, aspirations, vitality, and problems of such a community. It is the fondest hope of the Steering Committee that the Report will not only prove useful to our reviewers and readers in the outside world, but will also embody a long-lasting repository of information, insight, and guidance for all members of St. John's College.

The preparation of this document involved college-wide participation, including review by the Instruction Committee, the Student Committee on Instruction, and the Board. Special attention was given to educational assessment: a Board subcommittee reviewed a draft of the report on learning assessment and made valuable suggestions, and a special faculty forum was held to discuss the entire Educational Assessment report. This report was also given to members of the Student Committee on Instruction for review.

The Steering Committee wishes to thank the College community—especially those who contributed drafts of reports—for their support, patience, good will, and painstaking work.

The Self-Study follows the Design approved by Middle States in May 2002.

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Note: In the following Report, names with asterisks indicate Chairmen of subcommittees.

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PART ONE: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Chapter One: MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE (MSCHE I, AALE 1-5)

(*Marilyn Higuera; Harvey Flaumenhaft, *ex officio* member and Dean of the College; Eva Brann, former Dean; the Instruction Committee)

St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland is a small, non-denominational liberal arts college chartered in 1784. The school was first founded as King William's School in 1696 and is thus the third oldest college in the United States.

In 1937, the College adopted a new plan for liberal education developed from a comprehensive vision for undergraduate education. The College is still committed to this plan. A four-year required curriculum of fundamental studies centers on reading great books of Western civilization, listening to great works of music, and re-producing pivotal experiments in natural science. Inquiry and discussion are at the heart of the College's approach to learning.

A second campus of St. John's College was opened in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1964. It too dedicated itself to this plan of education. The two campuses form one College with one Board of Visitors and Governors.

In 1967, the Santa Fe campus began the Graduate Institute in Liberal Education, originally designed especially for teachers and to run only in summers. In 1977, the Annapolis campus also offered a graduate program in liberal education; in 1985 this program was expanded to run year-round.

The fullest articulation of our vision of liberal learning appears in our catalogue, the *Statement of the St. John's Program.* This catalogue is regularly reviewed and, if necessary, revised. It is given to prospective students and tutors as the most accurate and complete summary of our educational activity. To assist the self-study process, the following statement articulates the fundamental purposes of our academic activity and the goals essential to the institutional context for that activity.

St. John's College is a community dedicated to liberal education. Such education seeks to free human beings from the tyrannies of unexamined opinions, current fashions, and inherited prejudices; it also endeavors to enable them to make intelligent, free choices concerning the ends and means of both public and private life.

At St. John's College, freedom is pursued mainly through thoughtful conversation about great books of the Western tradition. By attempting to understand books that have shaped the world around us, we strive to bring to light our own ideas about the nature of things and the meaning of our reflecting on them; together we then examine these ideas, their consequences, their consistency, and their truth. All St. John's classes provide occasions for this activity of radical inquiry.

Since philosophic questions are at the root of our activity, and since wonder stimulates such questions, we also nourish the capacity to wonder. We recognize the importance of being struck with the depth of insight contained in an elemental concept, the beauty of an argument, or the unity of thought underlying different modes of knowledge. The disciplined rigors of class work are in the service of these moments, for when ideas move us deeply and turn us toward enlightenment, real education begins, and an independent desire to learn takes root.

Our approach to liberal education is guided by a love of wisdom that transcends the acquisition of information and even of knowledge narrowly conceived. Our inquiries are intended not only to hone the skills essential to critical intelligence, but also to cultivate a lifelong commitment to answering the question of how to live well. Aware of our own limitations, we, the faculty of St. John's College, commit ourselves to fostering this pursuit of wisdom. While we cannot teach the love of wisdom, we do aspire to be an exemplary community of learners, responsive to the efforts of those seeking the highest understanding. Such aspiration is the main criterion for a student's acceptance into our community, rather than any external measure of academic success.

Thus, tutors (as the College's teaching faculty is denominated, in distinction from "professors") teach primarily by being exemplary learners. The authoritative lecture has no place in the St. John's classroom. All tutors are expected eventually to lead classes in the whole Program, including Mathematics, Language, Laboratory, and Music; there are no departments at the College. Tutors as well as students must acknowledge their ignorance and engage in public learning. Moreover, the opinion of a tutor carries no more authority than that of a student; each must be supported by textual evidence or a rational argument and then subjected to good-spirited yet rigorous scrutiny.

Even great books themselves, sometimes said to be the real teachers at St. John's, are not accorded implicit authority. Instead, they serve as a rich and varied source of eloquently articulated opinions, perennial questions, and challenging answers. The books have been chosen for their originality, depth, inexhaustibility, and grace of expression. Although they are treated with the respectful attention merited by classics, they are themselves subject to critical examination. We read great books for the sake of understanding our world and ourselves.

The common reading of great books of the Western tradition forges the bonds of our community. First, it establishes the groundwork and a shared vocabulary for a conversation all can join. Prescription of an entire program of study frees all learners, irrespective of prior experience, to engage in a common, reflective activity. Second, the collection of books we have chosen for our curriculum forms a coherent tradition. Often the authors themselves are, explicitly or implicitly, responding to one another: diverse positions are argued, and their juxtaposition makes manifest a powerful dialectic that is not necessarily dictated by chronology. In this sense, the books themselves are in conversation with one another. Our own dialogue is elevated, both in substance and in manner, through continued exposure to this dignified and profound conversation. In our efforts to achieve the greatest possible depth of thought in this conversation, the College vigilantly and responsibly engages in a continual re-thinking of its own tradition and of the program that forms the basis for that tradition.

We offer our students, as conditions of a liberal education, a community animated by inquiry and conversation, and a curriculum of profound books: we do not offer education as a product. Rather membership in our community involves the student's serious participation in the daily activity of learning. We want our students to be active rather than passive, to listen discerningly, to grapple directly with difficult arguments, to struggle to untangle confusing ideas. For this reason, we eschew secondary sources in our classes and trust to the power of the ideas themselves and the students' natural ability to reason.

We remain mindful that there is no method for genuine learning, which proceeds from some deep, internal change in the learner. We do, however, seek to provide the most

propitious conditions for such learning to occur. In addition to requiring prolonged interaction with the provocative sources of our inherited tradition, St. John's College seeks to cultivate various skills that enhance the power of thought. Students must have opportunities to concentrate on the exercise of logic, memory, meticulous observation, accurate calculation, careful measurement, and articulate speech. For this reason, along with Seminars consisting of free-ranging discussion, we divide the curriculum into Mathematics, Language, and Music Tutorials, Laboratories, and a weekly lecture (as outlined in the appended *Statement of the St. John's Program*).

Our point of reference for this division is the traditional trivium and quadrivium. The trivium comprises the liberal arts of logic, grammar, and rhetoric; the quadrivium those of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. Such studies provide elementary experiences in the exercise of reason; but, it must be noted, even our approach to the mastering of basic elements emphasizes quality of thought rather than quantitative achievement. Moreover, though we divide our curriculum into subjects of study, we do not separate knowledge into isolated fields. Nor do we teach methods and techniques to be applied indiscriminately to every question in a field. Our practice of the liberal arts is always wedded to a definite content, such as the Greek language or Euclid's proofs. A given mathematics class, for example, while focusing on the logic of a demonstration, will also consider aspects of grammar and rhetoric in the effort to reach full understanding of the demonstration. To study the liberal arts as a coherent whole of different yet intersecting disciplines compels students to explore and compare various forms of precision. As students mature in their experience of different modes of thought, they are better able to explore philosophic questions. To some extent all classes involve this latter activity, but Seminar in particular emphasizes the free and independent exercise of all the liberal arts.

In order to preserve the community of learning that is essential to our purpose, the College makes a practical commitment to the following:

1. Conditions of student life, both in and out of the classroom, that sustain and support our principal activity, the life of the mind, and that allow discourse and reflection, open and honest exchanges, respect for others, and a cooperative spirit to permeate all aspects of College life;
2. Classes small enough to permit students to engage in cooperative inquiry; a total College enrollment that allows serious, spontaneous conversations to arise in any place at any time; and a faculty that is large enough to be consistent with maintaining small class size but small enough to permit tutors and students to know each other and participate in informal conversations as part of their mutual learning process;
3. Continued involvement of the faculty in governance of the College—through joint deliberation, guardianship of our communal way of life, and willingness to perform duties in addition to classroom teaching and meeting with students;
4. Adequate time in the schedules of both students and tutors to provide the leisure needed for philosophic reflection, deepening of understanding, and vitality of intellect; an atmosphere and resources that foster the academic growth and development of all tutors;
5. Administrative offices that continually cooperate and consult with one another in order to ensure that decisions are durable and in order to promote communal responsibility for the Mission of the College.

St. John's College plays an important role in the wider world of American education—primarily as an established repository of the intense experience of liberal education described above, and as a willing source of information and advice concerning ways to re-found liberal arts programs. Our commitment to the preservation of the organic, dynamic character of our community precludes large expenditures of time, energy, and attention away from the campus. We do, however, support, whenever practicable, educators interested in developing a plan of liberal education akin to our own. Many of our Graduate Institute students, it should be noted, are themselves teachers who, upon graduation, put their St. John's education to work with their students and colleagues. The Graduate Institute thus embodies an already established mode by which the College makes a considerable, ongoing investment in reaching out beyond its core mission of undergraduate liberal education.

Chapter Two: THE PROGRAM OF EDUCATION (MSCHE XI, XII; AALE 1-5)
Section A: The Undergraduate Program

Sources and Composition of the Report on the Undergraduate Program

All tutors who taught in the undergraduate program for the 2001-2002 academic year participated in the composition of this report. Tutors teaching the same Tutorial or Laboratory meet every week to discuss both substantive matters and questions or problems regarding pedagogy. Their designated leader—or archon, in Greek—begins each meeting and guides discussion. (The archon meeting will be discussed at greater length in the reports on Faculty Development, and The Assessment of Teaching and Faculty Learning.) At the end of the year, the archon submits to the Dean a report on how the year went and what problems remain regarding readings, scheduling, or materials. Early in its preparations, the Steering Committee alerted archons that their reports would be used for the Self-Study document, and encouraged them to devote some time in the weekly meetings to the discussion of problems and issues relevant to the Self-Study. These reports form the basis of the following account of the Tutorials and Laboratories of the undergraduate program.

For Seminars, there is a "recorder," who reviews the selection and sequence of books in a given seminar, and, after meeting with and gathering suggestions from the tutors for that particular Seminar, submits a report to the Dean. Recorders, too, were alerted of the importance of their reports for the Self-Study. Their reports form the basis of the following account of the Seminars of the undergraduate program. Archons and recorders were strongly encouraged to be candid in their criticisms.

It should be emphasized that, since tutors teach broadly in the curriculum, an archon's or recorder's assessment of a particular class is guided by a sense of the whole Program.

The Student Committee on Instruction (SCI) was also involved in the planning and composition of the report. In the planning stage, the Committee was asked to signal problems for special attention: these problems are addressed in the various parts of the report. During the composition stage, it was given a draft of the report on the undergraduate program for discussion and response. Members of the Steering Committee then attended a meeting of the SCI, discussed problematic areas of the report, and also received written comments. In a few cases, individual students were consulted by tutor-chairs of subcommittees.

Our report on the undergraduate program thus draws on a process of self-assessment that goes on continually at the College. This process engages tutors and students regularly, not only in discussing difficulties and evaluating parts of the Program, but also in learning from one another through conversation.

The following report presents the classes in the undergraduate program in the following order: Seminar, Language, Mathematics, Laboratory, and Music. Within each of these sections, the report proceeds "vertically," that is, starting with freshman classes and ending with senior.

I. The Seminar (Michael Blaustein, Joseph Macfarland, Eric Salem, Seminar Tutors)

The curriculum part of the *Statement of the St. John's Program* begins with a College truism: "The heart of the curriculum is the Seminar." At a recent meeting, the faculty reconsidered this claim, recognizing and reaffirming the truth of our truism. To be sure, learning of all sorts goes on in Tutorials and Laboratories, but the learning that most exemplifies the St. John's Program—wide ranging, open-ended inquiry into fundamental texts and questions, coupled with the intense examination of our most deeply held opinions—has its natural and proper home in the Seminar.

The basic structural features of the Seminar are as enduring as its place within the intellectual life of the College. Co-led by two tutors, Seminar classes begin with questions rather than demonstrations or translations. These questions are meant to invite and provoke ongoing inquisitive conversation, with oneself and with others, that continues long after the two-hour period is over. Since the Seminar aims at open-ended inquiry into fundamental texts and questions, its central place within the Program and its character are not likely to change: what can change is the list of readings. Although there is broad agreement about our reading list, certain authors, texts, and text selections regularly come up for discussion. The Senior Seminar list, which contains the most

recently written books, is always the most controversial. Even here, however, upon annual review of the Program by the Instruction Committee, there is far more stability than change, and our concerns amount to small waves in a largely tranquil sea. Year after year, from 8 to 10 on Monday and Thursday nights, students and tutors discuss the same books in the same way with the sense that here, in the thinking, speaking, and listening that go on in the Seminar, the College is most alive and most itself.

To say that the Seminar is central to the life of the College is not, however, to say that it constitutes the whole of that life. Just as a curriculum composed only of Tutorials and Laboratories would become too technical, too focused on the mastery of detail and techniques, so too a curriculum consisting of Seminars alone would lose focus and coherence.

The Seminar itself offers such balance in two ways: the Annual Essay and the Preceptorial. The Annual Essay gives students an opportunity to take up some book or question that has aroused their interest and explore it at some length and in detail. Preceptorials take place in the junior and senior year and replace the Seminar for roughly half of the first semester. They are "small groups of students engaged in the study of one book, or in exploration of one subject through several books" (*Statement of the St. John's Program*, p. 10). The Preceptorial is the closest thing the College has to an elective: tutors of Junior and Senior Seminar propose topics for preceptorials, and juniors and seniors submit their requests to the Dean. The Preceptorial gives students some relief from the relentless pace of the Seminar and offers them the opportunity to study and discuss a single book, author, or topic in greater depth and with greater attention to detail.

Despite the fact that Seminar conversations stand in need of balance, Seminar remains the class from which the other classes derive the life-giving pulse, nourishment, and spirit of unfettered conversation about the deepest things. More than the more focused classes, it draws on the students' wonder, attentiveness, judgment, imagination, openness to new ideas, willingness to being refuted, patience, courage, collegiality, leadership, and general resourcefulness. It tends to be the most intense class, where the stakes are highest and where students are most exhilarated if the discussion is fruitful and most frustrated if it isn't. It is also the class that makes the greatest demand on tutors' ability to listen, to ask good questions in a timely way, and to exercise self-restraint in guiding the discussion. As the part of the Program in which students most take responsibility for their own learning, Seminar embodies the College's effort, in its purest form.

a. Freshman Seminar

The Freshman Seminar is, in respect to its curriculum a model of stability, a bedrock of the Seminar and of the Program as a whole. To be sure, each year changes are proposed and discussed. In contrast to the Senior Seminar, where major changes in texts and even authors are regularly considered, the authors and books of the Freshman Seminar rarely come up for such discussion. Whether to add bits of Book 8 of Thucydides' *Histories* to an already long reading, whether to tweak the readings from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* so as to give more time and attention to the later books, whether to add Aristotle's discussion of material to the already crowded discussion of Book 2 of the *Physics*—these are the sorts of questions typically (and most recently) asked about the Freshman Seminar reading list.

If relative stability is the hallmark of the Freshman Seminar list, tremendous change is the characteristic mark of the students who work their way through it. Most of our

incoming freshmen arrive with some notion that they want to read important books and talk about important questions. Most are bright, energetic, and full of self-confidence. Yet many (and often the most vocal) are full, too, of opinions and bad habits that get in the way of serious reading, inquiry, and conversation. Assumptions about everything from tragic flaws to scientific progress are wielded to fend off serious engagement with either books or questions. Our early seminars, on the *Iliad* and beyond, often resemble battlegrounds where students exhaust themselves and their tutors in displays of self-assertion and unwitting self-contradiction. The great task of the Freshman Seminar tutors, then, is to help students to change their ways—to learn to listen, read, and think well—without losing their energy and enthusiasm.

Different tutors take different approaches to this task. Some think that freshmen need more guidance than upperclassmen and so do a good bit of leading and prodding. Others believe that watching and waiting for the just the right moment to ask a quick question or point out an inconsistency is the wiser approach. Tutors generally recognize that the required turnabout is ultimately something students must do on their own, above all because it is not a matter of substituting one set of dogmas for another. Students must experience for themselves the worth and possibility of confronting together fundamental texts and questions. What occasions this insight is different for different students, but most settle down to the work of the Seminar during the second half of the first semester.

Tutors have a number of resources available to them in presiding over and promoting this momentous change. The sheer weightiness of the texts read in Freshman Seminar has a powerful effect on our students. Moreover, as students gradually discover that these books form a kind of extended, multi-layered conversation in which they are being invited to participate, the seriousness of the enterprise comes to be apparent to them. Finally, as students also begin to see for themselves the multitude of connections between other parts of the Program and the books they have been reading in the Seminar, they are further spurred to active learning. The geometry they have been studying in the Mathematics Tutorial reverberates with their reading of Plato; the Aristotle readings they did at the beginning of Freshman Laboratory make sense as they study the *Physics*; the Greek they have been studying in the Language Tutorial can be brought to bear with increasing fruitfulness. Indeed, we find that their discovery, within the context of Seminar, of the interconnectedness of the Program, is not merely an aid to their learning but one sign that a Freshman Seminar has come into its own.

b. Sophomore Seminar

The readings of Sophomore Seminar, in contrast to those of Freshman Seminar (and probably Junior and Senior as well), show a tremendous variety in genre and in language of composition, and span the longest chronological period of all four years. After the selections from biblical prophecy and from classical Roman poetry and history with which the year begins, the rest of the readings (beginning with the Gospels) are by authors who in various ways brought these two very different worlds together and tried to find ways to assimilate and judge them. Even for the Roman writers, the question of how to deal with a partly alien tradition (that of ancient Greece) was a central theme. The Seminar's diverse readings are thus unified by the common classical and biblical roots and by the accumulating record of responses to them.

The biggest change since the last Self-Study has been the rearrangement of the fall schedule: we used to begin the year with the Roman readings, followed by the selections

from the Pentateuch and other prophetic books, followed immediately by the New Testament readings. Now we begin with the selections from the Hebrew Scriptures; then we do the Roman readings, and after them the New Testament. One reason for the change was to put the readings in a more plausibly chronological order. Another was to separate the Hebrew biblical readings from the New Testament in order to avoid the impression that the former should be seen simply as precursors to the latter. (In light of the uniformly Christian approaches to the Bible studied in the remainder of the year, this purpose is not very successfully achieved.) A benefit of the shift is that some students approach Virgil with a more open mind. Starting the Freshman Seminar with Homer and the Sophomore Seminar with Virgil led some students to expect that reading Virgil would be the same kind of experience as reading Homer. When it became clear that this was not the case, Virgil suffered in their estimation. With the new order of readings, this no longer seems to be a problem.

The only other remarkable feature of the schedule is the inclusion of selections from Aristotle's *On the Soul* in Sophomore rather than Freshman Seminar. The thematic importance of Aristotle's teaching on the soul to the authors of Sophomore Seminar is clear: not just Plotinus but all the theologians we read (including Dante) depend heavily on that teaching, perhaps more than on most other classical Greek sources. It is highly advantageous for students to come to these Christian authors when their study of *On the Soul* is fresh.

There are no major soluble problems with the syllabus, and no major changes seem called for. It will always be useful to reconsider and tinker with the reading list. But apart from shifts of emphasis, there will always be major works from the Western tradition that we do not have time to include (noteworthy among them is Augustine's *City of God*). A more conspicuous absence is the lack of any readings from the Islamic and post-biblical Jewish traditions, which are situated similarly to the Christian vis-à-vis the common classical and scriptural heritage, and which pose similar questions. We could not, however, afford more than a very few readings on such works and therefore would run the risk of making one or two authors stand for an entire multifarious tradition. Here the wiser course is to admit what we acknowledge elsewhere in the Program: that not everything worth doing can be done. We believe that it is better to be aware of the omission than to make token gestures toward inclusion.

c. Junior Seminar

The Junior Seminar has two great assets: a thoughtfully constructed reading list, and gradually maturing students who have for the most part learned to take charge of their own intellectual growth. The reading list avoids many of the difficulties of the Sophomore Seminar by presenting an articulated whole. It draws from a much smaller chronological period (principally the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). Even when there are deep rifts between authors, in this year more than previous years the authors seem aware of sharing an ongoing conversation with their opponents.

In the fall semester, ethical and political inquiries are mingled with inquiries into metaphysics; in the spring semester, readings in these two inquiries are segregated, with metaphysics falling before spring break, and ethical-political readings falling mostly after. One inconvenience of this arrangement is the resulting deviations from chronological order: we read Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* just prior to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*; shortly thereafter we read Locke's *Second Treatise on*

Government as the first in a series of ethical-political writings that lead through moral writings by Rousseau and Kant. Because Seminar is not intended as a study in the history of ideas, strict adherence to chronology need not govern the reading list. But the chronological deviation does highlight choices we have made in how we expect these authors to speak to one another: by being attuned to the conversation between Hume and Kant on questions of metaphysics and epistemology, we draw attention away from other implicit conversations, for example, between Locke, Hume, and Smith. The present arrangement facilitates our study of Kant's writings, which pose unusual difficulties and rewards for students and tutors alike. *The Critique of Pure Reason* and Kant's ethical writings are studied in the context of authors who help us to understand and articulate Kant's questions. The segregation of ethical-political writings from metaphysics brings an additional advantage at the conclusion of the year, when our lengthy inquiry into ethics and politics leads to our first encounter with American authors (Madison, Hamilton, Mark Twain) and a reflection upon our own way of life.

The placement of literature is often determined by more mundane concerns: the vacations that afford tutors and students the time needed to read novels. Two of the novels are very long (*Don Quixote* and *Middlemarch*), and two others are each read for a single seminar (*Pride and Prejudice* and *Huck Finn*). The length of these readings prevents students from attaining the familiarity needed to find a relevant passage quickly and to build up a sense of the book from a multitude of details; the resulting conversations are more likely than others to remain on the level of generalities. This defect in the study of literature in Seminar is remedied only in part by the study of French literature in the Language Tutorial.

The success of the Junior Seminar is due no less to the students than to the reading list. After two years of Seminar, students are generally better readers, who articulate their insights with greater clarity. They often have strong convictions about what shape a conversation ought to take, and may act with considerable vigor to direct the conversation to their own ends. With the enabling process behind them, and having grown accustomed to the freedom of a Seminar discussion, juniors often feel more responsible to themselves than to their tutors for their learning. With this growth come new difficulties. At one extreme, as chronically quiet or underachieving students come nearer to the end of their studies, it becomes more difficult for tutors to draw them out. At the other extreme, a strong student, faced with the technical difficulty of the philosophical readings, might labor strenuously to master the terminology and the argument to the neglect of more fundamental and simple questions like, "Is this true?" How does one live in accord with such ideas? As noted, the readings seem to invite the segregation of ethics and politics from metaphysics, and philosophy from literature (these philosophers eschew "likely stories"), so that philosophy may appear less "soulful", and we, in our response to it, may fail to engage the entire soul. Yet students often feel intensely the despair of one author, or the aspirations of another, and, in some cases it may be that a wry detachment is the most "soulful" response appropriate to the authors before us.

d. Senior Seminar

The Senior Seminar is characterized by the controversy that tends to spring up around the readings. The causes are various. One is the sheer difficulty of the Hegel readings. There are, to be sure, evenings in which this difficulty serves as a spur to close and inspired reading, when Hegel seminars become models for learning because so much

learning together must be done on the spot by tutors and students alike. But there are also seminars for which the *Phenomenology* is a lesson in intellectual discouragement, or for which much hard work and good will yield little fruitful understanding. Nevertheless, we continue to read Hegel's book because it *is* a book (not a compilation of lecture notes), and because of the sheer intellectual and imaginative power of its analyses. "Lordship and Bondage" and the account of conscience, the beautiful soul and forgiveness come immediately to mind.

A second and related cause of controversy has to do with the selection and sequence of readings. The problem of the fall semester is that we have only half a semester to work with (due to Preceptorials), and this half semester is filled with Hegel and responses to Hegel. To some tutors and students, these readings seem too much of a piece. In the spring semester, on the other hand, the greater diversity of readings and topics makes it difficult to pursue connections and relations between the readings.

Another cause of controversy is our lack of agreement about criteria for the choice of fiction in the year. Are we looking for works of fiction that fit with our American readings? Or for works that test the boundaries of traditional writing? Or for works that, independently of either issue, raise questions and provoke thinking about the most fundamental questions? We cannot seem to decide.

This list could go on. In this year alone the Seminar report to the Instruction Committee noted that at least three or four Senior Seminar tutors had proposed, among other things: dramatic changes in the Hegel readings, a cutting back on the Marx readings, the substitution of Verdi's *Otello* for Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, an expansion of the Faulkner reading, yet another re-doing of the Freud readings, and the insertion somewhere of something by James Joyce. The report noted that the reading list was "less settled than usual this academic year." Nevertheless, this unsettledness is a distinctive and ongoing feature of the Senior Seminar—not something to be cured or lamented, but instead expected and perhaps even welcomed.

The readings of the senior year in general seem to have a special character—they deliberately set out to unsettle us. They are radical or revolutionary, and in this way are of a piece with the works studied in Senior Mathematics, Laboratory, and even Language. Some call into question fundamental assumptions: the value of capitalism (Marx) and colonialism (Conrad), the status of negation and contradiction (Hegel) or morality and truth-seeking (Nietzsche). Others seem bent on making an easy-going rejection or affirmation of Christianity difficult (Dostoyevsky, Kierkegaard, O'Connor). Our readings in American politics seem to be an exception to this quasi-rule, yet even here we see Marshall re-conceiving the constitutional status of the Supreme Court, and Lincoln and Tocqueville highlighting the radicalness of the American experiment.

And then there are the students who read and study these unsettled and unsettling readings. Whatever the faults and failings that turn up in some seniors—a certain weariness with one another, occasional ennui about the whole enterprise, worries about life after graduation, early onset of nostalgia, and so on—seniors make this Seminar emphatically their own. Most tutors let the balance of authority shift in the direction of the students, to spend their time learning with seniors rather than leading them. Seniors know what a good seminar will demand of them: attentive reading, clarity of thought, generosity of spirit, a willingness to visit as yet unvisited heights and depths. And they know what good seminars feel like: what it means to hit the nerve of an argument, to tap into a fundamental question, to uncover a wealth of images. Seniors also know, and

suffer in the knowledge, that this is it, their last chance to get it right. When they miss the mark, they know it—no class at the College is quite as wretched as a Senior Seminar in tailspin. When they succeed, the result is an exhilarating blend of spontaneous conjecture and disciplined inquiry. To be part of such an experience is thought by most tutors to be a privilege and a pleasure.

II. The Language Tutorial (Nancy Buchenauer, Catherine Haigney, Katherine Heines, Jonathan Tuck, Language Tutors)

a. Freshman Language

The Freshman Language Tutorial involves the thoughtful study of ancient Greek grammar. Our approach to Greek includes an ongoing examination of English grammar and reflection on more general questions of how language works. The year culminates in the translation of a substantial portion of Plato's *Meno*, but passages from other Freshman Seminar readings are read as well, such as the *Republic* and Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Physics*. A secondary but important goal of the tutorial is the improvement of student writing. At least five papers are required during the course of the year, and students meet individually with their Language tutor for paper conferences to discuss problems in syntax, thought, organization, and style.

The study of Attic Greek allows students to encounter a highly self-conscious, literary language with a way of organizing spoken discourse quite different from their own. The Greek language is interesting because so many surviving Greek works were thoughtfully and beautifully crafted. Translation of passages from Freshman Seminar enhances Seminar conversations by supplying the slow, careful reading that is impossible when so many texts are read in such a short time. As a highly inflected language, Greek requires English speakers to think through the logic of English grammar rigorously. Most of our students have very little acquaintance with ways to analyze the grammar of their own language, so the study of ancient Greek becomes simultaneously the study of English. The impossibility of exact translation raises questions about how English functions, to what degree English usage is purely logical, and how poetic features (such as word usage and placement) affect meaning. General questions about what language is, how it works, and its relation to thought are raised both by the grammatical discussions and by the passages from Greek authors that are used as practice sentences in out text.

For many years our text has been *An Introduction to Ancient Greek* by Alfred Mollin and Robert Williamson, who, as faculty members, developed it specifically to serve the goals of the language tutorial at St. John’s College. No other text has been found as useful in presenting the elements of ancient Greek while preparing students to read Plato, supporting the Seminar, providing readings that are interesting in content as well as illustrating grammatical principles, and inviting reflection about language in general. Over the years the book has been gradually improved and now contains so much material that it could easily occupy the entire year. Effective use of this text requires that tutors attend to several difficulties: some essential features of grammar and syntax (such as the aorist, the perfect, important irregular verbs, and many uses of the subjunctive and optative) are postponed to the end of the book, where they run the risk of receiving insufficient consideration and little review. Furthermore, although presenting almost all pronouns together in one chapter makes logical sense, students sometimes confuse the many similar forms or become overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of different pronouns.

In particular, the relative pronoun deserves to be studied on its own and earlier, perhaps soon after the article, which is so similar in form. Some tutors are concerned that the book's focus on aspect rather than tense may be greater than is justified by Greek usage, or may divert student attention from other important grammatical points that deserve more emphasis; but it does highlight a distinction that is often crucial and one not easy for many students to keep in mind. Despite these difficulties, the Mollin and Williamson text fosters sensitivity to subtle and important grammatical distinctions.

The wealth of materials now available from this text demands that tutors choose what to use and what to omit, where to provide time for careful reading and where to accelerate. Tutors have different senses of where to focus attention, so that some classes have reached Chapter 13 by winter break, while others only reach Chapter 8. Classes often do not finish the book, and must cover essentials from later chapters while they translate the *Meno.* Archon reports filed in the Dean's Office provide suggestions about ways to bring in earlier in the year grammatical features explained later in the text; future archon reports should also recommend how much discussion should be allotted to the more controversial grammatical presentations.

In the past, the main goal of the Tutorial has been the careful reading of the *Meno*. This dialogue is agreed to be exactly the right text for our students because it discusses what learning is and how it occurs, as well as the relationship between excellence and the willingness to examine opinions. Since the basis for all classes at the College is Socrates' observation that learning occurs only through the work of the students themselves, it seems essential that we study this work together. In addition, since the tradition of radical inquiry begins with the questions posed by Socrates in Plato's dialogues, and because the Freshman Seminar reading list includes many of them, it is especially important to read one as slowly and carefully as possible. The amount of time devoted to reading the *Meno*, however, has decreased steadily, until at present some classes may spend no more than two or three weeks on it, while most spend less than six weeks. There is far less time for the *Meno*, first, because more time is needed for the new Mollin and Williamson text, and, second, because it has long been considered desirable to look at Book II, Chapter 1 of Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Physics* when the Seminar is about to read them. Nevertheless, tutors report that the time they do devote to the *Meno* results in the accomplishment of important work. While flexibility must be allowed to individual tutors, the College should ask itself whether the *Meno* remains the central text of Freshman Language, and if this implies that a greater amount of time be devoted to it.

An important task of the Freshman Language tutor is to convey the type of essay appropriate to a student's education at the College—neither thesis nor research paper, but thoughtful exploration of a question. Even after students realize that they have questions about the readings, and not only judgments and reactions, they must learn how to develop cogent articulations of their questions, to devise ways to approach answers, and to allow analysis of the text to be illuminating. Sometimes work on stylistic or organizational problems in a student's writing must be postponed while a student is beginning to grasp how writing can be a means of thinking.

Recommendation

- The Instruction Committee should review the role of, and amount of time devoted to, the *Meno* in Freshman Language.

b. Sophomore Language

The goal of the Sophomore Language Tutorial is understood by some tutors to be the careful study of great works of poetry, by others to be the study of the three liberal arts of grammar, rhetoric, and logic. The latter agree that the study of these arts is undertaken primarily through the study of great works; the former agree that although the trivium is not studied formally (except for logic), questions about the nature of language act as guides and goals of study in our reading of great works of literature. In the first semester, students translate selections from a Sophocles tragedy or Homer's epics, and selections from the Septuagint or the Greek New Testament. In the second, they study formal logic, at least one Shakespeare play, and English lyric poetry.

Although the goals of the first semester are varied, we consider the reading of great poetic texts in their original language an end in itself. Since the students' skills in Greek are challenged by the difficulty of the works, we translate very slowly. This is, for the most part, a benefit: students learn to see the subtleties and intricacies of the text and to read with a care not afforded by the fast pace at which books are read in Seminar. They inquire into the meaning of the work and examine details of grammar and syntax, meter, imagery, etc. They also reflect on the activity of translation itself, and become better able to evaluate the translations used in other classes.

Some tutors begin the year with a review of Greek grammar, but most choose to discuss grammatical issues as they are raised by the texts. By the end of the freshman year, we do not expect students to be competent in Greek, but to have enough Greek to be able to translate with the help of a lexicon, notes to the texts, and even published translations. Although there is wide variance in the students' level of skill, most find translation difficult and time-consuming, yet possible and rewarding.

Individual classes have always studied either a Sophocles play or selections from Homer. In the past, the choice of text was at the discretion of the individual tutors; most sections now, however, read the same work. This change resulted from discussions among students and faculty, in which it was determined that greater uniformity would afford sophomores more opportunity for conversation and learning outside of class. The practice has been very successful. Most tutors find that archon meetings are greatly enhanced by their study of the same text, and recommend continuing the practice.

For six out of the past seven years, most classes have read Sophocles rather than Homer. Sophocles' Greek is more difficult and requires a slower pace, and the structure and language are also more concentrated. Eight to ten lines per day easily provide enough material for fruitful discussion. Because Homer's Greek is easier, students develop greater facility, but tutors generally report that class discussions do not go as well because the poetry, although magnificent, is not as dense and complex as that of Sophocles. Some classes translate selections from the New Testament or Septuagint when sophomores are reading the Bible in Seminar.

The sequence of topics in the second semester has been under revision over the last five years. In the past, most classes began the semester with the study of logic, followed by a Shakespeare play, and concluded with lyric poetry. Although there is still widespread agreement that classes should study lyric poetry after spring break, many tutors have tried reversing the order of logic and the Shakespeare play, with favorable results: a Greek play followed immediately by a Shakespeare play can lead to interesting comparisons and contrasts. Logic would then be followed by lyric poetry and can be an integrated into the curriculum in the following way: if logic is studied not only formally,

but also through arguments of English prose writers, classes can analyze the nature of argument in its logical as well as rhetorical modes. The analysis of good English prose, an end in itself, can thus also be a good introduction to the close study of English poetry.

Tutors approach the study of logic in very different ways. All classes begin with Aristotle's discussion of contradiction in the *Metaphysics* and find this fruitful. Some then study selections from Aristotle's *Organon*; others use a short tutor-written manual; others omit the formal study of logic and instead examine arguments from Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Bacon, and Hobbes. Tutors allot to the study of logic anywhere from two to six weeks. Although they are reluctant to cut short the time devoted to Shakespeare and lyric poetry, many feel that logic should be either undertaken more seriously or done away with altogether. This opinion was echoed by members of the Student Committee on Instruction, who reviewed a draft of the Self-Study; they also said that there should be more consistency between sections in how logic is studied. Tutors find that reading Aristotle to study logic is worthwhile, yet too complex to be done well in a short time. On the other hand, some tutors feel that the current logic manual does not go into enough depth.

Tutors report more success when a short study of logic with the current manual is followed by the logical analysis of a text by Bacon or Hobbes. This practice provides a means for attending not only to the formal analysis of argument but also to the way a great English prose writer uses rhetoric and language. This practice would also allow a smoother transition to the study of lyric poetry. Furthermore, given the desire on the part of some faculty to introduce the examination of English prose, this approach to logic would provide an opportune place to do so. In any case, the study of logic remains the most vexing problem of the tutorial. The problem is not the variety of approaches but the fact that no approach seems to work as well as it should. In its current state, the study of logic seems not to have a place within the year as a whole. Most tutors agree that it should not be dropped, but that it is in need of serious repair. The Instruction Committee needs to address this problem in earnest and perhaps consider in particular the virtues of the approach outlined above.

The study of the Shakespeare play (or plays) continues to go well, in part because of the students' translation of Greek in the first semester. Having looked closely at Greek grammar, syntax, and meter, they now bring this attentiveness to their reading of Shakespeare. Students are encouraged to take parts for class recitation, a practice that supplements the detailed analytical work with a live experience of the text. Although the choice of the play varies from section to section, most classes recently have read the same play, with benefits similar to those in reading the same Sophocles play. The year ends with the study of English lyric poetry from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most classes spend one period on a single poem and find this practice rewarding. We continue to search for the anthology that would best suit our goals.

Recommendation

- The Instruction Committee should review the place and treatment of logic in the Tutorial.

c. Junior Language

This Tutorial's primary aims are clear: to learn enough French to read our chosen authors in the original, and in doing so to continue the inquiry into language that began in the freshman year. We spend the first semester working through Palmeri and Milligan's

French for Reading Knowledge, a text we have used for years, in part because its exercises draw on canonical literature. Questions are regularly raised about whether use of this text is appropriate in our classes. Though its exercises are suitable, its efficient treatment of grammar does not provoke thoughtful reflection. In 1997, when this text went out of print, we undertook a thorough search for an alternative. This search was unsuccessful, and we ultimately sought for and received permission to reprint Palmeri and Milligan. Its emphasis on sentences crafted by great writers compensates, in part, for its professional attitude to grammar. There are tapes available in the Library for help with pronunciation, a feature that some of us emphasize more, others less, depending on the extent to which we think sounding aloud helps in learning grammar and vocabulary or in experiencing verse.

The College has chosen French as the second foreign language that students are required to study, both because it is an un-inflected language (as opposed to Greek) and because it is possible even for beginners to acquire in eight weeks a sufficient grasp of grammar to translate and discuss intelligently selections of great rhetorical, dramatic, and philosophic power. In addition, French literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries forms a coherent tradition of artistic excellence and profundity analogous to the Greek tradition drawn upon in the first two years of Language Tutorial. Although many authors read in Junior Seminar are German philosophers, the perfection of form and moral insight in French authors of the same period fits our stress on grammar and rhetoric in the Tutorial. However, our economical approach to French grammar, the similarity of French to English, the use of a standard text, and the fact that juniors have already had conversations about many fundamentals of grammar can all present pedagogical difficulties in our continued examination of grammatical issues. It is therefore important that tutors give each other guidance in singling out those exercises in Palmeri and Milligan that address students' lingering grammatical deficiencies or highlight grammatical ambiguities. While some classes manage to finish the book in a brisk eight to ten weeks, leaving four to seven weeks for a concentrated study of La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes* and Pascal *Pensées*, others intersperse grammatical work with short readings from La Rochefoucauld, Pascal, Descartes, Rousseau, or essays by Hobbes or Bacon.

Although the work of Junior Language extends our examination of grammatical issues, such as the possible syntactical structures of conditional statements, the emphasis often shifts to rhetorical composition. After two years of reading and discussing great books, and after the study of rhythm, meter, and affect in Sophomore Music, juniors are usually more sensitive to shades of meaning, syntactical deviations, and alternative means of expression. Since rhetorical devices are prominent in the writing of La Rochefoucauld and Pascal, word selection, sentence construction, even the effect of the sounds chosen, all become topics early in our study of French. Since rhetorical matters are emphasized more in this Tutorial, Junior Language can be especially helpful in the improvement of student writing. Juniors have usually made progress in articulating thoughtful questions to address in essays and also have begun to understand how close analysis of their reading can help them develop illuminating responses to their questions. Junior year can be a propitious time to cultivate an awareness of the effect of their own words on a reader and to encourage them to consider their own word choice, sentence construction, organization—in short, to experiment with aspects of composition they have been discussing in the Tutorial itself.

During the latter half of the year, the principal work consists in the translation of significant portions of Racine's *Phèdre.* The 1993 Self-Study Report noted that moving the reading of Molière from Senior to Junior Language imposed additional burdens on the curriculum. We still recommend spending six to eight weeks on *Phèdre* and four to six weeks on a Molière play, but tutors have had varying success in giving adequate attention to both authors, and in 1997 the Instruction Committee decided to make the reading of a Molière play in French optional. Tutors who choose not to attempt Molière in French can productively spend the remaining time analyzing Seminar-related readings such as passages from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Hobbes' *Leviathan*, or Rousseau's *Essay on the Origin of Language.* Most agree that struggling with the difficulties of Molière's language and reflecting on the moral view embedded in his irony are endeavors appropriate to the close of the junior year.

Since our last Self-Study Report, the College has eliminated the requirement that students pass a French reading knowledge examination. Instead, tutors bear the responsibility for determining whether students have learned enough grammar to continue their study of French. Most tutors have found frequent quizzes on basic grammar to be essential in discovering which students should get extra help from the student French Assistants. The elimination of this requirement has caused no noticeable problems.

The second major change implemented in recent years (1998) was the elimination of "tracking" students according to their prior study of the language. Our classes now bring together those who have had no French with those who have had some or even a great deal of instruction or immersion. As with our other Tutorials, the more experienced and quicker students help those with less experience and facility. More advanced students benefit from grammar review and helping out in class, while beginners are motivated to work harder. Experience since 1998 indicates that this change has been successful. Members of the Student Committee on Instruction report that mixing students of all levels of preparation generally works well.

d. Senior Language

The Senior Language Tutorial, like the Language Tutorials of the other years, is the visible presence in the Program of the liberal arts of the trivium: logic, grammar, and rhetoric. In the senior year, rhetoric is given priority over the other two: the texts read are always literary texts and usually poetic ones. A typical schedule of readings might be as follows. The first term is on French poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including 3 weeks on miscellaneous lyrics from a photocopied anthology, compiled by faculty members; 9 weeks on Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*; 3 weeks on another French poet such as Rimbaud or Valéry, or a lyrical prose writer such as Proust. The second term (shortened by the Senior Essay Writing Period) is on English and American poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, selected by the tutor of each class. Most classes do some Wallace Stevens; otherwise practices vary widely. Some tutors assign one or more modern novels such as Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, or stories such as those in Joyce's *Dubliners.* During the course of the year, each student usually writes five or six medium-length papers on topics assigned from the class materials.

The Tutorial is, notoriously, the one place in the Program where readings are least uniform from class to class. The freedom of selection afforded to the tutors of individual sections has been far greater than that in other Tutorials. Since the year's work does not

cumulatively enable a succeeding year, there are fewer practical constraints. It is unavoidable that there is more disagreement about hierarchies of literary value as we come closer to the present day. The only author that is considered non-negotiable is Baudelaire, but even here there may be an overlap of only a few poems. In consequence, it has often happened that archon groups for this Tutorial do not meet regularly, since they lack common objects for discussion. Tutors who ask to teach it are often those with considerable experience in French and English poetry; they have well-developed tastes and preferences. Without day-to-day guidance from an archon group or a common teaching tradition, tutors with little background in the subject matter are more hesitant to attempt it for the first time. Without day-to-day guidance from an archon group or a common teaching tradition, tutors with little background in the subject matter do not get the help they need either in selecting poems and examples of prose or in learning how these works might be approached in class. With fewer reading experiences in common, seniors are less able to converse about their language classes across sectional boundaries. Thus the relative shapelessness of the curriculum contributes to the socially centrifugal tendencies in the senior year.

There is nonetheless a positive side to the variability of the reading list. A class may have more spontaneity about shaping its schedule to the needs and preferences of the students. In some sections students are given the opportunity to take part in choosing what is read. For seniors, this experience can be very salutary: they are reminded that the Program is the outcome of a series of human choices and did not issue from on high, engraved on tablets of stone. More philosophically inclined classes can undertake Valéry's *Le Cimetière Marin*. Classes with students interested in the visual arts can explore the numerous connections between poetry and painting in the periods under scrutiny. Tutors can teach the class repeatedly while continuing to explore new poems and different strategies of selection.

In spite of these recommendations, many faculty believe that it would be desirable to fix upon a more uniform reading list for the Tutorial. A comparable centralization took place in the Sophomore Language Tutorial about ten years ago, and the results seem to have been good. The Instruction Committee and the faculty at large should at least agree to consider the question of the variability of the current readings, perhaps with the aid of second-term seniors or recent graduates who were members of the Student Committee on Instruction.

There is widespread agreement that whatever shape the Tutorial might take, it should still focus on modern works of literature; it should still divide its attention between French and English; and the central figure should still be Baudelaire. The last of these claims may need some justification. For our purposes, one of the great virtues of *Les Fleurs du Mal* is that it looks both forward and backward. Baudelaire's use of traditional verse structures links him with our study of Racine and Molière in the junior year, and many of his poems allude to Program authors such as Virgil, St. Augustine, Shakespeare and Pascal. At the same time, his preoccupation with time, memory, history, and the continuity of personal experience links him with Hegel, whom the seniors read at about the same time; while his modern emphasis on the individual's subjectivity aligns him with other Senior Seminar writers, such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, William James, Freud, and Heidegger. (He has these interests in common with Valéry, Proust, and Woolf; such a thematic coherence might be a useful basis for structuring a uniform reading list.) Some students find *Les Fleurs du Mal* upsetting or depressing and are

impatient to be done with it. Others, however, find the book inexhaustible, and regret that we can read no more than a small selection.

If the decision should be made to attempt to achieve greater uniformity in the selection of English and American poems for the second term, it may be expedient to compile an in-house anthology, somewhat like the one made for the Sophomore Language Tutorial years ago. It is likely, however, that many of the poems we would want to include are not in the public domain, which could make such a publication prohibitively expensive. A good first step would be to compile a list of poems that have been repeatedly and successfully used.

The senior year can be relentlessly demanding. The Language Tutorial, as presently constituted, offers more of a respite than the other three classes— partly because the emphasis on lyric poems makes it more episodic. It is all to the good that seniors have a breathing space; but they may have more respect for the Tutorial and invest more effort in it if this part of the Program had more structure. In deciding whether to do so, the faculty may have to reflect on what it wants this class to be.

Recommendation

- The Instruction Committee should review the variability of readings in the second semester.

III. The Mathematics Tutorial (Michael Blaustein, Deborah Renaut, Joan Silver, John Verdi, Mathematics Tutors)

a. Freshman Mathematics

Over the decades the focus and texts of the Freshman Mathematics Tutorial have changed little. We begin with Euclid's *Elements*, concentrating on the geometrical books, with some attention to Euclid's treatment of number and to the relation between number and magnitude. The last seven to eight weeks of the year are devoted to Ptolemy's *Almagest* and primarily cover his account of the motion of the sun.

The *Elements* provides an essential beginning to our students' study of mathematics. It introduces them to a reasoned account that articulates its presuppositions and proceeds by demonstration. In addition, Euclid's approach can be seen as a challenge to modern notions of mathematics. In the *Elements*, mathematical objects are taken as worthy of investigation and contemplation in their own right. The basic questions that inform the four years of mathematical study begin to emerge: what sort of being do mathematical objects have, and what is their relation to the world? What kind of knowing is at work when we do mathematics? Is mathematics primarily concerned with "doing" or with an intellectual "seeing"?

Ptolemy's *Almagest* uses the geometrical understanding gained from Euclid and begins a new inquiry: how do heavenly bodies move? Reading the *Almagest* also gives rise to questions that will recur over the four years, such as: what is meant by "giving an account" of how such bodies move?

The stability of this Tutorial reflects its general strength and success. The few difficulties confronted in it are perennial. One is related to tutors relatively new to the Program; two others are felt primarily by students.

The difficulty facing newer tutors lies in understanding that mathematics in the Tutorial is studied not only for its own sake and for the intellectual virtues to be gained

from its practice, but also for the sake of struggling with the philosophical issues thematic to the entire Program. This difficulty is addressed primarily through archon meetings. There we address not only questions related to the mathematics and to the conduct of the class, but also larger questions that we hope will arise in the classroom.

Another difficulty relates to how mathematics is to be approached and the place of the demonstration of Euclid's propositions at the board. Such demonstrations are meant neither to be an example of rote memorization nor a simple presentation of mathematical skill. Rather, the student at the board is intended to be the focus of the endeavor the entire class is making to understand the reasoning of the proof. Moreover, demonstration is meant not to finish a conversation, but to provide a basis for further discussion of Euclid's method of proof, of the place of this proposition within the larger whole of his work, or of its relation to the sorts of more fundamental questions. The tutor is therefore challenged to find a balance between technical rigor and discussion. If the tutor directs attention to the true place of demonstration, students' differences in skill may cease to be a problem, and may even provide an advantage by revealing the extent to which a demonstration is an activity of the whole class; here it becomes clear that technical mastery, while often helpful, is not the primary goal.

Perhaps the most recalcitrant difficulty lies in the transition from Euclid to Ptolemy. Many students find this transition problematic, and feel that the study of the *Almagest* is more difficult than the study of Euclid. The sources of these problems are not easily identifiable, and appear to be rather various. Some students find it puzzling to be turning from a pure mathematics to one that incorporates more directly something of the world we live in; others find three-dimensional geometry difficult; still others are challenged by the combination of motion with three-dimensional geometry; and many seem lost as to the thrust of Ptolemy's early geometrical demonstrations, which is now done in a somewhat truncated form.

While these difficulties may not disappear, two changes might help to alleviate them: first, students could read an introduction to the Ptolemaic view of the cosmos early in the year and take daily readings throughout the year from the College's "Ptolemy stone" (by which one can measure the height of the sun at local noon). These measures would give students an early introduction to Ptolemy's undertaking and a better grasp of the sorts of observations that gave rise to his astronomical hypotheses. Second, we could emend the early Ptolemy schedule in order to cut less from his early geometry, and so allow the students to place it more in context. Changes such as these might shorten the time needed for students to become genuinely engaged in the study of the *Almagest*, and make the study itself more rewarding.

In spite of the difficulties mentioned above, the Freshman Mathematics Tutorial develops, in students and tutors alike, rigor in thinking and appreciation of a reasoned account, as well as a spirit of inquiry. Such inquiry questions presuppositions, and sees that the foundations of any reasoned account must be examined.

Recommendations

The Instruction Committee should review the following:

- the possible introduction to Ptolemy and observations of the sun early in the year
- the possibility of allotting more time to Ptolemy's geometry

b. Sophomore Mathematics

Sophomore Mathematics examines two of the most fundamental transitions in the tradition of astronomy and mathematics. Much of the first semester is devoted to Ptolemy, continuing the study begun in the freshman year, and to Copernicus's revision of Ptolemy. The rest of the year is devoted to studying the geometry of conic sections as presented by the ancient Greek mathematician Apollonius, followed by the study of Descartes' radical re-conception of this material in terms of the emerging development of algebraic analysis. In both cases, the themes of the Tutorial are approached so as to highlight the revolutionary character of the shifts.

In recent years, only minor changes in the syllabus have been made, and no important changes are needed now. Nevertheless, a few issues deserve consideration. In the first semester, the most important question is whether and how to spend some time on Kepler—in the second, to find a way to spend enough time on Descartes.

After studying Ptolemy and Copernicus, some classes spend a few days on Kepler's *Epitome of Copernican Astronomy*. To do this is highly desirable. Kepler's approach to astronomy is the most important between Copernicus and Newton, and the so-called "Kepler Laws" of planetary motion are prerequisites for the study (in Junior Mathematics) of Newton's *Principia*. More important for our purposes in Sophomore Mathematics, Kepler very deliberately turned astronomy from a strictly mathematical pursuit (as Ptolemy and Copernicus conceived it) to a physical one; in this respect his approach is perhaps a more significant change than the Copernican turn to heliocentrism. Students can see how Kepler's study of Copernicus led him to raise questions about the causes of planetary motion that had not arisen for Ptolemy or Copernicus. Reading Kepler is a fitting culmination to our work on the transition from ancient to modern astronomy and deserves a place in the Sophomore Mathematics curriculum.

There are, however, several difficulties in pursuing this course. For one thing, we do not yet have a successful set of selections from the *Epitome*, and no commentary (manual) is available. Our current manual contains nothing on Kepler other than a suggestion to read one selection. The need for a manual or commentary on the astronomical texts should be explained. Ptolemy, Copernicus, and Kepler did not write treatises for beginners, as Euclid did; they wrote for astronomers who were familiar with the necessary mathematics and with the relevant celestial phenomena. We need a manual to supply both mathematical commentary and descriptions of the observable motions of the heavenly bodies. The current manual does this job well (apart from a few comments on Ptolemy that give the impression of being biased in favor of Copernicus). To give Kepler the attention he deserves, we must develop a well thought-out curriculum with textual selections and commentary, as we have for the other two authors. A second and perhaps decisive reason to omit Kepler, in spite of the advantages mentioned above, is to free more time for work on Descartes.

The geometry of Apollonius' *Conics* is, in its manner of presentation, a return to the formality of Euclid: a sequence of definitions and propositions clearly demarcated and clearly stating what is to be proved. This gives some students a surer footing than the much less formally punctilious style of the astronomers. But the mathematics and the demands on the imagination are generally harder in Apollonius than in Euclid. The demonstrations are longer and more complex, and the diagrams are often much less revealing; proofs depend on ratios and other relations that are by no means evident from

inspecting the diagrams. It takes time to learn how to read Apollonius, and even more time to acquire the taste and ability to use the propositions as springboards for open-ended speculation about the conic sections. Students should concentrate less on memorizing and formally presenting a proof than on explaining its main parts and its strategy. It is hard, but possible, for many students to learn to do this; written assignments in which students outline propositions are very valuable.

Although this kind of work cannot be rushed, the tutor must keep an eye on the calendar. It is desirable to begin Viète and Descartes in the last few weeks before spring break. This allows enough time to work through Descartes' *Geometry* and still have a few weeks for modern analytic geometry. The goal of this final segment is to help students become familiar with how to read equations, and to understand their relation to the geometrical curves they describe. The current schedule intermingles the reading of Descartes with the study of our analytic geometry manual. This is a mistake: it is important to give undivided attention to the text of Descartes. Students should come to terms with this difficult, founding text before turning to the simpler presentation of modern analytic geometry.

Apollonius does not require much commentary, but Viète and Descartes do. The materials we use for Viète (and Diophantus) require considerable improvement: we need a text that is typographically clear and free of errors, and notes that give more help with Viète. For Descartes the situation is better: we now have a manual with an annotated translation of the selections we read from the *Geometry* along with useful appendices. More notes would be helpful, especially on the later parts of the selections.

The problems cited in the 1993 Self-Study regarding the Algebra Examination remain: tutors report that too many juniors and seniors continue to have difficulties with the elementary algebra required in the upper two years of Mathematics and Laboratory. We need to improve the effectiveness of the Algebra Examination and think about how we can better prepare students for their encounter with the analytic calculus and mathematical physics. Members of the Student Committee on Instruction likewise raised questions about the examination and wondered whether more class time should be devoted to the analytic geometry manual. (For a description of the Algebra Examination, and an accompanying recommendation, see The Assessment of Student Learning, Chapter Four, Section A.)

Recommendations

The Instruction Committee should review the following:

- the inclusion of a Kepler reading in the first semester
- improvement of materials on the transition from ancient to modern mathematics
- the possibility of more time for the analytic geometry manual in the second semester

c. Junior Mathematics

There is general satisfaction with the Junior Mathematics Tutorial. The questions we raise about the continuity of motion, the infinite and the infinitesimal lead to a new form of mathematics, the calculus. Our primary text, Newton's *Principia*, begins there and concludes with a sweeping vision of the mechanical motions of the universe.

The initial sequence of readings (Zeno, Aristotle, Galileo) considers Zeno's paradox: how is continuous motion possible if, at each instant, the moving object can be located in one discrete and countable place? The responses are geometrical and seem to involve a

sleight of hand. The lemmas in *Principia* intend to offer a more rigorous beginning, but the sense of unreality in trying to capture a moving object with a number persists throughout the year in spite of the overwhelming accomplishments of the new mathematics. We then turn to a manual (written by a tutor) in order to acquire quickly the fluency in the elementary calculus needed for later Laboratory readings.

We spend most of the second semester on the *Principia.* Aristotelian causality is abandoned, and replaced by Newton's understanding of force. Once the idea of cause is changed, the idea of the first or divine mover must be reconsidered. Newton calls his book "natural philosophy"—two words we are less likely to put together. We have ample opportunity during the year to consider whether the study of nature is properly called philosophical.

The last few weeks of the year are spent reading Dedekind's *Essays on the Theory of Numbers*. The increasing power of calculus, a science of numbers, led Dedekind to ask whether it was possible to give an axiomatic account of numbers and continuity. His first essay introduces us to a way of understanding number that avoids relying on visual imagination, that is, on geometry, and proceeds in terms of groups or sets distinguished by numerical properties.

Despite our general satisfaction with the Tutorial, problems concerning our current texts persist. In 1995, after having experimented with a calculus book written by a tutor, and after extensive discussion among faculty members, the Instruction Committee decided to continue using our former manual (newly revised and streamlined). We deemed it a priority to use original texts in the beginning of the year to frame the need for and idea of calculus. The current manual's presentation and organization suit this development of the calculus, while its efficiency in covering basic elements mitigates the departure from our practice of reading original texts. Nevertheless, students often find this manual too much like a textbook, and complain that classes generally do not have the thoughtful depth of discussion they expect. In 2000, the Instruction Committee studied the possibility of adopting the Santa Fe calculus manual, which includes many original papers replete with insights and digressions. However, given our satisfaction with our opening sequence and our sense of time constraints, the Committee decided to incorporate only a few of these papers in our current sequence.

Newton's *Principia* itself also poses a problem for us: it is difficult to read, and many students and tutors feel the need for guidance. In 1993, we were using a manual written by a tutor, though sometimes its complexity and detail diverted attention from major lines of inquiry. Since then (1995), Densmore's *Newton's Principia: The Central Argument* has been published—which now functions as our source of assistance. However, its format alone provokes problems in class, since effort is required to distinguish between the commentary and the text itself. Moreover, its editorial decisions and detailed supplementary proofs sometimes obscure direct confrontation with Newton's own arguments. The Instruction Committee decided that tutors should not *require* students to use Densmore's text, but has left the extent of its use to the discretion of tutors. Its use remains controversial, as Student Committee on Instruction forums in 2002 revealed.

During the 1998-2001 school years, the Instruction Committee also studied the feasibility of a proposal that Newton's *Principia* be read consecutively in one class, rather than partly in the Laboratory and partly in the Mathematics Tutorial, where it is interrupted by a study of modern calculus. While the benefits of reading the *Principia*

more continuously were recognized, scheduling difficulties concerning the chronology of readings (and hence ideas) proved insurmountable.

A different kind of question is also regularly considered, namely, how well prepared newer tutors and students are for the mathematics of the Tutorial. Newer tutors can discuss the work of the year in the weekly archon meetings, but we must also attend to other means of support. Our introduction to algebraic understanding takes place at the end of the second semester of the sophomore year, when many tutorials are rushing to find time. It might be helpful if references back to that sequence were made explicit. The study of Apollonius in the sophomore year is long and thorough, and it does provide necessary support to Newton, but greater familiarity with analytic geometry would enhance our study of calculus and perhaps strengthen the connection of our Newtonian studies to the Laboratory.

The best testimonial to the success of this Tutorial is the number of students and tutors who, having thought of themselves as "not mathematical," discover, with much excitement, that even the calculus is accessible and of profound interest to them. The study of the elements of geometry in the first two years of the Mathematics Tutorial has usually already persuaded such learners that they are not wholly un-mathematical, but Junior Mathematics helps them confront and comprehend a mathematics that is heavily reliant on symbols and equations. Along with the Laboratory and the Seminar, it actively examines the foundations of the overwhelming accomplishments of the mathematical sciences.

Recommendations

The Instruction Committee should review the following:

- the use of Densmore's text in the study of the *Principia*
- incorporation of supplementary papers into the current calculus manual

d. Senior Mathematics

The first term of Senior Mathematics returns to geometry, albeit in a new context. Our main text for the fall term is Lobachevsky's groundbreaking *Geometrical Researches on the Theory of Parallels.* Though the conceptual difficulties of non-Euclidean geometry are challenging, the proofs are generally less difficult than many of Newton's proofs read in junior year. Non-Euclidean geometry can thus be less intimidating and offer fresh opportunities for students to actively participate. The challenge to their spatial intuition, while confusing, usually provokes heartfelt objections and stimulating conversation about the role of intuition in mathematics, the character of postulates, and the truth of mathematical theorems.

Along with Lobachevsky's treatise, we read a manual developed by tutors. This manual develops certain issues independently of Lobachevsky and amplifies some consequences of his theorems. Its main difference from other College manuals, however, is that it requires the student to develop his own proofs of theorems. These proofs are usually not difficult, and hints are frequently provided. Nevertheless, students sometimes are flustered at being called upon to derive their own proofs. Even though they have had considerable experience following the arguments of great mathematicians and have had to construct their own chains of reasoning in all their classes, the activity of discovering mathematics within themselves appears to require a new level of insight. Though this project results in something of a departure from our practice of reading great books, and

can result in some pedagogical hurdles, it does seem a natural fruition of the kind of work students have been doing in the previous three years. Since the sequence of proofs in the manual continues serious reflection on various aspects of Euclidean geometry and its foundations, an activity our students are quite prepared to do, the exception we make with this manual generally works well. The manual is shaped by our dual goals of provoking fundamental philosophic questions and honing mathematical reasoning.

Perhaps the biggest question concerning the first term's work concerns the subject material of the last few weeks. Study of non-Euclidean geometry inevitably leads to a consideration of consistency and completeness in mathematics. So a natural conclusion to this term's work has always seemed to be an examination of Gödel's Theorem. But the questions of model-making and alternative geometries are somewhat hastily treated at the end of the first-term manual. Most students grasp the concept of a mathematical model, but find its application to consistency questions difficult. Our reading of Hilbert's new way of defining mathematical objects paves the way for questions of formalism. But these questions seem abstract to students since they gain little rigorous experience of formal systems. Various treatments of Gödel's Theorem, including a manual put together by tutors, have been used with some success, but the difficulty of the theorem together with the aforementioned problems perhaps suggest a whole different conclusion to the work of the semester, e.g. philosophical readings about geometry or imagination. At some point in the near future, the faculty should reconsider the desirability of concluding the first term with Gödel's theorem. Perhaps instead, a more detailed exploration of alternative geometries would simultaneously prepare the way for a connection of relativity to geometry.

After returning from their month of essay writing, seniors begin a study of mathematics more tied to physical concerns by working through Einstein's special relativity and energy-mass papers, followed by excerpts from Minkowski's *Space and Time*. The details of the kinematical part of Einstein's special relativity paper are within the grasp of all our students. As in the first term, although the concepts are mind-boggling, the mathematics required is fairly accessible. The dynamical part of Einstein's paper, on the other hand, requires more mastery of calculus and electro-dynamics. Frequently, certain students will demonstrate at the board more than others at this point. Cooperation among students of varying abilities and inclinations is, as always, necessary; and students who lack technical mastery of symbolic mathematics are nevertheless expected to follow the arguments, pose questions, and reflect upon consequences. Still, a review of Maxwell's equations and partial derivatives as a regular part of the curriculum might go some way toward addressing the disparity of abilities among the students.

The manuals used in both terms have been greatly improved during the last few years. The non-Euclidean geometry manual now has quite an elegant presentation. The relativity manual now includes numerous helpful notes for Einstein's special relativity paper and energy-mass paper; moreover, its new notes on Minkowski have made a number of tutors feel that it is possible for them to read his original work for the first time. As a consequence, tutors and students are less reliant on popular and textbook accounts of some of the more difficult aspects of relativity and space-time; discussions go more deeply into foundations and reflect more seriously upon conceptual innovations. At the end of the second term, as at the end of the first term, there is a range of possibilities. Some classes explore general relativity; some read Poincaré; some re-read Kant on space and time; some read Einstein's "Geometry and Experience" or Hawking's

"Einstein's Dream." The increased accessibility of Minkowski in recent years motivates more than ever a study of general relativity. The difficult material, however, proves something of an obstacle. A number of classes have used Einstein's own popular treatment of this subject, but it would clearly be more desirable to read at least some of *The Foundation of the General Theory of Relativity*. For this reason, it would be a good idea to keep general relativity in mind as a possible candidate for the subject of a study group in the future: such a study group might be able to determine the feasibility of putting together a coherent treatment for our students.

While the concluding weeks of both terms of Senior Mathematics should be re-examined, the variety of approaches can often be a good thing. Tutors who have some knowledge of the readings can suit the particulars of the material to their own experiences and to the abilities and interests of the class, and no other class at the College depends on the students having read some particular paper in this class. A synthesis of our work on non-Euclidean geometry with a development of general relativity would constitute a gratifying culmination to the mathematics tutorial. Unfortunately, however, technical difficulties increase dramatically with the advent of general relativity and may in the end preclude a satisfying examination in the context of a liberal education.

Recommendations

The Instruction Committee should review the following:

- improvement of materials used in the study of consistency and completeness
- possible alternatives to using Gödel as the culmination of the first semester
- faculty study group on general relativity

IV. The Laboratory (Chester Burke, Mera Flaumenhaft, Henry Higuera, Cordell Yee, Laboratory Tutors)

a. Freshman Laboratory

As its name indicates, the Laboratory is a "workshop." Here, as in other classes, activity is essential to learning, as students learn, not only from reasoned discourse, but also from hands-on observation and experiments. Students look at animals and plants, and at physical and chemical phenomena. They learn the arts of careful observation, dissection, measurement, and experimentation, as well as how to record what they observe in drawings, symbols, graphs, and mathematical expressions. Like all our classes, the Laboratory is a place for exploratory discussion of classic texts and experiments—all of which slows down students who live in a fast world and helps them develop habits of careful observation and questioning. Although science is in some way inherently progressive, we emphasize elementary questions, so that when students finally re-encounter the familiar science of their modern world, they will have some idea of the thinking that got them there. This is not history of science: although the three Laboratories move toward the advanced language of modern science, they concentrate on fundamental questions about matter, living beings, growth, motion, electricity and magnetism, species, and genetics. They also inquire into the activity of the scientist: What is a hypothesis? A law? What are the criteria for naming, speaking about, and classifying nature? What is the difference between observation and experiment? Does understanding the natural world require mathematical measurement? Is nature conquerable by those who understand it, and should it be?

Freshman Laboratory is divided into what might look like "biology," "physics," and "chemistry" sequences, but the natural sciences are here conceived as parts of a coherent whole, and not as separate disciplines. Fundamental questions and examples overlap and inform the three parts of the class.

The first sequence, “Observing Living Beings,” focuses on the observation and understanding of plants and animals: what they are—their “being”—when they are mature flourishing organisms, and how they “become” the beings they are. In a recent change, classes now start by reading Theophrastus on plants, and by observing and dissecting branches, buds, and flowers of magnolia trees. A new translation of Theophrastus by a tutor has been revised and will now be included in the manual. It is in the Laboratory that freshmen first encounter the thought of Aristotle. These first discussions of cause, in the context of living beings, will be the foundation of their studies in Laboratory and Seminar all year. The readings (*Parts of Animals, On the Soul*) are accompanied by observation and dissection of animals.

The careful looking and drawing in Laboratory have the same aims as the close "looking" at sentences and Euclidean propositions in the Tutorials: the longer students look, the more they see about the structure of the whole. Discussions focus on body and soul, form and function, insides and outsides. Dissections are not directed by manuals that identify "systems" and "parts." Rather, students are asked to decide what cuts will help them learn and to think about what is meant by “system” or “part.” For some students this relatively undirected exploration is bewildering at first, but with gentle guidance, they are amazed by how much they learn by slowing down and looking carefully. A few students decline to dissect: this usually provides an occasion for discussions about the activities and responsibilities of those who study living things.

The question concerning the relation of parts and wholes in living beings is also explored through the study of embryology: how does an undifferentiated mass of cells come to be an organized living being? Classic papers by Driesch and Spemann are studied, and we observe and discuss the earliest growth of seedlings, sea urchins, frogs, and chicks. This study connects the three segments of the Freshman Laboratory since it asks: is it possible to explain the differentiation of a living being through mechanical or chemical causes? One difficulty here is that the so-called mechanical hypothesis is inadequately represented by a reading of Virchow. The sequence on living bodies often ends with Erwin Straus’s *The Upright Posture.*

The second segment of the year, “Measurement and Equilibrium,” inquires into the foundations of a mathematical comprehension of nature. We read works by Aristotle, Archimedes, Pascal, Black, and Gay-Lussac, and examine weight, heat, hydrostatics, and air pressure, as students become aware of how we quantify natural phenomena. The contrast of this segment with the preceding one is obvious and fruitful: our subject matter is inorganic rather than living, and we attend to ratiometric quantities rather than shapes and qualities. For some students the mathematical nature of the investigations makes the work more accessible than the biology; others find it less intriguing. The sequence has remained unchanged for many years and continues to capture students’ interest.

The third segment of the year, “The Constitution of Bodies,” extends our inquiry into the mathematization of nature to the elements of matter. Beginning with Lavoisier’s *Elements of Chemistry*, we discuss how a reformation of nomenclature can deepen our understanding of elements and compounds. Our study continues with the development of atomic theory by readings by Dalton, Thomson, Gay-Lussac, Avogadro, Cannizzaro and

Mendeleev. The contrast between the observability of the properties of elements and the hypothetical character of atomic weight leads us to ask about the formation of hypotheses, an inquiry that overlaps with the study of Ptolemy in the Mathematics Tutorial. The final segment also examines the chemical elements common to living beings, thus ensuring that our initial study of living things is recalled through the year. Perhaps the least satisfying aspect of this segment is that the manual provides minute guidance for the students' work, depriving it of some of the spontaneity and wonder of the earlier practica.

Several difficulties arise in the Freshman Laboratory. First, contemporary scientific doctrines concerning subjects such as gravity or evolution often conflict in some respect with our classic readings. Even students with a weak grasp of contemporary science may, because of a confidence in the progress of science, come to treat the Laboratory as a history of science. The implied subject of the class may become "what was thought at a certain time" rather than "what we find to be true." We face this difficulty more in this class because other freshman classes dwell entirely on Greek authors, whereas here ancient and modern authors are often juxtaposed. This difficulty is dealt with here as it is in other classes when students lapse into modern assumptions: we ask them to suspend their certainty regarding what they think they have learned previously, to question the grounds of their prior opinions, and to try to take seriously other ideas.

A second difficulty is that students as well as tutors new to the class sometimes say that they enjoy the three segments but do not see how they cohere into a unified part of the Program. Familiarity with all three segments is necessary if tutors are to raise questions that make each segment address the other two. Newer tutors discuss individual readings and pedagogy with more experienced tutors in the archon meetings, but it is often said that there is not enough time for extended discussions about the aims of the class generally. If new tutors are able to find the help they need, they are more likely to teach the class again. In 2001-02 the archon collected additional readings that are familiar to many more experienced tutors and that help them to frame the questions frequently raised in the class. Another way to make the class more accessible and attractive would be to have a faculty study group like the recent ones that have introduced many tutors to botany and the work of Sophomore Mathematics. Such a study group would also provide time for unhurried hands-on practical work, which would benefit tutors who lack sufficient laboratory experience.

A third difficulty is the crowded schedule that resulted from the reduction, in 1976, of the Laboratory Program from four to three years. The quick pace, especially in the chemistry sequence, works against our desire to counter the speed often associated with everything scientific, and our conviction that with patient, leisurely discussion, most people can and should study science.

If the Laboratory goes well, students will learn to look and think in a way that is probably different from the way they have "done science" before. They will relate their questions about the natural world to their thoughts about mathematics, literature, ethics, politics, and metaphysics, and continue to do so when they are long gone from the College.

Recommendation

- The Instruction Committee should discuss the possibility of a study group devoted to Freshman Laboratory readings, with practica.

b. Junior Laboratory

In the Junior Laboratory we continue to combine reading and discussion with practical experiments, and to rely as much as possible on primary texts. These deal with dynamics and optics in the fall, and waves and electricity in the spring. The texts range chronologically from Galileo to Maxwell.

The main thread of the fall sequence is motion, its character and causes. We see Descartes reject the Scholastic/Aristotelian definition of motion. We examine Huygens', Leibniz's and Newton's treatments of absolute versus relative motion. We follow attempts to replace the Aristotelian efficient cause with concepts such as Descartes' quantity of motion, Leibniz's "living force," Newton's force, Mayer's *causa*, and Maxwell's treatment of work, kinetic and potential energy, and heat. We ask whether different kinds of force exist, whether conservation laws imply the real existence of the things conserved, what we mean by "laws of nature," and what the proper relation is between physics narrowly construed and metaphysics.

The pace is quick. We must let the works speak for themselves; on the other hand, we assembled this sequence advisedly, and we must also try to help the students follow the important threads as we see them. We do not have the time to develop a high level of skill in experimentation. Still, practical experience is necessary in order to examine the relation between theory and experiment.

Five years ago, following our colleagues in Santa Fe, we reversed the order of two of our sequences. We now finish the first semester with an optics sequence. The old order developed the equations governing simple vibratory and wave motion first. However, these equations were not employed at all in the optics sequence, which was rather deflating. Furthermore, the mathematics in the optics sequence is much less challenging than are the wave equations; and we decided, as had Santa Fe, that it was better to end a tiring term with something easier, and to introduce the more difficult material right after winter break. The new order has worked well.

The sequence asks, "What is light?" Though the wave/particle debate is in the background, time constraints force us to focus largely on the wave theory. We read Huygens on how a light wave might be generated and how its motion might be transferred through space without large-scale displacement of matter. The Huygens paper, a brilliant introduction to this sequence, should be more accessible with the new translation, notes, and experiment developed last year. The Newton paper discusses the relation between color and light. The Young paper argues extensively for the wave theory of light. Even in the new order, this sequence has problems: the papers are much richer than the sketches just given. It is difficult to strike a balance between letting classes flounder and heavy-handed theme mongering. We remain determined to have students confront these seminal works as independently as possible.

We are continually working on improving the first semester. The coordination between the Laboratory and the Mathematics Tutorial, though much improved recently, still requires constant attention. We also need to be constantly aware of the difficulties facing students and tutors encountering this material for the first time. We are continually re-thinking our experiments and demonstrations. Thanks to a recent generous grant, our labs have been beautifully remodeled, and much more equipment is available for spontaneous experiments. We need to find ways to encourage students to be more inventive with the new materials. The first semester dynamics manual is being rewritten,

with better translations, useful notes to difficult passages, and recently devised experiments. We still do not have the leisure to pursue all the avenues we want to: as always in the Laboratory, we are torn between the desire to discuss freely and the need to get to the end of the argument.

We begin the second semester with the pendulum, the vibrating string, and sound waves. Our primary sources here are Taylor and Euler for the wave equations, and Daniel Bernoulli for vibrating strings. This sequence needs a better introduction, perhaps through observing water waves. Many students never quite make the connection between the vibrating string and the equation so elegantly derived from it. We need to spend more time looking at simple phenomena and reflecting on the meaning of the mathematics that claims to provide a precise and widely applicable account of them.

Five years ago we began using a new Santa Fe manual for our final sequence (electricity and magnetism) in order to read more original papers. Last year we inaugurated a revision that maintains the intent of our Santa Fe colleagues. We begin with papers by Gilbert and others, in which mysterious phenomena of electricity and magnetism are described in vivid terms. Students experiment with simple materials (magnets, pith balls). There is practically no mathematical theory at this stage, but an interesting language slowly develops by which the phenomena may be described.

Next comes Faraday's *Experimental Researches*, where we are dazzled by Faraday's ability to let nature reveal itself through experiments. Faraday's prose is beautiful, comprehensive, and very difficult, partly because it lacks any direct reference to mathematics. We have set up many demonstrations and are inspired by his writing to improvise more. It is a challenge to the Laboratory to make adequate materials available for the most inquisitive students. During Faraday, the (artificial) division between discussion and experiment is most often obliterated: we often discuss a paragraph and rush to investigate some comprehensive notion.

We end with Maxwell's *Treatise* and other works. Maxwell tries to further Faraday's work by using the proper kind of mathematics as a way of articulating fundamental concepts. Maxwell's difficult mathematical treatment has been made accessible through many notes. Even when students are not fully able to grasp details, the power of his reasoning is able to illuminate such things as charge and induction. Nevertheless, we still need notes that provide a more intuitive grasp of the mathematics. Another problem is that there are very few experiments during the reading of Maxwell. Some tutors improvised experiments last year, but more permanent arrangements are needed. Maxwell's Equations and his prediction that an electromagnetic wave will travel at the speed of light are still the culminating pieces of the year.

Junior Laboratory is intellectually satisfying and pedagogically effective. Most students can do the work, even those not inclined toward physics; the readings reinforce the Junior Seminar in important ways. Conversations in the Laboratory are particularly exciting while students are reading Kant in Seminar. The readings and arguments follow one another coherently and cogently, and by the end of the year students feel a sense of genuine accomplishment.

Recommendations

The Instruction Committee should review the following:

- the optics sequence
- ways of encouraging more extracurricular use of the new lab facilities

- a new introduction to the sequence on waves
- a new introduction for our new version of Maxwell

c. Senior Laboratory

The fall semester of Senior Laboratory continues the study of the constitution of matter begun in the Freshman Laboratory, proceeding further into atomic structure, and brings together four areas of study from the junior year: classical mechanics, optics, wave motion, and electromagnetism. As in the Laboratories of the earlier years, students read, as far as possible, original accounts of experiments or interpretations of experiments, and perform, where possible, versions of the original experiments.

The readings deal with attempts to locate fundamental units of charge and matter, the notion of irreducible particles of energy, the proposal that light can be treated both as particle and wave, and the possibility that there are inherent limits to our understanding of the motion of "particles." The readings present an opportunity to discuss such topics as the nature of matter, time and space, the aims and status of mathematical descriptions of nature, and the possibility of certainty of knowledge. Too often in the Senior Laboratory, good discussions fail to occur. It can be difficult to bring classes to the point of being ready to discuss the larger questions raised by the readings (perhaps one reason why relatively few faculty members are willing to undertake the Senior Laboratory). The readings are often highly technical, and some rely heavily on mathematical expression. Most are written for specialists. The authors often omit steps in their arguments, and, as is often the case with first formulations, are not always clear. Such difficulties are not necessarily a hindrance and can present opportunities for discussing questions of interpretation. Although annotations in the manual often supply useful background information and mathematical derivations, students often have difficulty coming to even the most tentative conclusions about the more challenging papers.

Part of the problem is that it is sometimes hard to grasp what phenomena are being addressed. The difficulty goes beyond the minute dimensions with which atomic theory is concerned. Though wave mechanics is a study in dynamics, we rely mostly on static, monochromatic drawings as aids to visualization. Our videos are laughably old, they lack explanatory narrative, and they tend to render our students passive—a situation that runs counter to our radical understanding of the term "laboratory." We have recently updated the equipment for the few experiments that are done. We ought to update our supplementary materials for wave mechanics. A quick search of the Web locates simple programs that illustrate group velocity and produce dynamic simulations of the Schrödinger wave equation, some with 3-D graphics. These are superior to our videos in that they allow one to adjust values and to observe the effects of those adjustments. Such programs would at least allow students to engage in something approaching experimentation in the latter part of the semester. The laboratory preparation rooms are wired for Internet access, but at present lack the hardware needed to run the available software. The Director of Laboratories is planning to upgrade our computer hardware. As it stands, however, students perform no experiments in the second half of the semester.

We have few doubts about the inherent interest and merit of our studies. The work is provocative and threatens to overthrow the impressively grand theories studied in the junior year. With particularly able students, the fall semester can go almost as well as other tutorials. With students not as adept in technical matters, discussions can be halting

and intermittent. We need to make the more difficult readings more accessible (especially if we are serious about bringing more faculty into the Senior Laboratory). This task may require a more imaginative use of supplementary materials as well as a revision of the manual.

The Laboratory program ends as it began—with a study of living organisms. In the spring of the senior year, students finally confront the evidence and arguments for their modern views of evolution and genetics. The semester begins with Darwin and Mendel, proceeds to a synthesis by Chetverikov, and then traces developments in cellular and molecular biology. In addition, this work raises questions about whether there is purpose in nature, whether there are natural kinds, what distinguishes living from non-living, whether living things have a wholeness, and if so, what is responsible for it.

The readings up through Chetverikov work well. The Darwin and Mendel readings are not too technical, and students can usually grasp the intellectual tension between instability and stability. Chetverikov attempts to synthesize Darwin and Mendel in a paper clear and rich in examples. Then the situation changes. The experiments and arguments presented are often detailed, lengthy, and complex. But the findings—for example, that genes are located on chromosomes—are often well known to students from their pre-college experience with biology. For this reason, students can have trouble seeing the significance of some of the readings, and class discussions can be halting and sporadic. This problem is especially acute with the Jacob and Monod paper, the most difficult work of the semester. For several years, this paper has not really been a part of the program. A scheduling anomaly has resulted in spring semesters shortened by a week, so that for a few years there has been too little time to do justice to the paper and its suggestion of a cybernetic model for the workings of genetic control. Even in semesters of normal length, classes have had a difficult time working through this paper, which comes at the end of the year, when students lack the energy to focus on so dense a reading. Although the Jacob and Monod paper is the most problematic reading, others are also so technical that attempts to discuss larger questions seem forced.

Another difficulty with the spring semester is a lack of lab work—a problem that begins in the second half of the fall semester. Observing the effects of natural selection requires more time than is available to us, and many of the cellular processes studied are too small to be seen even with microscopes. The Laboratory in the spring becomes very text-centered, even though the subject is the development of the living organism. We need to afford better access to the phenomena under consideration. We should look into the possibility of acquiring skeletons and fossils and perhaps even documentaries on research into evolution. We should update our videos on mitosis and meiosis. If the structure of DNA is to continue to be one of our concerns, we need to have better instructional aids, including new models of the DNA molecule. Multimedia resources on DNA and cellular biology are available on the Web, so it would not be expensive to acquire materials.

The program of the spring semester seems less settled than that of the fall. The present reading list seems to validate what have become familiar ways of thinking, which makes the work of the spring appear less challenging than that of the fall. Some of the more technical readings may have to make way for readings in which the kinds of questions that we would like to raise emerge more powerfully.

Recommendations
The Instruction Committee should review the following:

- supplementary materials for the latter half of quantum mechanics (simulations, videos, etc.)
- supplementary materials for the study of biology (fossils, documentaries, new videos on mitosis and meiosis)

V. Freshman Music and the Sophomore Music Tutorial (Peter Kalkavage, Thomas May, Music Tutors)

a. Freshman Music
The purpose of Freshman Music is to prepare students for the work of the Sophomore Music tutorial. The preparation is two-fold: students learn (if they do not already know) the basics necessary for reading music notation, and sing great choral pieces that illustrate the musical elements studied in the Sophomore Tutorial. The class provides freshmen with a common musical experience, regardless of their formal education in music or personal taste. It meets once a week for two periods (two hours and forty minutes). Smaller classes are scheduled to address the needs of students who have little or no acquaintance with music. In the weekly choral meetings, students learn a variety of pieces, many of which are studied in detail in the sophomore year.

The materials of instruction for the class are the manual *Elements: A Workbook for Freshman Music* and the *Anthology for Freshman and Sophomore Music.* Both are published by the College and have been used for the past twelve years or so. The *Elements* workbook has served well its purpose of providing an introduction to music notation, and has not needed any substantial revision since it was first used in 1989. The *Anthology*, by contrast, has been revised yearly in response to our needs in and experience of the recently revised Sophomore Music tutorial (see below). It contains pieces sung in the choral meetings: canons, part songs and hymns, chants and motets, fugues, and choruses from opera and oratorio. Although the pieces vary from year to year, the ones essential to Sophomore Music are always done. The different selections become the signature pieces of the year, points of pride and comparison between successive freshman classes.

Freshman Music has improved dramatically in the last five years. Thanks to the spirited leadership of tutors and a much greater effort to connect Freshman and Sophomore Music, the student complaints noted in the 1993 Self-Study have diminished considerably. Most students now enjoy singing and bring their enthusiasm for it into the sophomore year. It is remarkable how students, whose tastes in music vary wildly, are brought together by a deep affection for Mozart's *Ave Verum Corpus* and Palestrina's *Sicut Cervus.* Having worked on various pieces, the freshmen sing them for the entire community at the end of each semester. This has become one of the College's most enjoyable traditions.

Since the class meets only once a week and many of the pieces learned are essential to Sophomore Music, there is an urgency in making every minute of class time count in the learning and perfecting of new music. The following arrangement seems to work well: during the notation classes, the chorus continues to meet and sing in sectionals. Sopranos and altos meet for the first half of the class, while tenors and basses meet in notation classes during the same time; then the order is reversed for the second half of the class. The efficiency of this arrangement is possible only through the work of the student music

assistants, who teach the three-week notation classes and are generally available for help during the evening music assistance hours. The assistants are competent and generally diligent about their duties. There is also a music assistant who serves as accompanist both for both sectionals and the entire chorus. This arrangement has significantly improved the pace at which freshmen learn new pieces, as the chorus can, from early on in the term, begin to read the music rather than merely follow the words of the score.

Though fewer tutors ask to lead this class than do the Sophomore Music tutorial (one must be able to sing and conduct), staffing has not been a problem: six different faculty have led the chorus over the last ten years. It is unlikely that any other class in the Program requires more energy of its tutor.

The two respects in which the tutor of this class must be especially vigilant are attendance and getting students to take and pass a quiz on musical elements. There are always a few students who persist in not taking the class seriously by showing poor attendance. A warning from the Assistant Dean's Office that a student is in danger of receiving a failing grade for poor attendance must, unfortunately, sometimes be used as a last resort.

For many years this class has met for about two-and-a-half hours on Thursday afternoons—not long before their seminar that evening. It would be better if this class met on Tuesday or Wednesday afternoons instead, when students would not be distracted by worries about completing difficult Seminar readings for that evening and Tutorial assignments for the next day.

Freshman Music and the Sophomore Music Tutorial now work together to form a coherent music program on the Annapolis campus. There is now much more coordination between the two classes, and rising sophomores enter the year with a firmer grasp of basics, a more usable repertory, and an enthusiasm for singing.

Recommendation

- The Instruction Committee should review the possibility of scheduling Freshman Music for Tuesday or Wednesday instead of Thursday.

b. Sophomore Music

This Tutorial has undergone significant revision since the last Self-Study. The sequence of topics and selection of musical pieces remain largely unchanged. But in addition to Victor Zuckerkandl's *The Sense of Music*, which has been used for many years, we now use a text called *Materials for Sophomore Music*—a carefully ordered sequence of readings and musical examples that unifies the year and, together with the new day-by-day schedule, makes the Tutorial more teachable than it had been before.

Our goal is not music appreciation, or acquaintance with music history, or the mastery of skills, but the attempt to understand music at its deepest, most elemental level. Sophomore Music has important connections with other Tutorials and with Laboratory. It also supports the Seminar in that three of the four years of Seminar contain a musical work: sophomores discuss Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, juniors Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and seniors Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde.*

The Tutorial covers melody, rhythm, music and ratio, texture and structure, early counterpoint, and tonal harmony. The melody section covers both tonal and modal melodies (chant). The section on rhythm explores measured music through dance rhythms and rhythmic periods. In the music and ratio segment, we read the musical

passages of Plato's *Timaeus* and discuss interval and ratio, the overtone series, and the problem of building a scale. In texture and structure, we examine the temporal organization of two short piano works by Schubert. In the counterpoint sequence (which tends to be our most successful part of the year), we study the phenomenon of "two or more melodies at one time" with readings from Zarlino's *Art of Counterpoint* and do a close study of works by Lassus, Josquin, and Palestrina. The first semester reaches its climax in the study of Palestrina's *Sicut Cervus*. The second semester begins with the elements of tonal harmony (the harmonic period, the formation of chords and cadences, sonata form) and proceeds to two compositions by Mozart: the motet *Ave Verum Corpus* and a movement from a piano sonata. Classes then spend several weeks on Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and a briefer period on a Mozart opera (most recently, *The Magic Flute*). As an aid to their learning, students do composition exercises and write roughly five papers over the course of the year.

It is appropriate that music be studied in the sophomore year. Many of the musical works we study have deep connections with the Bible, a central work of Sophomore Seminar. The study of music also fits the rest of the year, which, in addition to theological works, contains a great deal of poetry. The Tutorial studies several musical instances of circularity (the major scale, rhythmic periods, the harmonic period) and thus fits nicely with Ptolemy's attempt to find circles in the heavens and with Kepler's attempt to reveal a music of the spheres. It is impossible to study music seriously without reflecting on the soul as a principle of life, motion, perception, thought, and feeling. The Tutorial thus addresses a theme that is central to the Seminar and appears in the *Enneads* of Plotinus, Aristotle's *On the Soul*, and Dante's *Comedy*. Finally, since the Tutorial studies the mathematical basis of music by building on the ratios of Freshman Mathematics, it both keeps alive the spirit of the Greek cosmos and paves the way for the modern study of wave motion in the Junior and Senior Laboratories. Music is thus a bridge between ancient and modern conceptions of nature.

The "great books" here are the great musical works themselves. Zuckerkandl's text and the *Materials* manual are used only to help students approach these works with sufficient technical preparation and to raise fundamental questions like, How is a melody different from a random sequence of tones? What is time in music? What does it mean to *be* musical? Does music provide a possible bond between mathematics and nature?

Our study of great musical works is supported by weekly choral practica, in which two or three classes combine to sing isolated musical phenomena and pieces related to the work of the Tutorial. The choral practicum is the most successful addition in the last twenty-five years: more students than ever enjoy and profit from singing in Freshman Music and enter Sophomore Music eager to continue singing and to study the pieces they love. Choral singing is also an ongoing part of the life of classes, and most students find it perfectly natural to sing in these smaller groups.

One recent improvement is a handbook composed by a current senior. It contains piano accompaniments to some of the choral pieces studied in the Tutorial, a review of basics, and musical exercises for the practica. Another improvement is the recent, much-needed revision of the harmony section of the manual.

The role of student assistants varies with the needs and preferences of tutors. A tutor who does not play piano is usually assigned an assistant who does. The assistant attends classes, helps in leading discussion, supports the singing that goes on in class, and helps

students outside of class. A tutor may prefer not to use an assistant, though most tutors have found student assistants extremely helpful, if not absolutely necessary.

Students sometimes question the appropriateness of Zuckerkandl's *The Sense of Music* for the Tutorial. They do so on two grounds: that it puts forth a definite theory, and that, in spite of its virtues, it is not a "great book." By and large, however, tutors and students have been grateful for the text and find it useful in class, in spite of their disagreements with some of its teachings. The text raises fundamental questions, makes bold and interesting claims that beget lively discussion, and offers provocative images. It also introduces students to the elements and phenomena of music in a way that makes music accessible: the listener's experience always comes first.

Sophomore Music is at a high point in its history. It has always been the class most beset with student complaints and low tutor involvement. Complaints include, as indicated above, that we shouldn't read non-great books as central texts; that the point of the Tutorial wasn't clear; and that the analysis of musical works wasn't interesting. All this has started to change: student complaints are far fewer and less vociferous; there is more enthusiasm for the study of music among students; and more tutors are auditing the class and requesting to teach it. The main reason for the improvement is the new *Materials* manual, which, as stated earlier, organizes the various parts and musical pieces of the year into a highly intelligible whole.

In spite of this marked improvement, music continues to be our most difficult undertaking, and recent work by the Student Committee on Instruction points to the need for continued attention to student complaints. Now that more tutors are familiar with Sophomore Music, there should be more discussion of the goal of the Tutorial and the place of music within the curriculum. We need to do even more to attract faculty to the Tutorial and bring out connections between music and the rest of the Program. One possibility is to offer faculty seminars and study groups on musical topics. We also need to find ways of getting newer tutors to share the work of leading the practica. More of an effort should be made to help students and newer tutors learn their way around a piano keyboard so that they can play intervals, scales, cadences, and simple melodies.

The study of music at the College is unusually demanding: students must make an especially strong effort to be open to inquiry and to ideas that sometimes go against their cherished opinions, especially if they come with some previous music training; and tutors must raise provocative questions and strike the right balance between analysis and discussion. Then there is the fact that some people (tutors and students alike) are simply much better than others at hearing and identifying musical phenomena—a problem we continually face in the Tutorial. But though the road is at times rocky, the rewards are great, as those of us know who teach the Tutorial regularly, and whose wonder at the phenomena of music is perpetually renewed in the company of our students.

Recommendations

- The Instruction Committee should consider a faculty study group on a musical topic, perhaps a summer study group on tonal harmony.

VI. The Friday Night Lecture and Question Period (*Erik Sageng, Henry Higuera)

Listening to lectures profitably is a skill that requires practice like any other, and the Friday Night Lecture is the only place in the Program where students are exposed to extended, systematic, oral presentations of serious material. Students hear St. John's

tutors present their own work and thought in a way that would be inappropriate in tutorials or seminar discussions. Tutors and visiting lecturers present ideas and points of view that sometimes extend or deepen studies pursued elsewhere in the Program, sometimes challenge approaches and even principles common within the College. Students learn how things are done elsewhere, and are exposed to topics and fields of study not dealt with explicitly or extensively within the Program.

In the Question Period students are able to deepen their understanding of the material presented in the lecture by asking the speaker to explain something further. The conversation is broadened and often related to things studied in other parts of the Program as students and tutors discuss the issues raised by the lecture with the speaker and among themselves. This is one of the few occasions in which a large portion of the community can come together in a body for conversation. Indeed, once each semester Friday night is occupied with an All College Seminar, in which a non-program work is read, and tutors and students divide into seminars groups that cut across the four years of the Program. In the All College Seminar and at the more frequent Question Periods students and tutors converse, get to know each other, and learn from each other in ways that might never occur in regular classes. Those subsequent, smaller conversations in Seminars and Tutorials are often enriched by the ideas presented in lectures and the cross-fertilization provided by the question periods.

This effect on other classes can only occur, however, if the lectures and question periods are broadly attended so that they become part of the shared experience of the class, like the assigned text under discussion. Unfortunately, this is usually not the case. College-aged young people often have other ideas about what are appropriate Friday evening activities, and many of our students do not consider Friday night lectures an integral part of the Program. It is very disappointing how many students say they are not willing to attend lectures dealing with books they have not yet read, or on topics in which they do not believe themselves to be interested. Students sometimes point out that attendance by tutors is far from universal. Tutors with families especially find it difficult to spend a third night a week away from home.

We occasionally have a concert or a play at the normal lecture time on Friday night. As is the case with the material presented in most lectures, we study music and drama elsewhere in the program, but these works are not grasped in the same way under analysis and discussion in the classroom as they are when presented as coherent wholes in the auditorium—arguably in the manner in which the author or composer intended them to be received. These events are also similar to lectures in that they are performed by people who have devoted themselves for a time to the interpretation and presentation of these works.

The format of the Friday Night Lecture is long established and seems to be generally satisfactory. People who do attend regularly find them to be valuable and enjoyable, and often consider them to be a vital, integral part of the St. John's Program, but how to get people to attend regularly in order to come to this recognition remains a problem. It is very difficult to overcome the influence of upperclass students who demonstrate to newer students that lectures are not universally considered a required, important part of the Program. Attempts in the past to require attendance have proved impractical and embarrassing. It does seem that if students can be induced to attend regularly for a while early on, before being thoroughly corrupted in this respect, they often come to appreciate the lectures and continue to attend throughout their four years at the College. One way of

doing this might be to make regular, lecture-related writing assignments in Freshman Language, but this could come to interfere with the other work of that tutorial.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves whether we really believe that the lectures are an integral part of the Program. In order to address the problem of attendance at Friday Night Lecture, the dean recently proposed, and the faculty discussed, what alternatives to the lecture format might draw a larger number of students and tutors as well as suit the aims of the College. No consensus was reached on these alternatives, and our practice has remained largely unchanged. If we do believe that the Friday Night Lecture is an integral part of the Program, should we make it more emphatically clear to students that they are expected to attend regularly? It might be prudent, however, not to declare such a requirement unless we are prepared to require compliance in some way, and no acceptable and effective way of doing so has yet been proposed.

VII. Writing in the St. John's Program (*Jonathan Tuck, Joseph Macfarland)

Student writing at St. John's is a medium for personal, radical inquiry and the pursuit of wisdom. The role of writing is thus continuous with the role of spoken conversation. As with the spoken word, we do not approach writing technically, as a separable skill: we honor thoughtfulness, responsibility, cogent argumentation and personal self-exploration in writing as we do in speech. In the early years of the New Program, it was often said that St. John's is a talking college, and that the spontaneity and communality of spoken conversation should take precedence over writing. This claim is still accepted in principle—we do not write for the sake of writing—but in the last twenty-five years there has been a significant increase in the amount of writing assigned, as well as much reflection by the faculty and the Student Committee on Instruction about the place of writing in the Program.

Many institutions pay lip service to the notion of "writing across the curriculum." At St. John's it is a reality: students write expository essays in every part of the Program, including Mathematics Tutorials and Laboratories. They are discouraged from using secondary materials; they are asked to write essays, not theses or research papers. In the first three years of the Seminar, the annual essay is submitted to the seminar leaders and serves as the focus for a half-hour oral examination. The Senior Essay, considered by many students as a kind of culmination of their studies here, is written with an advisor over the space of several months, ending in a writing period of four weeks in which no classes are held. It is then given an hour-long public examination by a committee of three faculty members. Shorter papers are assigned by individual tutors in the Tutorials and Laboratories. Although individual practices vary, the Dean and the Instruction Committee have set minimum amounts of writing that are to be assigned, especially in the Language Tutorials, which are expected to discharge the largest part of the task of instruction in writing. In each class, occasions for writing are connected with the content of the curriculum; our refusal to offer a composition course as such springs from our conviction that the form and the content of student writing are inextricably linked.

In a number of ways, our practices with respect to writing set us apart from other colleges. Since our students write essays rather than research papers, we encourage them to use a personal style that is somewhat less formal than the norm. (The use of "I," for example, is usually welcomed.) At the same time, our emphasis on sustained sequences of deduction (especially in Mathematics Tutorials) can assist our students in making rigorous arguments; similarly, our study of Greek and French in the Language Tutorial

can make students more attentive to the grammar, syntax, and diction of their own sentences. Consistent with our public de-emphasis of letter grades, tutors never put a grade on a student paper; rather they respond evaluatively either with written comments or especially with individual writing conferences. Because our classes are always small, we are able to make the writing conference much more central in our writing instruction than it is at other institutions. Tutors are thus enabled to give a much more specific and nuanced response to a piece of student writing. Students are more likely to understand what they need to do in order to improve, and also get a powerful sense that what they write is being read with care. Tutors can individualize assignments with an eye to the needs of individual students, and they can monitor each student's development as a writer over the course of the year. In addition, two or three students, usually seniors or juniors, are appointed each year to serve as paid writing assistants, meeting individually with students who need writing help, especially with editing and revising. Thus our methods of working with student papers generally take into account the inescapable privateness of the activity of writing. (It is partly for these reasons that we encounter almost none of the plagiarism of written assignments that has reached epidemic proportions in many other colleges and universities.)

At the same time, students at St. John's encounter some distinctive difficulties in their writing. The first and biggest is unavoidable: since our students are extremely serious and self-motivated, and since everything they read is of such high quality, they can easily become intimidated. They feel that there is nothing they can write that is worthy of the book they are writing about. They need to be reminded again and again that it is imprudent, and unfair to themselves, to try to compete with Plato, or Shakespeare, or Darwin. Even if they avoid this pitfall, the sheer richness and density of the books and topics they write about often makes articulation and organization more difficult. In consequence, it sometimes happens that a student who wrote fluently and gracefully before coming to St. John's falls prey to writer's block; this hazard is especially present when students are working on annual essays. Some tutors have suggested that it might help to make space in the Language Tutorials for excellent examples from the English essayists, to be used as role models; but doing so would require dropping something from an already crowded year. A more promising suggestion is that we try to demystify the writing process by assigning more short papers, less formal than the usual 6 to 8-page essay and with less "lead time." Some tutors have used journal writing for this purpose as well. The Student Committee on Instruction (SCI), in its forum on writing, voiced the desire of the students for more and shorter writing assignments.

The faculty may encounter a corresponding problem, since student prose is likely to be less inspiring than the other things they read. Some tutors need to be reminded to be generous in praising what is praiseworthy in student papers, as well as pointing out shortcomings. At times during the school year the volume of student writing can be almost overwhelming for the tutor, even with our small classes, and acute sensitivity to a student's individual needs is correspondingly harder to muster. It is important to remember that students learn to write by writing, even more than by getting full and elaborate responses to that writing. We need to seek out ways to diversify our means of responding. One helpful tactic is to encourage students to share their papers with each other, or involve another student in a three-person paper conference.

A second distinctive St. John's difficulty is that students become accustomed to the collective investigation of a question through seminar-style conversations. They are very

capable of articulating deep questions or insights, but without a response from the class these can remain undeveloped, isolated *aperçus*. Thus students here may be less able to sustain a line of inquiry or develop a question on their own, as paper-writing demands. When writing annual essays, especially the Senior Essay, students may develop a dependency on the faculty advisor to draw out the consequences of their thoughts and suggestions; the advisor must thus walk a fine line, offering help but not too much help. Students need to be shown how their assertions generate further questions, or intelligent disagreements that are not mere straw men, and then how to use these to advance their inquiries; they need to internalize the conversation and make their papers more dialectical. Rewriting that is substantive, not merely cosmetic, can deepen and complexify an argument by incorporating suggestions or objections from a tutor, a writing assistant or another student; but eventually we want students to be able to generate this development from within. The SCI has expressed the students' desire for more occasions for rewriting, not just as a "punishment" for substandard work but as a general procedure to make us live with our writing in a more continuous and integrated way. On the other hand, a blanket assignment that the whole class rewrite a paper loses the specificity of individualized writing instruction; sometimes it is more valuable for a given student to undertake a new assignment, rather than rewriting an old one.

Tutors often come to St. John's without much experience in the teaching of writing. Since they all are expected to teach across the curriculum, they may need some additional support from the College in dealing with student papers. The freshman archons, especially the Freshman Language archon, can help with this task; there are also a few tutors with more extensive experience in this area who can offer specific techniques and gimmicks. In general, the faculty deals very well with the content of the papers and with their argumentation, but is less successful in relating this content to formal, mechanical, and stylistic features of student writing. Paper conferences sometimes turn into stimulating conversations about the question a paper addresses, losing sight of the particular formulations in the paper itself. Tutors must remember to allocate time and attention, in conferences or in written comments, to the form of the paper, not as separable from the content but as necessarily connected with it. Grammatical and stylistic difficulties are too important to be left to the student writing assistants, although the assistants can be of great help to certain student writers. Just as we need to provide more support for newer tutors in dealing with student papers, we should also provide it in the course of training each year's writing assistants. One possible venue for faculty development in this area could be the orientation sessions for new and recently appointed tutors during the fall term; another meeting could be added which addresses issues of student writing. The Dean and Instruction Committee should consider the questions of the training of writing assistants and of providing assistance to newer faculty in this area.

Because writing at St. John's is more informal, personal and exploratory, students who adapt successfully to our ways may need to retool their writing process when they write for a different community of readers, either in applications for jobs, fellowships and graduate study or else after they graduate. It seems that very few of them find this further adaptation to be very difficult; but they need to be warned about the differences. We must not forget that as a practical matter, students will often need to find a different written voice once they leave here, or rather to learn to vary and control their style so that they can use several voices. The Placement Office is often a good resource for students who seek to diversify their writing, especially in application essays and letters.

Attention to student writing has improved greatly in recent years, and should now count as a strength, rather than a deficiency, in our curriculum. While we may not always be satisfied with the quality of our students' writing, most of our practices for improving it are sound and valuable, provided that we can find the energy to implement them. Relative to the state of the art in higher education generally, there is no "writing problem" at St. John's. Viewed as products, our students' papers measure up pretty well against those of students at other institutions; but they are even more impressive as part of a process of intellectual development and increased autonomy and thoughtfulness. If writing at St. John's is not absolutely everything that we want it to be, the reason is the high standard we set for ourselves.

VIII. Afterword (Marilyn Higuera, Tutor and member of the Steering Committee)

The primary texts for the undergraduate program are drawn exclusively from the Western tradition. As our Mission Statement explains, these books form a coherent tradition of the highest quality. Although we value extensive, adventurous reading of excellent books, whatever their source and context, our Mission in undergraduate education is to provide, as a foundation for such reading, a focused, critical examination of the presuppositions and conclusions of our own intellectual inheritance. We are forced to excerpt works and omit important developments even within this tradition, taking care not to let the desire for completeness dilute students' concentrated participation in a dialectic provoked by the books we have chosen. In its regular reviews of the curriculum, the Instruction Committee constantly seeks to achieve the right balance between adding works that might illuminate our inquiries and providing enough time for deep reflection and serious examination of works already on the Program.

Time must be provided not only to digest the books we read, but also to acquire the skills requisite to getting the most from an inquiry into them. The division of the Program into Mathematics, Language, and Music Tutorials, Laboratory, and Seminar reflects our concern for the acquisition of skills associated with the liberal arts. This division is not intended to partition knowledge into subject areas; it does allow us, however, to emphasize and cultivate certain activities. In Mathematics Tutorials, for example, we practice reasoning logically, speaking precisely, and exercising the imagination; in Language Tutorials, we refine our understanding of grammar, develop an awareness of rhetoric, and work to capture nuances of expression; in the Music Tutorial, we attend to the elements of our experience of beauty; in Laboratory, we train our powers of observation and evaluate different modes of explanation. If students are to develop and improve these skills, they must regularly practice them in public by demonstrating proofs at the board, translating passages, parsing sentences, articulating theories, asking questions, venturing answers. This emphasis on activity necessitates Tutorial and Laboratory class sizes of thirteen to sixteen students. Every year, the Instruction Committee reviews the teaching slate for the following year and assesses prospective class sizes, placing a high priority on classes small enough for students to exercise and discipline their powers of reasoning.

The curriculum is, for the most part, organized chronologically. Nevertheless, we do not study history as such: our students are often unaware of the historical context for what they read. Our goal is to offer them unmediated confrontation with the greatest ideas, so that they learn to examine these ideas for themselves. On the other hand, in the course of their studies students read seminal works of history by Thucydides and

Herodotus. They read Nietzsche and Hegel, who transform the notion of history and its relation to us. And they study founding documents of the American republic and pivotal Supreme Court decisions that guide its further development. Hence, our students do reflect on history, the purpose of studying history, what distinguishes history from myth, and the principles of American government. More generally, students also discern the interconnected unfolding of ideas that constitute our intellectual history. We do not, strictly speaking, study "the Greeks" or "the Middle Ages" or "the Enlightenment." We resist categorizing authors as representatives of epochs, and we encourage students to entertain the possibility that the ideas of any given book are timeless and relevant rather than culturally determined.

Chapter Two: THE PROGRAM OF EDUCATION
Section B: Non-Undergraduate Educational Programs and Activities (MSCHE XIII; AALE 8, 10, 11)

Subsection 1: The Graduate Institute
(*William Pastille, Director of the Graduate Institute; Michael Dink, former Director; Thomas May, former Director; John Verdi, member of the Instruction Committee and former Director)

History and Mission. In the summer of 1967, the Santa Fe campus began an experimental project called The Teachers' Institute in Liberal Education. It was designed as a certificate program for public-school teachers who had been fairly well trained to dispense information, but usually not to be advocates for active, lifelong learning. It was thought that participation in the College's approach to learning might increase their own love for great books and fundamental ideas, and that their students, perceiving their teachers' enthusiasm, might also come to love learning instead of merely collecting information. Within a short time, the program began to attract non-teachers—adults with college degrees who wanted to read the books on the program with other adults. As a result, the decision was made to offer a master's degree, and the name of the program was changed to The Graduate Institute in Liberal Education. In 1978, the Annapolis campus also began to offer the program of graduate study.

Like the undergraduate College, the Graduate Institute seeks to promote among its students an enduring appreciation for, and a critical understanding of, our common intellectual heritage; to encourage a profound awareness of the ethical and social obligations incumbent on us as communal and political beings; and to lay the foundation for an abiding interest in serious inquiry concerning fundamental questions.

Unlike the undergraduate College, however, the Graduate Institute aims its educational efforts at adults. Some have completed an undergraduate degree; some have completed a graduate or professional degree; and many have significant life experience outside of institutions of learning. Thus, while the undergraduate program tries to establish habits of liberal learning in the young, who are still in the process of being formed, the Graduate Institute must try to refashion and supplement habits designed for specialized or professional learning. In this regard, the mission of the Institute is somewhat more difficult than that of the undergraduate program, and requires more diligent effort from both faculty and students.

Curriculum. The Graduate Institute offers the degree of Master of Arts in Liberal Arts to students who complete four semesters of study. St. John's is one of about 150 institutions offering a master's degree in liberal studies, and was one of the founding members of the professional organization for these programs, the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs. Our course of study, however, is unique: whereas other programs are usually interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary, allowing students to select courses for two or more disciplines according to their interests with perhaps a few required core courses, our curriculum is transdisciplinary and, for the most part, required. This is because our graduate program, like the undergraduate program, is rooted in the belief that a truly liberal education—an education that liberates one from unseen limitations caused by unexamined prejudices and assumptions—requires a study of great books, which are the original sources of the ideas that have shaped Western civilization.

In our opinion, this study is best effected by direct confrontation with these sources in cooperative discussion by small groups of students and faculty, who are jointly responsible for investigating the authors' thoughts, clarifying divergent interpretations, and testing various conclusions.

The curriculum is divided into five subject-categories or "segments": History; Literature; Mathematics and Natural Science; Philosophy and Theology; and Politics and Society. The segments allow for flexible progress through the program for adults, many of whom have responsibilities to family and career. Each segment is composed of three classes: a Seminar, which reads and discusses a series of great books in roughly chronological order; a Tutorial, which focuses on a few great books or on smaller sections of books for closer reading; and a Preceptorial, which spends a whole semester studying a single text, or a few related texts on a particular topic, chosen and led by different members of the faculty each term. Each class is worth 3 credits, each segment worth 9, and 36 credits are required for the degree. All classes are kept small, in order to facilitate discussion. Seminars have two tutors and 16-18 students; tutorials have one tutor and 10-14 students; preceptorials have one tutor and 8-12 students.

The process of curricular assessment is continuous, but change is incremental. Every semester, members of the faculty make recommendations for possible changes in the reading lists; these are collected by the Director of the Institute and brought before the Graduate Institute Committee for consideration. Major changes require deliberation by the Instruction Committee and consultation with the Santa Fe campus in order to ensure uniformity of the program on the two campuses.

The most recent changes have been the addition of the Master's Essay (1994) and the Ancient Greek Language Preceptorial (1995). In the latter, students learn Greek grammar and translate excerpts from classic texts. Many continue their study of Greek in the next semester through translation of extended excerpts from a single work by Plato or Homer. The Master's Essay, which takes the place of one preceptorial, offers the opportunity for sustained, highly concentrated study of a text or author. Students who opt for the Essay meet regularly with a faculty advisor, who oversees the student's inquiry and writing. Once the Essay is accepted by a three-member committee of tutors, the student undergoes a public, hour-long oral examination, modeled after the examination of the undergraduate Senior Essay. Both additions were in direct response to student demand. They have been highly effective in promoting more concentrated and prolonged study, are popular among students, and serve to strengthen the graduate curriculum by bringing it somewhat closer to the model provided by our undergraduate program of study.

Faculty. The faculty of the Graduate Institute consists primarily of senior, tenured members of the St. John's faculty. This was the intention from the beginning of the Institute, and remains the intention: the effectiveness of the graduate program depends on tutors who know how the books studied there relate to the undergraduate program. Practical considerations cooperate in realizing this intention, since the first responsibility of junior tutors is to make progress in teaching as much of the undergraduate program as possible.

Fluctuations in enrollment have made it advisable to invite Visiting Tutors to teach in the Institute. They are selected on the basis of their ability to guide discussion, not on the basis of any special expertise. The practice of inviting Visiting Tutors has been very helpful in giving the Dean flexibility in devising the teaching slate for the College, and in

providing flexibility of membership in the community of learning. The latter benefit consists in building friendships with people from other institutions, and in allowing room on our teaching faculty for tutors who do not wish to seek permanent, full-time positions. In keeping with the intention of maximizing the number of experienced tutors in the Institute, the College has recently made, and will continue to make, an effort to minimize its dependence on Visiting Tutors. The need for these tutors will decrease substantially with the elimination of the January freshman program. When the College no longer must accommodate an influx of undergraduates in January as well as an influx of Graduate Institute students, it should be possible to greatly decrease fluctuations in the number of tutors available for teaching in the Institute.

Students. The student body of the Graduate Institute is quite heterogeneous, comprising a wide range of age, cultural background, and professional expertise. What unites the student body is a strong desire to read and discuss the books of the graduate program. Almost all students in the Institute feel that their previous education failed them in not giving them enough opportunity to approach great books directly, and they are on the whole extremely enthusiastic about having a second chance to do so. This shared enthusiasm promotes a seriousness and sense of community that impresses them while they are here and stays with them after they leave. Recent surveys by the Career Counseling Office and the Advancement Office have shown that graduates of the Institute have an even greater level of satisfaction with their St. John's education than alumni of the undergraduate program (see Support Documents).

In the first ten years of the Institute in Annapolis, about half the student body was composed of teachers. Since then, the number of teachers has declined, in large part due to the evaporation of government and foundation support for teacher grants that promoted advanced study in the liberal arts. In an effort to stave off this decline, and to shore up the Institute's original commitment to teachers, the directors of the Institute inaugurated the St. John's Teachers Grant a few years ago. This is a form of preferential financial-aid packaging that decreases the loan portion of any financial-aid award and replaces it with grant money from the College, thus reducing substantially the tuition cost for teachers with financial aid as compared to non-teachers with financial aid. The grant is still fairly new, and it will take some time to evaluate whether it actually helps to prevent continued decline in the number of teachers who attend the Institute.

The College has decided that the optimal number of students in the Institute is approximately 80 during the fall and spring terms; during the summer term there are usually 45-50. Altogether, then, the three-term academic year would have approximately 210 students. In 2001-2002, there were about 185, whereas projections for 2002-2003 show that we will have almost exactly the optimal 210.

Assessment of Student Learning. Evaluation of the learning of Graduate Institute students appears in Chapter Four, Section A.

Evaluation of the Current Program of Study. In his *Statement of Policy and Program* for the Graduate Institute of March 2001, the Director of the Institute observed that the graduate program is "solid, successful, and has met the test of time" (see Support Document). But he also encouraged the faculty "to begin thinking of what an ideal program of liberal education for adults would be, even if we do not foresee having the

means or desire to offer such a program." Implicit in this call to consider an ideal program is the possibility that the current program, though successful, is not ideal, and that a different program would represent more adequately the College's views concerning adult education.

At least one reason why the current program may not be ideal is that the historical circumstances surrounding its formation became embodied both in its curriculum and in its structure. The division of the material into subject-categories was thought appropriate to the expectations of public-school teachers in the late 1960's, while at the same time being comprehensive enough to ensure a liberal, transdisciplinary experience when taken as a whole. The choice to hold classes in the evenings on only two days a week during the academic year was thought necessary to attract and retain full-time working adults when the Institute first expanded beyond the summer term. The practice of allowing entering students to begin with any segment currently being offered was thought necessary to ensure maximum stability in the enrollment numbers from term to term, once the Institute grew large enough to offer more than one segment at a time. These practices might well be at odds with what the College considers the best possible program of study for adults.

In pursuing the search for the ideal program for adults, it is useful to contrast the graduate program with our undergraduate program, which embodies our model for liberal education. There are four significant differences between the two programs. First, as was stated above, the graduate curriculum is divided into segments based on subject-categories, whereas the undergraduate curriculum is not. Second, classes in the Graduate Institute always combine new students with those who are more experienced in the program, whereas undergraduate classes are composed of students at the same level of study. Third, students in a given Graduate Institute class have not all read the same texts, whereas the opposite is true of undergraduate classes. And fourth, by contrast with the undergraduate program, the graduate curriculum does not have required classes devoted to the arts of the trivium and quadrivium. The Mathematics Tutorial in the Mathematics and Natural Science segment, and the Ancient Greek Language Preceptorial, offer students the opportunity to study these arts, but no segment of the graduate program, and therefore no class, is currently required.

Each of these differences has advantages and disadvantages. The division into subject categories means that students in the Institute are more likely than undergraduates to juxtapose ancient and modern texts effectively, since their readings run the gamut in each segment. On the other hand, they do not experience, as our undergraduates do constantly, the interconnections among different texts in a single tradition. New students in the Institute can be helped in each of their classes to adapt to our mode of learning by the more experienced students. On the other hand, the discussion seldom attains the degree of cohesion and focus that we witness in our best junior and senior undergraduate classes, where students who have been working together for several years sometimes achieve remarkable feats of cooperative learning. The fact that Graduate Institute students in a given class have been exposed to different parts of the curriculum reinforces the notion that anyone can learn from anyone. On the other hand, the polite avoidance of reference to texts that others have not read seriously limits the range of discussion. Finally, not requiring classes devoted to the skills of the trivium and quadrivium in the graduate curriculum makes it possible for students to read many more great books than would otherwise be possible. But students who have not cultivated these skills elsewhere may

not be sufficiently prepared to encounter the texts directly. Furthermore, students in the Institute do not experience the benefits, as our undergraduates do, of dwelling with details and examining the elements of language, mathematical demonstration, and scientific argument and experiment.

When these pluses and minuses are weighed against one another, it seems at least plausible that students in the Graduate Institute might be better served by a curriculum that more resembled the undergraduate program. But how, and to what extent, should the undergraduate program serve as a model for any revision of the graduate program? And would any revision work, given the apparent need for flexibility in scheduling?

One possibility, which has been outlined by a former Director, would be to devise a required, introductory segment similar to the undergraduate freshman-year curriculum. This would be followed by three segments more or less like those currently offered: readings in the current segments of the program would have to be adjusted as a consequence of this change. The required segment would address the most serious lack in the current program by offering students a common intellectual foundation, as well as common, foundational texts to which students could refer in subsequent segments. If the required introductory segment included Euclid, as would surely be the case, then it would address all four of the disadvantages listed above.

It must be emphasized, however, that any change in the curriculum might seriously jeopardize the advantages of the current program. A required initial segment would put pressure on the Institute to fill that one segment whenever it was offered. The likely result is that in some terms we would be short of students, while in other terms we would be forced to turn students away—exigencies that might very well be fatal for such a small program. Finally, it is possible that, after careful deliberation, the College would decide that our current program is, after all, not only the most practicable but also the best program for our adult students.

Recommendation

- The College should reevaluate the Graduate Institute program in order to decide: whether the current program adequately represents our notion of the best liberal education for adults; if not, whether a required first segment would make the program more adequate; and whether practical obstacles to implementing this segment can be overcome.

Subsection 2: Educational Outreach Activities

(*William Pastille, Director of the Graduate Institute; Alice Chambers, Assistant to the Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations; Kathy Dulisse, Director of Community Programs, Christopher Nelson, President of the College; George Russell, Tutor; Walter Sterling, Tutor and member of the Instruction Committee)

The Graduate Institute is an extension of the undergraduate program—an extension that provides many of the benefits sought for in outreach activities. As our Mission Statement says, "The Graduate Institute . . . embodies an already established mode by which the College makes a considerable, ongoing investment in reaching out beyond its core mission of undergraduate liberal education." In addition to this large-scale effort, the College makes its approach and resources available, within the limits set forth in the Mission Statement, to local communities and the nation at large, through various other activities.

Over the years, many regular activities administered by the Advancement Office have become permanent additions to the College's efforts. Those not directly related to the Program include the Fine Arts Workshops, the Mitchell Art Gallery (see report on the Gallery), the Maryland History Series, the Sailboat Picnic, and the St. John's Kite Fly. Activities more closely related to the discussion of great texts and to our Mission include the annual Saturday Seminar for interested members of the Annapolis community, and tutor-led Executive Seminars in Annapolis, Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, DC. For many years, the College has also offered a Continuing Education Program, primarily for local residents. The eight-week program includes tutor-led seminars and preceptorials, and sometimes, in addition, non-tutor-led classes in voice, sculpture, and creative writing.

All these activities have proved successful, and the College plans to continue them. There are always requests to extend some current activities or to initiate new ones. Consideration of such requests must always address these factors that have guided the choice of outreach activities in the past: whether the activity fulfills the College's desire to extend our educational Mission to people of all ages who wish to engage in the life of the mind; whether it fulfills the College's civic responsibility at both the local and national levels; whether it extends or supplements the learning or growth of our students beyond what is offered in the curriculum; whether it offers advancement opportunities; how closely the activity is related to our core Mission; and whether it will overextend the resources of time, energy, and attention of faculty and staff. Different activities present different combinations of advantages and disadvantages regarding these six factors. Each proposal must be considered individually and on its own merits. To ensure that outreach activities are consistent with our Mission, and are not an overextending of resources, the College should continue its current practice regarding oversight.

The College also contributes to the wider world of American education through presentations by faculty at meetings of the Association of Core Texts and Courses (ACTC), collaboration with members of other institutions in the construction of grant proposals on liberal learning, contributions to various periodicals on education, and review of great books programs at other colleges and universities.

An issue that should receive more attention in the near future is the relation between outreach activities and the Alumni Office. The College regards alumni as both permanent members of the College community and excellent representatives of the College to the rest of the world.

Recommendations

- All outreach activities should continue to be subject to approval by the Dean and Instruction Committee.
- All College-wide outreach activities should be subject to approval by the Dean and Instruction Committee on both campuses.
- We should think about how outreach efforts could make more and better use of our alumni and of the Alumni Office.

Chapter Two: THE PROGRAM OF EDUCATION

Section C. Student Admissions and Financial Aid (MSCHE VIII, AALE 6, C8-C14)

(*John Christensen, Director of Admissions; Caroline Christensen, liaison and Director of Financial Aid; Roberta Gable, Director of Placement; Barbara Goyette, Vice President of Advancement; Dorcey Rose, Associate Director of Admissions; Jo-Ann Mattson, Director of Alumni Activities)

Admissions Policies and Procedures. Just as its academic program differs from those offered at more conventional institutions, so St. John's admissions policies and procedures depart significantly from those at most institutions. There is no deadline and no fee; applications are accepted on a rolling basis. A lengthy set of essays replaces the typical personal statement. Standardized test scores are not required in most cases. Decisions are usually given two weeks after a file is complete, and deposits are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until the class is full.

In part, these practices underscore that the St. John's Program is radically different from liberal arts education elsewhere. More importantly, they arise from the College's Mission. Our primary goal is not to put together a freshman class with a predetermined profile based on GPA, Class Rank, SAT averages, and so on. Instead, we hope to bring together students with genuine interest in learning through reading and discussing seminal works of Western civilization, and remain open to as wide a range of student ability and background as possible. In terms of conventional indicators like class rank or SAT scores, our admissions process may appear selective, but that is mostly a function of the "self-selective" nature of our applicant pool rather than of conscious intent in application decisions. We do not consider our Program elitist, nor do we believe that it is beyond the reach of all but "the best" students. Rather, we believe that our Program is within the abilities of, and benefits, those who have completed a standard college preparatory program with reasonable success.

Our application policies and procedures are clearly articulated, along with their rationale, most fully in the *Statement of the St. John's Program* (the catalogue), in several secondary publications (see Viewbook, How to Apply, and Application Packet) and on the College's website. The Admissions Office makes every effort to insure that prospective students receive this information in a sequence that will educate the student about our Program and the College's approach to admissions, and encourage applications from only those for whom the Program is appropriate. Similarly, the lengthy essays at the core of the application are an intentional stumbling block: we want students to think carefully about their reasons for being interested in St. John's, and hope that the essay requirement will discourage inappropriate applications.

Admissions Publications. In 1996 a marketing study was conducted for the College by Neustadt Creative Marketing of Baltimore, Maryland. This study resulted in a comprehensive redesign of all admissions materials and the development of an "image program" for all College publications. The two admissions mailers (used in Student Search and mass-mailings), Viewbook (used in response to mailings or other initial inquiries), Program Statement (catalogue with application forms), Visit Leaflet (describing the extended campus visit program), and Careers Leaflet (outlining graduate school and career patterns of our alumni) were all given a face-lift while retaining most of their original texts. Many prospective students note that our materials are nearly unique among hundreds they receive, and say that they appreciate our efforts to be clear about what we offer, and why, instead of attempting to be all things for all students.

Often the praise comes from those who have decided St. John's is not for them—perhaps the surest sign of our success in distinguishing our Program from those offered elsewhere.

Our catalogue clearly and accurately states admissions requirements, academic requirements, and responsibilities for enrolled students; it also contains general information about judging academic progress, students' right to privacy, and so forth. The College's two Initial Mailers are reviewed every two years and revised as appropriate, as are the Viewbook, Careers Leaflet, and Visit Leaflet. The Financial Aid Leaflet (see section below) is revised annually and regularly distributed to prospective students, parents, counselors, and others. Secondary publications, like the How to Apply leaflet or the Application Packet, are reviewed and revised annually.

Student Financial Aid. Our financial aid program is entirely need-based: its sole purpose is to enable qualified applicants with inadequate resources to attend the College. Financial aid is not used as a marketing ploy, a leveraging strategy, or to manipulate the composition of the student body. Our aid program is consistent with the College's individualized, non-competitive approach to learning.

Policies and procedures regarding financial aid are clearly articulated in the catalogue and the Financial Aid Leaflet. Once a prospective student initiates an application for financial assistance, the Financial Aid Office provides detailed information about resources and instructions for completing an application. Comprehensive information about both federal and institutional aid programs is included with notification of eligibility letters sent by the Aid Office.

We submit audited financial statements and a compliance audit to the Department of Education on an annual basis. Audits are conducted by the accounting firm, Mullen, Sondberg, Wimbish, and Stone. Copies of both reports are available. Our Official Cohort Default Rate data is available on the Department of Education's website.

As student recruitment is inextricably related to student financial aid, the Admissions Director is an *ex officio* member of the Financial Aid Committee and directly involved in the development and implementation of financial aid policy. Financial aid policy is reviewed annually by the Financial Aid Committee (which includes the President, Dean, Treasurer, Assistant Dean, and Admissions Director) in advance of the fall recruitment season to assess the previous year's results, to anticipate difficulties in the upcoming year, and to adjust policy in light of the College's overall budget. The committee meets regularly through the awarding cycle to consider appeals and difficult cases. Its members are in frequent contact throughout the spring to consider any implications of last minute adjustments in class size and balance of aid to non-aid recipients. Close cooperation between the Admissions and Financial Aid staffs is essential to managing the College's tuition discount rate and securing enrolled classes of the desired size and composition. Typically, the College enrolls a freshman class with 45-50% receiving institutional grant aid and over the last 4 years has brought its discount rate down from 34.6% to 28%.

Recruitment Activities. The Admissions Office is responsible for the annual recruitment and enrollment of fall and January freshman classes of approximately 108-126 and 20-30 students respectively. Recruitment activities of the Admissions Office fall into four categories: campus visits, recruitment travel, an alumni representative program, and electronic media. All are regularly reviewed in light of our Mission and adjusted in

response to changing circumstances. Since the College's use of electronic media has increased dramatically in the last ten years, this report will concentrate on that effort after reviewing the other recruitment activities.

Our main campus visit program accommodates about 450 prospective students per year. The visit entails a tour, overnight stay, visits to freshman classes, and an interview (see Annapolis Visit leaflet). We know from surveys of entering freshmen that the visit is often the single most important factor in their decision to enroll, and we have taken care to construct a program that is both friendly and frank. Given the unique nature of the academic program and the way in which it colors campus social life, we want the visit to provide a realistic introduction, pro and con, to student life at St. John's. The visit is strongly encouraged but not required. Typically, 65% of an entering class will make this extended stay on campus. Others take advantage of the shorter visit program instituted in 1996. Both programs are described in more detail in Recruitment Programs (a document generated during the self-study process).

The Admissions Office concentrates its travel efforts on visits to high schools east of the Mississippi River (the Santa Fe Admissions Office represents the College to high schools west of the Mississippi River). The program seems to be operating at its optimal level given the size of the College and the uniqueness of its appeal. In addition to the domestic travel program, the Admissions Office travels to 10-15 international schools each year: our goal is to attract a small but steady flow of international students or American students with extensive international experience in order to add diversity to our student body. As with the tracking of most statistics for St. John's, small numbers make the assessment of our travel program difficult. We do track travel efforts as sources for inquiries and for applicants (see applicant source reports in Support Documents), and we do see results, but most decisions about where and when to travel arise from judgments made from experience on the road about what seems productive.

Over the past 10 years, the College has increased its use of alumni representatives in its recruitment efforts. St. John's alumni are generally supportive of the College and eager to introduce people to its distinctive Program. The Admissions Office maintains a program in which about 700 alumni participate. (For a fuller description, see Recruitment Programs in Support Documents).

Increasingly, the Internet and other forms of electronic media are becoming central to student recruitment. Over the last few years, email has become the single largest first source of inquiry among those who eventually apply to the Annapolis campus. In order to sustain its recruitment effort, the Admissions Office needs to exploit opportunities in this relatively new medium.

The existing website works reasonably well in support of the Admissions Office's traditional recruitment efforts, but needs to become more central. However, it must not be over-developed with audio/visual features that detract from the text-based presentation appropriate to our Program. Students interested in St. John's are readers, after all: we need to provide them with the extensive written descriptions and explanations of the Program available in the College's traditional publications, while taking advantage of the flexibility a website affords. Current plans for revising the College's website acknowledge this crucial point while including needed features enumerated in the recommendations below. Similarly, those plans acknowledge the appropriateness of a single main page for the College's two Admissions Offices, reinforcing the message of

"one Program on two campuses," while affording secondary pages for campus-specific matters like virtual tours, directions, schedules for visit programs, and so on.

Should the College develop other electronic media for recruitment purposes? Independent websites for student recruitment spring up every day, and the Admissions Office is besieged with advertisements for them and requests to fill out surveys online to keep them updated. Similarly, we are inundated with offers for CD Rom mailers and email management programs. Virtually all these schemes, however, seem to insert an unnecessary "middle man" between prospective students and the College, given the very nature of the Internet itself. We have therefore decided to put our limited resources into the development of our own website rather than attempt to maintain a presence on every available independent one. We do, however, intend to continue our participation in combined print/internet listings like those available through major vendors such as Peterson's Guides or the College Board.

Another area of electronic communication that seems worth exploring is mass mailing by email. There is great potential for savings and speed through email reminders and notices that are now sent through the postal service. The challenge here is to develop a style of communication consistent with the College's highly personalized correspondence with prospective students and the publications it sends them. Work is currently being done to make it possible for our computer system to automatically upload the email addresses made available through the College Board's Student Search and through information available through electronic transmissions of test score information and vendors like Peterson's.

Admissions Staffing and Facilities. The Admissions Staff is composed of a Director, 3 professional staff (an Associate Director and 2 admissions counselors), and 2 clerical staff. It is supplemented by a host of student aides who focus on clerical tasks and tours for visitors. The addition of a second clerical staff member two years ago freed the Admissions Secretary to function as an office manager, overseeing the myriad details of the visiting program, non-routine correspondence, inventory, student aide schedules, and so on, thus bringing some order and calm to what had become an impossibly chaotic and hectic daily pace.

Training in the basic functions of our computer system is adequate, but most staff members remain untrained in programs like Excel or Access, or in more advanced word-processing functions like mail merges, and are thus not using the potential of our computer capacity efficiently. The Jenzebar/Quodata software designed to manage the applicant pool is a mixed blessing. Data entry is fairly straightforward, as is routine report and letter generation, but ad hoc report writing is too difficult for the end user in the Admissions Office and must be left to the IT staff; the system is fraught with bugs and glitches of one sort or another, and key links either do not exist or do not function well. Finally, the databases of the Annapolis and Santa Fe Admissions Offices are not integrated.

While the Admissions Office is adequately staffed for the foreseeable future, office space remains a problem. The reception area is attractive and adequate, but the main office is too small for the 4 staff members and student aides who must share it. Similarly, the basement work area is barely large enough to accommodate the Associate Director's office, computer terminals, files, and brochures that must be stored there.

Recruitment, Enrollment, and Retention. In recent years, the Admissions Office has met most of the College's enrollment goals with relative ease: we have been able to meet our target for class size while maintaining quality (as measured in terms of capacity and desire to do the Program) and geographical diversity (over 30 states and 2 or 3 foreign countries typically represented in fall classes), without having to expend an unreasonably large portion of the budget on financial aid. (The College still maintains a policy of providing aid only on the basis of demonstrated need, and roughly half the freshman class each year enrolls with an average grant from College resources of $15, 510.) Our success is largely the result of a much expanded applicant pool over the last several years.

But the larger pool has brought problems as well. Historically, the College has accepted 80-85% of its applicants. This practice was necessary through most of the 1980's and accorded with our "self-selective" admissions posture. Typically, the fall class filled in late May to early June, a waitlist for financial aid having been established in April when the budget was exhausted. Over the last four years, the pattern has changed dramatically. Our aid funds were committed earlier each year, and greater numbers of applicants had to be placed on the waitlist well before May 1. Since we have always promised those on the waitlist aid for a subsequent class, many deferred enrollment, swelling the applicant pool for the following year and causing us to commit aid funds even earlier in the cycle. Furthermore, we were forced to tell some approved applicants that the class for which they had applied was full well before May 1. Worse, our pattern of rolling admissions resulted in lower-rated students receiving aid awards early in the cycle. The problem became especially acute in the cycle leading to the fall 2001 class, and the Admissions Committee began to consider possible solutions.

After considerable discussion, we decided to recalibrate our decision making in two key areas. First, we placed even greater emphasis on the application essays. In cases of solid but not outstanding records, we wanted to be especially sure that the essays showed genuine understanding of the work required by our Program, not just a general interest in "great books" or "reading and discussion." Second, we reformulated our understanding of what it means for us to take risks on applicants—a practice we all wanted to continue. Now, rather than view risky applicants as "risks we are willing to take," we ask ourselves whether they are “risks we are eager to take." This shift in perspective allows us to acknowledge the necessity of turning away more applicants, while maintaining our commitment to taking chances on promising applicants who do not meet the standard definition of "good students."

Increased computer capacity in recent years has made tracking of all sorts of admissions activities possible but often not especially helpful. If our visit to Ben Franklin High School in New Orleans generates 1 excellent applicant this year and none next, do we stop visiting? We do track our recruitment efforts, but the numbers with which we deal are often so small that no clear conclusions can be drawn from them with confidence. Only recently, as a result of increased computer capacity, have attrition studies become easily generated. These studies of the correlation between Admissions Committee rankings and performance and persistence at the College revealed that (at least for the one year for which we have complete data—see Support Document, “Entering Freshmen in Fall 1997 Who Withdrew”) those applicants given the lowest committee rating left the College at a rate three times that of those who received the highest rating and twice that of those who received the middle rating. Now that our database contains rating information for all currently enrolled students and a program has

been written for retrieving the relevant information, these correlation studies can be conducted regularly, but they are not the entire picture regarding attrition: we need to know more about why students leave the College.

The one area in which the Admissions Office has had little success is minority recruitment (enrollment is 6 to 8%). Several reasons for this might be advanced (our fixed curriculum, perceived costs, and competition from better known and more prestigious institutions), but lack of effort is not one of them. Our many efforts include: becoming a sponsoring institution for A Better Chance, Inc., which provides financial aid and other support for minority students across the country; entering the Fairfax County Partnership Program to encourage minority interest in private institutions in Virginia and Maryland; attending college fairs for African American students; visiting high schools with high minority enrollment in metropolitan areas such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington DC, New York, Durham, Atlanta, and New Orleans; participating in a recruitment tour of South Carolina sponsored by the National Consortium for Black Professional Development; and giving special presentations to teachers and counselors in the Detroit public school system.

None of these efforts has brought any success. It is important to understand why this is the case. Our minority students come to us for the same reason that our majority students do: our academic program. There is no "special angle" or appeal that we can make to minority students, and we are unwilling to offer special scholarships or other incentives in order to attract them, for reasons outlined above in the sections on Admissions and Financial Aid. Our best opportunity in this area is to continue to focus on high school visits in schools with minority students who are most likely to consider private higher education, and to remain open and encouraging to those few minority students who develop a deep interest in the College.

Coordination of Recruitment Efforts with Santa Fe Campus. Each of the College's two Admissions Offices is charged with recruiting for the College as a whole, but while general policies and procedures are shared, each office is shaped by local needs and constraints in its day-to-day routine and in the scope of its activities. Consequently, there is a tendency for the two offices to lose touch with one another and become preoccupied with campus specific issues or concerns, often developing very different perspectives on how shared problems or projects (publications, for example) ought to be addressed. The 1996 marketing study conducted by Neustadt Creative Marketing at least resulted in brochures that were adopted for use by both campuses, ending the practice of using a shared catalogue but mostly different secondary materials. Nevertheless, each campus had to develop its own Financial Aid leaflet because of the different tuition structures and some differences in financial aid policy.

To some extent, the tendency to isolation and divergent views has been mitigated by the institution of the Management Committee. In the past year and a half, the Committee has conducted a thorough review of financial aid policies and practices, admissions publications and their pattern of distribution, and Admissions Committee decision-making: the results have been positive. The local issues facing each campus in these areas are now better understood, and actual practices in addressing them have been brought much closer together. Still, without periodic and ongoing consultation, differences in perspective and practice are likely to develop again, especially as market forces within the college bound population are shifting all the time. It is critical that

financial aid be administered in as nearly identical a fashion as possible on the two campuses in order to facilitate transfer of current students and to prevent applicants from "shopping for a better deal" between Annapolis and Santa Fe. The Admissions Officers do talk with one another frequently, of course, as the need to revise publications, for example, or to discuss a particular prospective student arise, but these occasions are essentially ad hoc and often do not allow for thorough review and reflection on the College's recruitment program as a whole.

For the most part, there are not many areas of replication in effort or lost opportunities for joint projects. The territory for recruitment travel has been divided into that east and west of the Mississippi River, an arrangement that is both practical in terms of expense but also reflective of the preponderant geographical flow of freshman applications. The major admissions publications are developed jointly, and costs are shared. Although the campuses used to conduct separate mass-mailings through the College Board's Student Search Service, that is no longer the case. Beginning in the spring of 2002, a joint national mailing was conducted, allowing us to purchase all the names that match our criteria nationally, rather than conducting separate searches in separate regions in which one campus or the other had to lower criteria to get a sufficient number of names or randomly sort out names to keep costs down. There are undoubtedly replications in the mailing lists for high schools and counselors developed by each office in response to specific requests, but these are minor redundancies that are neither costly nor especially awkward. The area of greatest inefficiency and lost opportunity is in the inability to share inquiry lists early enough and quickly enough to target more successfully prospective students at schools on our separate travel schedules: this is a deficiency that cannot be corrected without major improvements in the College's computer capacities.

Recommendations

- Improve our electronic capabilities:
  - In the upcoming redevelopment of the College's website, emphasize the alumni representative program as a resource for prospective students.
  - Highlight dates of alumni receptions and other College events that prospective students may attend.
  - Combine groups of alumni representatives into a single listing that can be searched in a variety of ways: chronologically, geographically, by profession, by year of graduation.
  - Develop an online application appropriate to St. John's demand for lengthy essays and minimal statistical information.
  - Explore the need for separate mailboxes for inquiries: regular, international, transfer.
  - Construct inquiry form capable of tracking the sources which brought the prospective student to the website.
  - Develop graphics and short messages for email communication with prospective students
- Institute some consistent and sustained program of computer training to improve the skill level and efficiency of Admissions staff.
- Improve the basement workspace (and bathrooms). A separate office facility for the Advancement Office, which now shares the Carroll Barrister House with Admissions, should be devised as soon as reasonably possible.
- Although appropriate accreditation information and federal disclaimers about non-discrimination appear in most publications, they are absent in a few and incomplete in others. The appearance of this material should be regularized as each is reprinted.

- The Santa Fe and Annapolis Financial Aid leaflets should be combined in a shared brochure.
- The Instruction Committee together with the Admissions Director should study how best to use data generated about retention.
- Establish a routine schedule of meetings for the Admissions Directors to review various aspects of the College's overall recruitment effort.
- Continue periodic Management Committee review of admissions publications, policies, and practices.

Chapter Three: THE TEACHING FACULTY (MSCHE X; AALE 12, 14)
(*Harvey Flaumenhaft, Dean of the College; Peter Kalkavage, Chairman of the Steering Committee; Judith Seeger, Assistant Dean, the Instruction Committee)

The Teacher as Learner. As our Mission Statement affirms, tutors at St. John's College "teach primarily by being exemplary learners." We teach, not by lecturing but by raising questions and guiding discussion—in Seminar discussions of great books and in the more technical work of Tutorials and Laboratories. Sometimes we advance class discussion by offering our own opinions, which, however, are not authoritative but are subject to scrutiny and refutation. We have neither departments nor rank: tutors do not specialize but are required to teach broadly in the all-required Program, regardless of background. New tutors start with freshman classes and advance, slowly, through the Program. A full teaching assignment includes a Seminar (with another tutor) and two other classes among Tutorials and Laboratories. Tutors meet regularly with individual students outside of class, either to go over written work or to discuss some aspect of the work for that class. They also serve as advisors for annual essays and meet with the student advisee, sometimes weekly, to discuss the topic and help with the student's writing.

The practice of teacher as fellow learner has these advantages: it strongly encourages student self-sufficiency; helps foster a life-long habit of learning through conversation and joint inquiry; promotes collegiality and cooperation; provides daily opportunity for the tutor's own learning, thus keeping tutors intellectually alive and open to new ideas; and gives students a living example of what it means to be a lover, rather than a possessor of knowledge and wisdom.

Although not required to publish, tutors are expected to sustain a deep, inquiring relation to the books and authors on the Program. In addition to independent study, this activity may take the form of participation in study groups, giving a Friday night lecture, or simply engaging in conversations with students and colleagues. Furthermore, tutors are expected to be full members of the community of learning through attendance at formal meetings, service on committees, and general availability on campus for discussion and consultation with both students and colleagues (see Practical Commitment #3 of the Mission Statement),

The guardianship of genuine learning is intense and demanding. Tutors must be teachers who thrive on the intellectual challenges and risks posed by material that is new to them. On a daily basis, they must exercise good judgment, resourcefulness, and imagination in promoting active learning and class discussion; ask helpful, well-timed questions; and provoke students to go beyond superficial answers by generating perplexities and demonstrating their own capacity for perplexity and wonder. A tutor's professional knowledge can be a valuable resource, but it can also pose problems: tutors must resist the temptation to lecture, in their areas of expertise and in general.

The College pursues several ways of helping tutors in their classroom teaching and continued learning. These will be discussed in the section below on Faculty Development.

Recruitment and Initial Appointment. The peculiar combination of virtues required in a St. John's tutor poses special problems for recruitment. Typically, we attract more applicants from some fields than from others: many from classics, romance languages, philosophy (including political philosophy), religious studies, history (especially

intellectual and cultural history), and music—few from mathematical and natural sciences and the social sciences. The greatest number of promising applicants learn about us from professors who know about the College and have had the applicant in their classes, tutors who give talks or participate in conferences at other colleges and universities, alumni whom the applicant met as a fellow graduate student, and books or articles that refer to us or are identified as having been written by St. John's tutors.

In an effort to attract a greater number of promising applicants, we have done some advertising of positions in journals like the PMLA and the Chronicle. This effort resulted in many letters of inquiry but few applicants who really understood the goals and character of the College. We have also sent tutors to annual meetings of groups like the American Philosophical Association. This, too, did not significantly improve recruitment. Recently, the College has contacted the leading departments of the history of science in order to address the imbalance in our applicant pool. This has not been as fruitful as recent referrals of scientifically trained people with philosophic interests by professors who knew the applicant in college or graduate school. The College should continue to explore ways of encouraging a greater number of suitable applicants, especially those with backgrounds in the mathematical and natural sciences.

Our procedure for initial appointment is as follows. Anyone who inquires about joining our faculty receives from the Dean a letter giving a brief account of what teaching at St. John's entails, along with a statement of our application procedures. A complete application includes a *curriculum vitae*, three letters of reference, a brief piece of writing that exhibits the applicant's way of being thoughtful, and a statement describing the applicant's intellectual life. The Dean reads all applications and brings promising ones to the Instruction Committee (see below). All members of the Committee read these applications and, together with the Dean, decide whether or not to invite the applicant for an interview. If invited, the applicant comes to campus for a visit that includes the hour-long interview with Dean and Instruction Committee, lunch with members of the Committee, meals and meetings with random students, several long conversations with the Dean, and attendance of classes. All this gives the applicant and the College a good idea of what it would be like if the applicant were a member of the community.

Scores of applications are received each year, and no more than a dozen are invited for an interview. The few who are invited and whom we seek to appoint are those who are willing to forego the pursuit of a field of expertise, who regard lack of knowledge as an opportunity for learning through conversation, who find that helping others to learn advances their own learning, and who regard great books as the great teachers.

The procedure for initial appointment has worked fairly well and has remained unchanged for many years. The Dean and Instruction Committee should nevertheless consider delegating members of the Instruction Committee to assist the Dean in reviewing applications and selecting promising ones. This would lighten somewhat the heavy burden of duties imposed on the Dean.

Recommendations

- The Dean and Instruction Committee should devise ways of improving recruitment, especially through advertising and contacting departments.
- The Dean and Instruction Committee should consider delegating members of the Committee to assist the Dean in identifying promising applications.

Faculty Leadership: Dean and Instruction Committee. Whatever academic administration there is at St. John's is vested in a single non-career Dean, chosen by the faculty for a limited term and advised by six elected faculty members who constitute the Instruction Committee.

The supremacy of the academic program is supported by the Dean's membership on the Finance Committee, the Board of Visitors and Governors and its Executive Committee, and on the recently instituted Management Committee. In addition, the following officers of the College currently report to the Dean: Assistant Dean, Registrar, Admissions Director, Financial Aid Director, Director of Laboratories, Athletic Director, Librarian, Placement Director, and Director of the Graduate Institute.

The Dean is Chairman of the Instruction Committee, which includes the President *ex officio*. Candidates are nominated for a three-year term by the Committee itself, after soliciting suggestions from the entire faculty. Tutors serving on the Committee continue to teach full time. The Committee meets weekly throughout the academic year and makes its decisions through consensus rather than voting. Its work includes the appointment and reappointment of faculty, including tenure; approval of teaching assignments; review of sophomores to determine whether any of them should not be enabled to advance into the upper two years of the Program; regular review and, when necessary, revision of the curriculum; meeting with the Student Committee on Instruction and with the Visiting Committee of the Board to consider what we do, how we do it, and why. The attendance of the President at Instruction Committee meetings, like that of the Dean at non-instructional meetings, ensures the close cooperation between the academic and the administrative aspects of the College. The President's attendance makes it possible, on a regular basis, for discussion of how financial and other administrative decisions affect academic life and the College community as a whole.

Recent improvements to the work of the Committee include more organized, formal procedures for the following: review of sophomores whose Enabling is in question (see Assessment of Student Learning); review of archon reports to locate and address problems in various parts of the Program (see Assessment of the Undergraduate Program); and the recording of the reasons for curricular revisions.

Our insistence on a thoroughly integrated community has produced a staggering amount of work for the Instruction Committee. On the one hand, since we seek to avoid both top-down management and fragmentation into specialized parts, we do not want to replace the Instruction Committee with several specialized committees, or to relieve its members of any teaching assignments. On the other hand, if the Committee is to do an effective job of overseeing the Program, clearly some delegation of responsibilities among its members seems to be in order.

The Instruction Committee on the Annapolis campus is but half of the Committee of the entire College. Once a year, the Annapolis and Santa Fe branches of the Committee attend a Joint Meeting on one of the two campuses alternately. The purpose is to exchange information, voice concerns, discuss problems, and, above all, to maintain the instructional unity that holds the College together and allows for the easy transfer of students between the campuses. The two Deans alternate the chairmanship of the Joint Meeting and the writing of the annual *Statement of Educational Program and Policy* (required by the Polity), which the Joint Committee discusses in draft. Critical discussion of the *Statement* is the most effective means by which the goals listed above are promoted.

Recommendation

- The Dean and Instruction Committee should determine areas in which duties, in addition to that of assisting the Dean in screening applications, are delegated to Committee members.

The Faculty Assembled: The Role of the Faculty in College Deliberations. The entire faculty (which is comprised of Teaching and Associate Faculty) assembles monthly, called together by the President, who is Chairman of the faculty meeting. The meeting serves several purposes. It provides a regular opportunity for teaching faculty to hear reports from officers of the College, and to ask questions and express their views; to assess the Program and various academic practices; to deliberate and make decisions on matters such as membership of certain committees, the granting of degrees, the recommendation of changes to the Polity. The meeting fosters wide-ranging deliberation by the faculty about what would make the College better. It helps newer tutors discover the ways of the College and learn from disagreements among experienced tutors on important matters. It helps more seasoned tutors learn how the College looks to newer colleagues and to rediscover what things need to be explained or defended. Finally, it fosters community and a sense of the College as an integrated whole.

One improvement to the faculty meeting in the last ten years has been the new meeting place (the General Hartle Room in the Barr-Buchanan Center), which has provided just the right blend of formality and coziness. The time of the meeting, however, continues to pose problems (Wednesday at 3:45 P.M.), as tutors with family responsibilities are often forced to leave before the meeting is over. There are few alternatives: we can meet on Wednesday evening, or cancel the final class on Wednesday afternoon so that the meeting can begin earlier; or go back to the practice of meeting on Saturday mornings. All these involve serious difficulties. The faculty meeting is vital to the continued well-being of the College. Its importance obliges us to revisit the question of scheduling in order to maximize full attendance for the entire meeting.

The problem of time is related to the problem of reconciling the two main functions of the meeting: involvement of faculty in administrative deliberation and discussion of the academic program. If tutors are not part of administrative deliberations, we risk administrative decisions that do not serve the educational ends of the College, and which generate lowered faculty morale. But if tutors are involved in such monthly deliberations, we risk overtaxing tutors and distracting them from the teaching and learning that bind them to the College. Clearly, it is necessary to strike the right balance, but finding the right ratio of administrative involvement to academic discussion is not easy.

Another fairly recent change has been to devote an hour or more of each faculty meeting to the discussion of an instructional topic. Topics have included, “What does it mean to call the Seminar ‘the heart’ of the undergraduate program?” and “What are we trying to accomplish in the Freshman Language Tutorial?” This change has resulted in lively, helpful discussions in which a good mix of newer and more experienced tutors took part. It remains difficult, however, given our current meeting time, to do justice to such assessment of the Program and also to engage in adequate deliberation of administrative matters.

Recommendation

- The Dean and Instruction Committee, in consultation with the faculty, should revisit alternatives to the scheduling of the monthly faculty meeting, and, in addition, re-think the allocation of time for reports.

Faculty Development. As stated earlier, the College pursues several ways of helping tutors accomplish their daunting task of leading classes in subjects outside their field of expertise and learn what it means to be a St. John's tutor. One is the orientation program for newly appointed tutors. This fairly recent program, conducted in the week before the fall semester begins, has been helpful: all new tutors attend freshman classes led by experienced tutors. Another is our long-standing practice of pairing tutors for all seminars. In pairing co-leaders, we try to match tutors whose backgrounds, interests, and approaches are complementary. But we also try to match newer with more experienced tutors, thereby giving newer tutors frequent occasion for learning about the seminar readings and pedagogy.

The most regular form of help in the teaching of non-seminar classes is provided by the archon meeting. Here all tutors teaching the same Tutorial or Laboratory meet weekly to discuss pedagogy and matters of intellectual substance. In recent years this meeting has been the subject of concern. With the increased size of the College and the corresponding increased number of sections for a given class, an archon group may have as many as ten tutors. This makes it difficult for newer tutors to raise their questions and concerns. It should be noted that the archon meeting cannot in any case provide all the help that is needed, and newer tutors are expected to exercise initiative and take advantage of a community of learning in which colleagues are only too happy to offer help informally and engage in candid discussion of difficulties.

Earlier in the College's history, it was fairly common for tutors new to a Tutorial or Laboratory to audit the classes of more experienced tutors. This practice—a natural means of faculty initiation into the Program—has become rare. The recent availability of funded summer study groups (see below) has been valuable but is not as helpful to teaching as witnessing and learning along with a class at work. Auditing supports the tutor as fellow learner, encourages collegiality, and would complement the work of our enlarged archon meetings.

Tutors promote student learning by being passionately involved in their own learning. They cannot do the job they are supposed to do without sufficient time and opportunity for study: not just in order to keep up with the technical demands of their Tutorials and Laboratories, and to become initiated into the Program, but to stay intellectually refreshed and alive. The College provides three principal means to this end: a generous sabbatical policy, two endowed grants, and a recently expanded array of funded summer study groups.

The College regularly offers a full year's sabbatical to tutors who have accumulated many years of service. Since tutors are not required to publish, they are free to use sabbaticals for continued study. Some use this time to prepare a Friday night lecture, or to revise a manual used in a Tutorial or Laboratory. Some attend classes at other colleges or universities and study something not on the Program, such as biblical Hebrew. Others devote their sabbatical to all the reading they wanted to do but were prevented from doing by their teaching responsibilities. Some combine study and travel. Some in fact do work on books, articles, and translations for publication.

The College currently receives two grants that offer tutors reduced teaching for independent study during the academic year: the NEH Chair in Ancient and Modern Thought, and the Schmidt Fellowship. The former gives a tutor subsidized reduced teaching for two years for deep and sustained study of some great text, author, or topic (the topic alternates each year between ancient and modern). In the second year of the grant, the tutor leads a faculty study group, four members of which also have reduced teaching assignments, and gives a Friday Night Lecture. The Schmidt Fellowship gives a tutor reduced teaching for one semester for the study of some topic in economics, political thought, history, or psychology. The tutor leads a faculty study group on the topic. Here, too, four faculty participants are given reduced teaching.

The most recent improvement in faculty development has been an increased number of funded summer study groups. These have included the detailed study, by a small group of tutors, of ancient geometry, the origin of algebra, and laboratory work in biology and physics (with experiments); as well as the discussion and analysis of philosophic classics not on the Program, like Descartes' *Passions of the Soul* and Hegel's *Philosophy of Right.* This year the Dean and Instruction Committee have devised yet another funded summer study group: a weekend of several seminars devoted to a single text (in this initial outing, a Shakespeare play).

St. John's has a vigorous culture of study groups among students and tutors alike. Many tutor study groups are informal, spontaneous, and unfunded. It is indeed one of the glories of the College—and a sure sign of intellectual vitality—that so many of these informal groups, on everything from Husserl to Chinese, spring up despite the constraints under which tutors must do their work. Unfortunately, however, scarcity of time for attendance and preparation keeps groups from flourishing fully.

Tutors are seriously over-worked and have little, if any, leisure for sustained study. In addition to a demanding schedule of classes, tutors attend two archon meetings every week (one for each Tutorial or Laboratory). Twice a year they must schedule oral examinations for all the students in their seminar (except for seniors). There are many meetings with students, sometimes students who are not in the tutor's class but who seek out the tutor for help or conversation. Then there are the committees on which a tutor serves, some of which, like the Instruction Committee, meet weekly. Some tutors volunteer to interview prospective students for the Admissions Office on a weekly basis. Workdays become a relentless rush from one responsibility to another. The week ends with yet another obligation: attendance at the Friday Night Lecture and Question Period.

The recent increase in funded summer study groups has provided the following benefits to faculty development: sustained help with technically demanding aspects of the St. John's Program, an occasion for the reading and discussion of great texts not on the Program, and in general a much-needed opportunity for intellectual refreshment and invigoration. But this increased opportunity for summer study does not provide sufficient relief from the immense strain on tutors' energies throughout the year. The College has grown much larger and more complex, and so too have the pressures upon it from without, with the result that more is demanded of tutors. Moreover, many more spouses of tutors now work, and the responsibilities of tutors for child-care have grown. Finally, as a result of the town's growth in size and prosperity, fewer tutors can afford to live close to the campus. Most disturbing is the fact that many are now teaching during the whole year—during the summer, year after year, in the Graduate Institute, Summer Classics, and the second semester of the January Freshman Program—besides picking up

extra teaching jobs during the normal school year (in Continuing Education, in Executive Seminars, and in whatever else comes along). And although some of this extra work is done for its own sake, or as a service to the College, much of it is done for the sake of making ends meet by supplementing a very low income. If the College wants tutors who are functioning at their highest level, and offering their best to students and colleagues, then it must do more than increase the number of funded summer study groups; it must increase salaries so that tutors are no longer forced, for financial reasons, to choose between summer teaching and the sometimes equally demanding, if exhilarating, participation in funded study groups.

Recommendations

- The College should find a way to give tutors released time for auditing.
- There should be continued funding to maintain at least the current level of funded summer study groups.
- The President, Dean, and Instruction Committee should discuss the feasibility of subsidized reduced teaching prior to sabbatical.
- Faculty salaries should be substantially increased—a primary goal of our upcoming Capital Campaign.

Chapter Four: EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

In the following report on Educational Assessment the reader should note these distinctive features of the College: all classes are required (no departments or majors); student attendance is mandatory; tutors do not specialize but teach broadly in the curriculum; classes proceed by discussion, not lecture; assessment at all levels is ongoing; it proceeds, like our classes, by way of discussion; assessment of learning occurs daily and draws on first-hand experience with individual students rather than on gathering data from written tests, surveys, or questionnaires.

The College understands that its modes of assessment are unconventional. We are pleased that, after reviewing learning assessment plans at various colleges in the late 1990's, Middle States deemed the plan outlined in our 1993 Self-Study worthy of commendation (see letter of October 6, 2000 in Support Documents).

Section A: Assessment of Student Learning (MSCHE XIV; AALE 9)

(*Peter Kalkavage, Chairman of the Steering Committee; Marilyn Higuera, member of the Steering Committee; Joseph Macfarland, member of the Steering Committee; Harvey Flaumenhaft, Dean of the College; Eva Brann, former Dean; the Instruction Committee; members of the Student Committee on Instruction; Board subcommittee, chaired by William Tilles)

Ongoing Assessment: Classes, Papers, Conferences, Informal Conversation. Assessment of student learning is a fact of everyday life at the College. The primary area of assessment is the classroom. Since all classes proceed by discussion rather than lecture and test taking, students are responsible for their own learning. They are expected to participate regularly in class discussion, present mathematical demonstrations at the board, re-enact crucial experiments in the natural sciences, present and emend their translations of Greek and French excerpts from great works, read aloud and analyze great poems in English, sing great pieces of music and present their analyses in class. They write several papers in the course of the year for Tutorials and Laboratories, and an Annual Essay in each of the first three years of Seminar. Conferences are scheduled for some papers in the tutorials and laboratories, and oral examinations are conducted for all annual essays. In addition, tutors may schedule, and students are encouraged to request, informal meetings in which students receive individual help in some aspect of their learning, or in which the tutor and student discuss the student's progress or that of the class.

This rich context for active learning provides the tutor with ample evidence of the student's progress. Genuine learning, in our opinion, cannot be quantified, and so we eschew numerical measures of student work. We do not think of learning in terms of outcomes: learning for us is not a process in which the teacher supplies an "input" with a corresponding student "output" but is rather the student's self-sustained effort, mediated by the tutor, to reach deepened and clarified understanding.

Such effort shows itself most directly in the detailed work of the Tutorials and Laboratories. We attend to how often a student has, for example, volunteered to do mathematical demonstrations at the board; whether the demonstration has been presented in a clear and organized way; whether it sprang from rote memory or from an attempt at genuine understanding of the argument. Analogous evidence presents itself abundantly in other non-Seminar classes. Quizzes, although not a central part of learning at the College, are very helpful in these classes, to students and tutors alike, in determining whether students have learned the elements that must be committed to memory. Some

tutors schedule oral examinations in Tutorials and Laboratories. Although time-consuming, these can be a very effective means of assessing the student's understanding and progress.

We also attend to student participation in discussion in all classes in order to determine how actively, and profitably, the student pursues his own learning. We ask whether the student advances the discussion through fruitful observations and questions, and has done the assigned reading with thoughtfulness and attention to detail; whether the student argues in the spirit of striving to know and persuade, or merely in order to debate, and listens to and learns from other students in the class. Above all, we attend to evidence of progress in learning, manifested in the effort to reach real understanding and overcome obstacles.

We also look carefully at student writing to determine whether a paper is well written from a formal standpoint (spelling, punctuation, syntax, organization, and overall clarity); whether it shows adequate attention to the book under investigation; whether it is a real inquiry that tries to get at something important and interesting.

Such assessment depends on three pre-conditions. The first is the student's faithful attendance. Attendance is required for all classes. It is carefully monitored at the College, and poor attendance may result in the student's dismissal (see Chapter V, part 2). The second is small class size to encourage close interrelationship among students and between students and tutors. Normally, no more than fourteen students are in tutorials and laboratories, and twenty in seminars. The third is the tutor's vigilance in observing and judging individual student performance. In Seminar, this third condition is more easily met because two tutors share the responsibility for leading the discussion, regularly discuss the progress of individual students, and combine their efforts in addressing the problems of individual students and the seminar as a whole.

Instead of using data gathered after the fact, we draw on first-hand experience of our students' ongoing act of learning. As fellow learners who teach broadly in the Program, we experience what learning is like "from the inside." The ends of assessment are well served by the fact that we have the same students in our classes for an entire year. Within a short time, we come to know our students well and begin to develop a detailed profile of their strengths and weaknesses. Some tutors keep a detailed written record of student progress in all its aspects; others keep a written record only of quizzes and written work. Such records, whether written or held in memory, are essential to the reports given in the Periodic Assessment Meeting or Don Rag (see next section).

Our modes of assessment are designed to help students gain a clear sense of their progress and so become better, more self-sufficient learners. The ongoing assessment described above also gives tutors immediate feedback regarding their effectiveness and progress. Because classes are discussion rather than lecture, where the tutor is guide and midwife rather than designated knower, tutors have constant occasion in their classes to experience right there and then what works and what doesn't, make adjustments, and become more effective guides. Our distinctive approach thus forges a strong bond between the assessment and improvement of student learning, and the assessment and improvement of teaching.

The strong emphasis on student participation in class has drawbacks for the assessment of quiet students. The problem is acute in Seminar but can also come up in other classes. Tutors strongly exhort quiet students, in their don rags (see next section) and privately outside of class, to take a more active role in class, but sometimes the

quietness persists. For such students, written work in the Tutorials and Laboratories, and the annual essay and oral examination in Seminar, assume great importance for assessment. But satisfactory work in these areas is not a substitute for active learning in class. The problem was discussed at length at a recent faculty meeting—with the result that tutors were made more aware of the problem and urged to be on the lookout for quiet students in their classes. But the problem has always been, and continues to be, a difficult one for us, requiring continued attention to students and consultation among faculty.

Periodic Assessment: The Don Rag. The Periodic Assessment Meeting or Don Rag is a formal gathering of the student and all his tutors for that year. These tutors form the Don Rag Committee and present a composite report on the student's learning over the course of a semester or year. The meeting is scheduled near the end of each semester for all freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. (Seniors, who are expected to be more self-evaluative, have no don rags.) The meeting is allotted fifteen minutes but sometimes takes longer. The tutors report to each other in the student's presence. The chairman of the Committee (one of the Seminar co-leaders) asks each of the other tutors in turn to give their reports on the student's work in the individual classes. The student is then invited to respond, and a general discussion ensues. Juniors have the option of a conference, in which the junior begins the meeting by reporting on the work in all classes, after which the tutors and student engage in an evaluative discussion. Tutor assessments and the response of the student form the don rag report. These are written during the meeting by the other Seminar co-leader.

The purpose of the don rag is to give the student a live, composite assessment of the work for the semester in all its aspects and to make recommendations for improved learning. Reports are typically a mix of praise, encouragement, criticism, and suggestions. In response to the reports students sometimes explain why the work has been deficient, or supplement a tutor's report, or offer their own sense of how a class has been going and how it might be improved. In cases where a student's work has run into serious difficulties, the student is warned about possible consequences, including the possibility of dismissal from the College.

Don rags continue to be the most effective means of assessing and improving student learning at the College. Their format has remained unchanged for many years. Students and tutors take them very seriously. Students with problems generally show improvement in their second-semester classes as a direct result of their first-semester don rags. The effectiveness of don rags derives largely from the fact that the student hears formally from all his tutors as a group, and is invited to participate and respond specifically to the tutors' assessment. Tutors get to hear all the reports, modify their overall assessment of the student accordingly, and combine their efforts in giving the student a comprehensive picture and good advice. By the end of the don rag, the student has gotten a live, interactive assessment that is more than the sum of its parts.

The Don Rag Committee makes recommendations regarding conditions for the student's continuance at the College. These are recorded on the don rag form and include, but are not confined to, academic probation and absence probation. Sometimes the Committee recommends that a special don rag take place in the next semester to determine whether a student will continue. The Committee may recommend, without conditions, that a student not continue at the College. The composite report and

recommendations of the Don Rag Committee are vital to the Sophomore Enabling Process (see below). All reports are promptly submitted to the Dean's office. The Dean reviews them and, in problematic cases, sends a letter to the student reminding him of the difficulties and alerting him to any conditions the Committee has set for his continuance at the College. Usually, the student then meets with the Dean to discuss the report more fully.

After the student's first don rag at the College, the Dean sends a letter to parents of dependent students explaining our procedure and informing them of whether the student's work is satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The release of further information requires a waiver by the student.

Since the last Self-Study, check boxes have been added to the don rag form so that the form clearly indicates whether the Committee recommends that the student continue, and clearly communicates serious problems to the Dean so that letters of warning can be sent to the students. Difficulties with the don rag tend to lie more in execution than in structure. Sometimes tutor reports are either too abbreviated or too expansive. Tutors must strive to give reports that are compendious, directly address progress in learning, and offer specific criticisms and suggestions. Although these reports are not meant to be indirect ways of communicating letter grades, tutors must be careful not to give reports that conflict with the intended grade. A more serious problem is that, in our desire to encourage students, we sometimes fail to offer enough criticism. Our students regularly remind us that they want useful criticism. We must be sure they get it—in don rags and throughout the year when necessary and appropriate—being careful, however, not to make a point of being harsh and discouraging.

It should be noted that our students, especially in their junior conferences, are often strikingly astute and candid in assessing their own progress in learning (they sometimes bring a written account). This seems to be a direct result of their maturation at the College, and highlights the fact that our modes of assessment succeed in fostering the habit of ongoing self-assessment.

Grades. Our peculiar attitude toward grades derives from the collision of a goal with a necessity: we want our students to work for understanding and not for grades; but students need transcripts, and therefore grades, for their professional lives beyond graduation. No grades of any kind are placed on written work handed back to students. Grades are, however, used for internal purposes soon to be described. Students may obtain their grades from the Registrar's office, but many never do. Generally, they have a good idea, apart from any external assessment, of how they are doing in a given class. Students who are concerned about what a tutor thinks of any aspect of their work in a class are encouraged simply to talk to that tutor.

There are three reasons why we do not want our students to be grade-conscious. First, we wish to foster genuine learning that aims at deepened understanding and the cultivation of freedom. Grades get in the way of this goal because they stress an end extrinsic to learning. They are distracting, and are considered so by most students. Second, grading implies competition. Students at St. John's are encouraged to be fellows in learning rather than competitors for honor and mastery. Although we rank students in order to give them a grade, our prevalent mode is to regard and treat them as individual learners on their individual journeys through the Program. Third, grades are inadequate as a means of evaluating a student's success in liberal learning.

Despite our ambivalence toward grades, we take the fair determination of grades very seriously. Tutors often record letter grades for some aspects of a student's work (quizzes, papers, sets of problems, presentations, etc.). But the ultimate grade for the class must take into account other, more important aspects of learning for which there is no easily discernible letter grade—the student's effort, attitude, and overall progress. There is no escape from the need for judgment, no refuge in the easy "objectivity" of simple calculation. It should be noted that Seminar co-leaders only very rarely disagree seriously about a grade (in which case, the Dean intervenes and tries to make a determination).

Letter grades (A+ through F) are used internally in the following circumstances. First, they are part of the evidence used in the Sophomore Enabling Process (see below). Second, in order to graduate, a senior must have satisfactory grades in all senior classes (no D or F)—a condition that can be waived only by faculty vote after discussion. Third, a Senior Essay cannot be accepted for examination unless the examining committee agrees to give it a satisfactory grade (C- or better). Fourth, a student can be told by the Dean, in response to the recommendation of the Don Rag Committee, that the student cannot continue unless the grade for a paper or a class is either passing or satisfactory (D or higher, C- or higher). Since the last Self-Study, the grading options for the Senior Oral Examination have been changed from Honors, Pass, or Fail, to either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.

At one of its meetings, the faculty explored alternative ways of communicating the quality of student work to the outside world—for example, a brief description in the transcript in place of a letter grade. But this practice seemed needlessly complex, especially given tutors' efforts to assign grades that fit, even if they do not illuminate, student work. Tutors generally see no serious problem in our double life regarding grades. We use grades without letting them get in the way of more substantial modes of learning assessment.

Algebra Examination and the Freshman Music Quiz. Two formal, written tests are administered at the College: the Algebra Examination and the Freshman Music Quiz. (We used to have a French reading test but, after long discussion, decided to abandon it in 1994.) An algebra test is necessary because, although we do not teach algebra, we presuppose it for the study of modern mathematics and science in the upper two years, and need an early indication of serious difficulties. The test must be passed by the end of the first semester of the sophomore year if the student is to continue in the second semester. It can be taken repeatedly and tests minimum competence in algebraic manipulations and elementary problem solving. (Tutoring in algebra is provided by the student mathematics assistants, who also offer a review class prior to each administration of the test.) As stated at the end of the report on the Sophomore Mathematics Tutorial, the College needs to make this examination more effective—not so much as an assessment tool but as a means of ensuring that our students are prepared for the analytic mathematics of the junior and senior years.

Like the Algebra Test, the Freshman Music Quiz tests minimum competence. The quiz covers the elements of notation and theory, and is administered repeatedly during the freshman year. It has less weight than the Algebra Examination in determining a student's fate at the College but is nevertheless useful in signaling, to the following year's tutors of Sophomore Music, which students in their classes are likely to have

difficulties. In recent years the music quiz seems to have worked well: sophomores on the whole seem prepared for their study of music theory, and those who still have difficulties with the basics need only an occasional review.

The Sophomore Enabling Process. At the end of the sophomore year, all sophomores at the College undergo an "enabling" review that determines whether they may enter the upper two years of the Program. At the Enabling Meeting, which is of indefinite length, the Dean and Instruction Committee, upon the advice and recommendation of the student's assembled freshman and sophomore tutors, decide whether the student will continue into the junior year. The student's sophomore tutors, who form the Don Rag Committee, play a crucial role in the deliberations. Prior to the Enabling Meeting, the Dean asks tutors to submit the names of students whose enabling is in question and carefully reviews all sophomore don rag reports for the second semester.

Since the 1993 Self-Study, the Enabling Meeting has been made more focused and organized: the Dean and Instruction Committee now review and discuss problematic cases before the Enabling Meeting, sort out different kinds and degrees of difficulties, and come to the meeting with provisional specific decisions. Each student whose enabling is in question is discussed fully in order to determine whether the student "is enabled," "is enabled with conditions," or "is not enabled." The deliberations begin with a review of the student's academic record in the freshman and sophomore years. A less than satisfactory grade signals which part of the student's work is in question and needs to be discussed. In order to continue into the junior year, a student must submit a satisfactory Sophomore Essay (also called the Enabling Essay). If a student submits a satisfactory Enabling Essay but being enabled seems compromised by other difficulties, the tutors discuss these difficulties. The Dean and Instruction Committee listen to and take part in the discussion and then make their final decision either to abide by or to change their initial decision.

A satisfactory record is not, however, sufficient for a student's enabling. The Enabling Meeting must also determine whether, based on the evidence in the freshman and sophomore years, the student can write a satisfactory Senior Essay, is prepared to undertake the technically demanding mathematical work of the upper two years, and shows serious commitment to learning in the Program through regular preparation and attendance and profitable participation in classes.

All sophomores who are not enabled receive letters from the Dean informing them of this fact. They then meet with the Dean to discuss the reasons for this decision. They may submit an appeal to the Dean and Instruction Committee for reconsideration of the enabling decision. Over the last twelve years the number has fluctuated between three and fourteen. The number of sophomores not enabled depends only on our judgment of individual students.

Annual Essays and Oral Examinations. All freshmen, sophomores, and juniors must submit to their Seminar tutors a satisfactory Annual Essay on some reading from that particular year. The Annual Essay must be competently written and deal with some important idea or question raised by a book, usually but not necessarily a Seminar reading. It should reflect the learning that was the direct result of the student's reading, thinking, and discussion in Seminar. Most students ask a tutor to serve as advisor in the writing of the essay. The Seminar tutors may ask a student to re-write an unsatisfactory

essay and submit it by a certain date. In the half-hour Oral Examination on the essay, the tutor co-leaders ask the student questions about the essay in an effort to provoke further thought and inquiry.

Oral examinations lasting half an hour are also given in the first semester. These examinations have as their starting point some question or topic that the student has chosen from the Seminar readings for that semester. Like all oral examinations at the College, they take the form of conversations that determine how carefully and deeply students have read and thought about the books of the Program, how articulately they can formulate ideas and questions, and how well they pursue a line of argument and inquiry.

The Senior Essay and Oral Examination. The Senior Essay and Oral Examination, at their best, represent the crowning moment of a student's career at the College. The Essay is the senior's attempt to write a substantial, organized, and carefully written paper (of at least twenty pages) that inquires into some text or topic encountered in the Program, and that embodies the culmination of the work of the preceding four years. It is neither a research paper nor a thesis. The student selects a topic in the first semester of the senior year and submits it to the Dean for approval. Seniors must also select an advisor, who helps the student formulate a manageable topic and oversees the writing of the essay. Seniors are given a month off from classes at the beginning of the second semester to write their essays. The completed essay is submitted to an examining committee composed of three tutors (the advisor is not among them). These tutors determine whether the essay is at least acceptable (merits a C- or better), and the chairman of the committee reports the decision to the Dean. Unsatisfactory essays are returned to the student, who is given spring break to work on the essay for re-submission. Once the essay is accepted, the student then undergoes the Senior Oral Examination.

The Senior Oral Examination is the most formal, dignified examination at the College. It is public, hour-long, and is conducted in academic attire. Although the examination is not the student's "defense" of a "thesis," tutors ask probing questions that test the depth, accuracy, and consistency of the essay. Now on the brink of graduation, having been nourished by a rich and demanding program of study, and having invested much time in the reading and reflection that went into the essay, seniors can be expected to hold their own in the face of tough questions, and display the intellectual virtues they have developed in the course of their St. John's career. These include resourcefulness and imagination, the careful reading of a text, the articulate presentation of thought, the ability to follow and further a line of inquiry, and the willingness to acknowledge and explore problems and difficulties. The Senior Oral Examination is not merely an assessment tool at the College but can be the supreme opportunity for student flourishing.

The Final Assessment: Graduation Requirements. The final assessment of a student at St. John's College takes place at the last faculty meeting of the year. The Dean reads the names of all seniors, and the faculty votes on whether a senior is recommended for graduation. To be recommended, a senior must have completed all parts of the Program, have passed an Oral Examination on a satisfactory Senior Essay, and have received no unsatisfactory grade (D or F) in the senior year. Only this last condition for graduation may be waived: by vote of the faculty. Sometimes a senior is recommended upon fulfillment of certain conditions (for example, the submission of a satisfactory paper in a

Tutorial). Occasionally, a student is not recommended and may appeal to the Dean and Instruction Committee for later consideration.

Learning Assessment in the Graduate Institute. Learning assessment in the Graduate Institute is similar to that in the undergraduate program. There is both ongoing and periodic assessment; grades are given, but students do not work for grades; and students have easy access to their tutors, who can at any time give the student feedback and offer suggestions. Conferences for Graduate Institute students are a much less formal version of the don rag (they are to be distinguished from junior conferences in the undergraduate program). For example, there is no written record of the deliberations and decisions of tutors. Conferences are automatically scheduled for all first-term students. Additional conferences for subsequent terms may be requested by either tutors or a student. They are automatically scheduled for students who have received an unsatisfactory grade for a class in the preceding term.

The goal of the conference is twofold: to touch base with first-term students and identify problems early, and to address serious problems that come up for students in later terms. Normally, these older, more mature students require less monitoring than our undergraduates and in many cases require only encouragement and advice. They are in general very self-motivated, self-monitoring, and eager for useful criticism. Occasionally, a student needs pointed criticism and warning—in extreme cases, warning about possible dismissal from the College. Papers are assigned in all classes but Seminar, and the Preceptorial Essay takes on the role of the Annual Essay in the undergraduate program. Oral examinations are given in the Seminar: students write a one-page statement of questions they would like to discuss and which serve as a basis for the oral. Although there are no orals on papers written for any of the classes, tutors frequently schedule conferences on papers written in the Tutorial and Preceptorial. (For a discussion of graduation requirements, see the report on the Graduate Institute.)

Learning Assessment in the Graduate Institute proceeds within the following limits: the segments of the Graduate Institute do not build on one another and so students are not assessed on the basis of how they are progressing through a set program of study; Graduate Institute students are more set in their ways, either because they are older or because they have studied at other colleges, so that habits that impede learning are harder to change; there is far less tutorial-like work on the basis of which progress in the liberal arts can be assessed (notable exceptions are the Mathematics Tutorial, in which students work through propositions from Euclid and Lobachevsky, and the Greek Preceptorial). In our assessment of student learning in the Graduate Institute, although we must adjust expectations in light of the character of the students and the program, we must not flag in our efforts to give students clear and pointed criticism and suggestions for improved learning.

Critical Summary. Our modes of learning assessment, largely unaltered over the years, are nevertheless subject to ongoing review. We continually search out and discuss problematic areas, and try to find ways to make appropriate changes. The emphasis here is on *appropriate*: the College resists means of assessment that conflict with its goals and habits of liberal learning.

Problems have to do more with execution than with structure. We must be constantly on guard in our classes to pay close attention to the work and progress of individual

students: some of us may need to keep a better record of this work and progress. We must make every effort in the don rag to resist the temptation to encourage at the expense of noting problems and offering useful criticism, or to soften the blow of necessary warnings. Absorbed as we are with matters of real thought in our tutorials, we should probably make more use of quizzes and problem-sets, and possibly other means of assessment, not merely to determine whether our students are really learning the elements of the liberal arts, but to encourage the attention to detail that attends the search for depth. Again, in our passion for intellectual substance, we sometimes neglect the formal aspects of student writing. We should offer what help we can in the technical aspects of good writing, occasionally require that deficient papers be re-written, and devote at least part of our paper conferences with students to the assessment and improvement of these aspects. Students with writing problems should be strongly encouraged to seek help from the writing assistant as soon as possible.

Recommendations

- We should make a more consistent effort to alert students to difficulties well before the don rag.
- We should continue to explore ways of assessing the learning of quiet students.
- We should review the Algebra Examination, and devise ways of improving student preparation for the analytic mathematics of the upper two years.
- We should review the standards used in the Enabling Process, and discuss more fully what constitutes satisfactory work in the upper two years.

Section B: Assessment of Teaching and Faculty Learning (MSCHE XIV, AALE 12.2)

(*Harvey Flaumenhaft, Dean of the College; Peter Kalkavage, Chairman of the Steering Committee; Judith Seeger, Assistant Dean; the Instruction Committee)

The formal mode of tutor review is contained in our *Appointment Procedure* (see Support Documents), which is sent to all tutors early in the semester in which the decision is made. In addition to offering a clear statement of the review process, the document contains a list of the five qualitative criteria that govern the assessment of a tutor's work and a chart showing the pattern of consultation with students and faculty for a given reappointment or for tenure. The document also conveys the important statement that the five criteria "are applied more rigorously with successive reappointments" and are especially strict in the case of tenure. Tutor assessment at St. John's is based neither on publications or research (which are not required) nor on anonymous student evaluation forms (we have live interviews instead). Our procedures have been in place since before the 1993 Self-Study and continue to serve us well.

Non-tenured tutors undergo a series of reappointments for a steadily increasing number of years: a one-year, a two-year, and finally a three-year reappointment. The tenure decision is made in the second year of the three-year reappointment. The gradual increase by a year gives tutors time to immerse themselves in their teaching and learning, advance in the Program, and become part of the St. John's community without the specter of constant formal review. It allows adequate time for growth, and for virtues and problems to become sufficiently manifest.

The Dean and Instruction Committee conduct formal review of candidates for reappointment and tenure. Their deliberations are based on their own experience with the

candidate, reports of tenured faculty, and, in the case of the three-year reappointment and tenure decision, reports of students. The Assistant Dean, with whom students have close contact, is also a source of reports on how classes are going. The Dean and members of the Committee gather reports on the candidate by interviewing the tenured faculty and, where appropriate, students. Tenured tutors share the work of interviewing students, taking notes during the interview and reporting back to a member of the Committee. All reports of tutors are read aloud at the Instruction Committee meeting, and all student reports are written up and distributed for reading by the entire Committee. After exhaustive discussion and review, the Dean and the Committee reach their decision—as always, by consensus, not voting. The Dean communicates this decision in a letter to the candidate, who then schedules a conversation with the Dean. For each reappointment decision, the Dean conveys to the candidate an overview of the reports, stressing areas in which the tutor needs to improve.

Assessment of faculty teaching and learning, like that of student learning, is a daily part of College life. For the most part, we get to know each other very well, as colleagues and fellow learners; and when a candidate is not well known among the faculty, this is a sign that the tutor, for whatever reason, is not contributing adequately to the intellectual community. To be sure, it is difficult for non-tenured tutors to live in this atmosphere of continual assessment, which is an inevitable, and necessary, part of living in the St. John's community. A counterbalance within the community comes from continual collegiality, openness to conversation, and willingness to discuss difficulties candidly and offer help.

Our guide for tutor assessment is provided by the five criteria stated in the *Appointment Procedure*:

1. Excellence of intellect and imagination.
2. Competence in the St. John's Program as demonstrated by learning in the areas which it encompasses, by continuing inquiry into those areas, and by increasing understanding of fundamental questions raised by the books read in the Program.
3. Excellence as a teacher, particularly as a teacher of small discussion classes and of seminars in which leadership is shared with another tutor. Such excellence is shown, in part, by an ability to listen patiently and thoughtfully both inside and outside the classroom.
4. Commitment to the St. John's Program, especially as demonstrated by a willingness and ability to teach in different parts of it.
5. Sensitivity and responsiveness to the needs of the College community.

There are several ways in which tutors demonstrate the degree to which they meet these standards. Quality of classroom teaching is conveyed through the student reports cited above. These reports are generally balanced and discerning. A student will typically indicate strong points and weak points of a tutor's classroom teaching, including helpfulness in paper conferences and overall accessibility outside of class. Most students allow their names to appear in the report. The Assistant Dean can aid the assessment of classroom teaching by informing the Dean and Instruction Committee of any difficulties students have reported to this office, and of conversations with a tutor about student complaints. It is of the utmost importance that the Dean and Assistant Dean direct the student to speak with the tutor about any problems with a class.

The pairing of non-tenured and tenured tutors in Seminar is a potent aid to assessment, as it is to faculty development. The tenured co-leader's report plays a major role in determining the candidate's ability to lead discussion, listen patiently and thoughtfully, ask good opening questions, and read the Seminar books with care and depth. The senior leader has ample occasion to assess the junior leader's ability to assess student learning, and is responsible for bringing difficulties to the attention of the junior partner and offering advice (being careful, however, not to disrupt the seminar and the equal share the co-leaders have in guiding discussion). The College should promote this practice more consistently and remind senior co-leaders of their role in the assessment and improvement of teaching.

Archons play a similar role in assessment. Since the archon meeting takes place weekly, the archon (usually, a tenured tutor) has frequent opportunities to offer advice and guidance, and to assess the candidate's ability to learn new and difficult material, willingness to enter into discussion of details and fundamental questions, capacity for close reading, and overall quality of mind.

Other opportunities for assessment include lectures given by the candidate, post-lecture question periods, work in the composition and improvement of instructional materials, participation in faculty seminars, formal or informal study groups, committee work and other services to the College, and informal conversation with colleagues.

Assessment opportunities for tutors also come directly from students in their classes. Strictly speaking, classes at St. John's are the students' classes, not the tutor's; and students, mindful of this defining feature of the College and deeply interested in the progress and well-being of the whole class, sometimes bring difficulties to the tutor's attention, in don rags and conferences (see Assessment of Student Learning), and informally outside of class. Students who have been shy about doing so are strongly encouraged to be more forthright in talking to their tutors about problems. Often a student helps simply by offering the tutor suggestions about class dynamics or assignments. (Student assistants in Laboratory and Music can be extremely helpful here, especially for tutors teaching these classes for the first time.) Such feedback from students plays an essential role in the assessment and improvement of teaching.

Although excellence in classroom teaching is obviously essential to assessment and to our Mission, our first criterion is excellence of intellect and imagination. The primacy of this criterion stresses the fact that teaching and learning at St. John's are not confined to the classroom, that the tutor's influence on students, inside and outside the classroom, ultimately draws its depth and interest from the tutor's intellectual passion and quality of mind, and that the tutor is expected to nourish the intellectual lives of fellow tutors as well as students—to contribute to the whole community of learning. In this regard, the recent increase in funded summer study groups (see Faculty Development in the report on The Teaching Faculty), in addition to offering more opportunity for improved classroom teaching, also offers more opportunity for intellectual growth, and for assessing a non-tenured tutor's quality of mind.

Recommendations

- The Dean and Instruction Committee should continue to ensure that recently appointed tutors are made sufficiently aware of difficulties and criticisms expressed by tutors and students.

- Tenured Seminar co-leaders should be made more aware of their responsibility to give non-tenured partners feedback and criticism.
- The Dean should remind tutors insufficiently well known to the rest of the faculty of the importance of making themselves part of the community of learning.

Section C: Assessment of the Undergraduate Program (MSCHE XIV, AALE 13)
(*John Verdi, member of the Instruction Committee; Marilyn Higuera, member of the Steering Committee; members of the Instruction Committee)

Our undergraduate program undergoes informal review almost continuously through the conversation that takes place among tutors, among students, and between tutors and students. There are, however, four significant formal avenues for proposing and addressing issues affecting the curriculum, and making decisions about changes.

The Instruction Committee. A primary responsibility of the Instruction Committee is to review and, when necessary, revise the curriculum. (For a fuller account of its duties, see The Teaching Faculty under Faculty Leadership: Dean and Instruction Committee.) This year the Committee has been actively involved in the College's Self-Study. In addition to reading, discussing, and emending drafts of self-study reports on Assessment, Graduate Institute, Admissions, Library, Print Shop and Bookstore, it discussed drafts of all reports on the undergraduate program, located problematic areas, and selected topics for discussion at faculty meetings.

In its review of Seminar readings, the Committee considers the reports of the Seminar "recorders" (see below). These reports may suggest changes in the reading list, or at least signal problems with readings (such as their selection, length, or position in the list). Occasionally, the Instruction Committee itself initiates changes to the Seminar reading list, though most suggestions come from tutors who are currently teaching, or have recently taught, the Seminars for which the changes are being suggested.

In Tutorials and Laboratories, archons in their annual reports summarize the experiences of the tutors teaching particular classes that year (see below). The Dean reads these reports (as well as those sent from the Santa Fe campus) and brings to the Instruction Committee suggestions for substantive changes in readings or scheduling.

The Instruction Committee sometimes solicits revisions of existing manuals or even the writing of a new manual. At other times, tutors take on themselves the task of revising or writing manuals, and bring these materials to the Instruction Committee for review and possible inclusion.

The Committee also oversees the Program by determining Preceptorial topics from among those proposed by tutors of Junior and Senior Seminars (see The Undergraduate Program). It decides for the most part what funded faculty study groups will be offered—some of which result in suggestions for changes to the curriculum, though that is not usually their main intent. It determines the readings to be discussed in faculty seminars (three per year), and the topic for discussion in monthly faculty meetings. The Committee also advises the Dean on his biennial *Statement of Educational Policy and Program*. Finally, the Instruction Committee reviews proposed topics for Community Seminars, Executive Seminars, and Continuing Education.

Although curricular review is an essential duty of the Instruction Committee, sometimes it must take a backseat to other important concerns, especially faculty appointments and re-appointments. In years when there are many reappointments, the

review work of the Committee may lag significantly. To address this problem, the Committee has sometimes delegated the responsibility of reviewing Seminar readings, selections, and manuals used in Tutorials and Laboratories to certain Committee members. Such delegation has worked well and should be continued.

As stated in the report on The Teaching Faculty, the two halves of the Instruction Committee (Annapolis and Santa Fe) meet once a year to discuss instructional issues that affect both campuses (such as minor divergences in the curricula), and to learn from each other how things are being done on the other campus. The overriding motivation for such a meeting is to ensure that the undergraduate program, as it is instantiated on the two campuses, maintain unity of principle and flexibility in practice. The Joint Meeting is probably not enough to keep the two campuses acting as one College regarding instructional matters. It has been suggested that other exchanges of tutors, either for the purpose of discussing specific curricular issues or for holding seminars on books for a few days, would contribute to instructional unity. In considering this suggestion, however, the Dean and Instruction Committee must make sure that such exchange does not distract tutors from conversing with and getting to know colleagues on their home campus.

The Faculty Meeting. The monthly faculty meeting plays an important role in Program assessment (for its other functions, see The Teaching Faculty). To ensure that such assessment take place regularly, and not be overwhelmed by the more administrative business at hand, we now devote at least an hour of every meeting to thorough discussion of some instructional topic determined by the Dean and Instruction Committee. Recent topics have included "What does it mean to call the Seminar the heart of the undergraduate program at St. John's?" and "What are we trying to accomplish in the Freshman Language Tutorial?" (As stated above, the current Self-Study has been a rich source of topics for discussion.) In the course of these discussions, suggestions may arise for changes in the way we do things. Sometimes discussions revolve around more particular, and sweeping, suggestions. Recently, for example, the faculty discussed the possible consequences of re-configuring the entire Mathematics and Laboratory curriculum. These sorts of discussions provide an occasion for the faculty to consider in depth in what ways the current curriculum falls short of an ideal, and in what ways it succeeds in achieving the goals of the College. Finally, major instructional proposals, as described in Article X of the Polity, are also discussed and voted on in faculty meetings, though these tend to be rare.

The Archon Meeting, Archon Report, and Recorders. Archons are tutors responsible for leading weekly meetings of all tutors who, along with them, are teaching the same Tutorial or Laboratory. In addition to providing regular help and support to tutors, especially those teaching the class for the first time (see The Teaching Faculty, under Faculty Development), archon meetings are a natural means of weekly Program assessment for Tutorials and Laboratories. The archon distributes materials collected from previous years and, at the end of the year, submits to the Dean a written report of what went well and what did not, sometimes with suggestions for improvements that tend to arise in the course of the weekly meetings. These reports are routinely consulted by subsequent archons and are probably the main institutional vehicle for assessing and improving the Program.

Each year's Seminar is also assigned a "recorder," a tutor teaching that class who is responsible for gathering impressions and suggestions from other tutors about the books read in Seminar. The recorder presents a written report to the Dean and Instruction Committee for review. These reports are not usually consulted by other tutors, as are the archon reports. The reports of archons and recorders form the basis of self-study reports on the undergraduate program.

Archon reports vary in detail and in suggestions for review and revision. Some reports contain instructional materials distributed during the year, a practice that should be encouraged. Reports sometimes include detailed comments on errors or obscurities in manuals, or proposals for introducing new readings or eliminating others. The Dean reads all the archon reports and brings to the Instruction Committee for discussion only major issues. This year all members of the Instruction Committee received copies of all archon reports, and were delegated to review certain ones carefully and then report back to the whole Committee.

The Student Committee on Instruction. The Student Committee on Instruction (SCI) consists of eleven members, two from each class plus two co-chairs and a secretary, chosen by the Delegate Council (the student government). The SCI meets every week to discuss issues concerning the Program of the College and general instructional matters. They host forums for the College community, during which some of these questions are discussed. Several years ago, for example, they initiated public discussion about the Music Tutorial and the place of music in the curriculum. This year they held similar discussions, at the suggestion of the Dean, on the topic of the Dean's *Statement of Educational Policy and Program*, namely, the continued development and use of instructional materials, such as manuals.

The SCI meets with the Dean several times a year to discuss what matters interest them and the student body as a whole, and also to ask advice on what issues the Dean and Instruction Committee might like to see aired. There is also a regular meeting of the SCI with the Instruction Committee in the spring. In recent years, the SCI has been instrumental in persuading the Instruction Committee to supplement the Junior Mathematics manual with primary readings, as is currently done on the Santa Fe campus. The SCI is also at work on a manual of its own to help sophomores review Greek before the start of the year. Further, when the SCI expressed its concern about the absence of tracking in Junior Language, the Instruction Committee felt it incumbent to express the rationale for this policy in writing. Also, the SCI has taken on the responsibility of arranging for tutors to lead pre-lecture seminars on the topics of Friday Night Lectures.

The SCI is an active, serious group of students who take a deep interest in the curriculum and the life of learning at the College. Their efforts in Program assessment would be more effective if time could be found for more contact between them and members of the Instruction Committee. It would be helpful, for example, if members of the Instruction Committee regularly attended forums scheduled by the SCI.

Concluding Remarks. Although we avoid change for its own sake, and rarely "experiment," the undergraduate program is under annual formal review. The purpose of such review is not always, or even primarily, for the sake of making major changes, but for the sake of keeping ourselves reflective about why we do what we do, and making minor adjustments here and there. The Program has remained largely unchanged over the

course of many years of review by many different Deans and Instruction Committees. (The biggest changes tend to be the readings for Senior Seminar.) Our modes of Program assessment seem adequate to our needs at present. We must keep in mind, however, that the very tools by which we revise and assess must themselves, from time to time, be subjected to serious scrutiny.

Recommendations

- The Dean and Instruction Committee should continue to delegate duties of Program review.
- The Dean should appoint a member of the Committee (other than the Secretary) to record changes in Seminar readings, along with reasons for the changes.
- Members of the Instruction Committee should regularly attend forums of the Student Committee on Instruction.
- The reading of all archon reports by the entire Instruction Committee (with delegated reporting) should be continued.

Chapter Five: EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORT
Section A. Educational Materials and Environment

Subsection 1. Music Library, Student Assistants, Concerts (AALE 15)
(*Eric Stoltzfus, Tutor and Music Librarian; Peter Kalkavage, Chairman of the Steering Committee and Archon of Sophomore Music)

Music flourishes at the College despite the fact that there is no "music department" and the curriculum offers no formal training in performance. A student-organized *Collegium Musicum* plans concerts at least twice a year, with performances (including poetry recitals) by students, staff, and tutors. The St. John's Chorus has existed for many years and provides an opportunity for members of the College community to sing and perform great choral works. A smaller madrigal group and a small chamber orchestra have also performed for years. None of these groups requires auditions. The Music Library encourages and supports the formation of other ensembles. Part of what makes the variety of music groups so energetic, and the *Collegium Musicum* concerts so beloved, is that they depend on student organization and leadership.

The Music Library is an organic part of the teaching and learning of music within the curriculum. As an entity independent of the main Library, it is fittingly housed in Mellon Hall, where our Sophomore Music classes are conducted. The Music Library Collection consists of CD's, records, scores, and a small set of reference books—materials that support the work of the Music Tutorial. Our Collection, while below the standard of a research library, is adequate to the instructional goals of the Program.

Over two-thirds of the undergraduate student body sign out items in any given year, and the library is used frequently by music classes (which meet just across the hall): tutors fetch scores or recordings for use in class, and students prepare for class by listening to music at the listening stations. Often a classroom discussion leads to a quick trip across the hallway to bring a pertinent example to class. Even more often, students come to the library just after class to sign out something that has piqued their interest. The library has a very informal, inviting atmosphere and is often a center for conversation and communal listening. There is even an antique Steinway that does not remain silent. The College does not currently have a music computer lab, although some students have their own software for music instruction, theory, sequencing, and printing. A music computer lab would be extremely helpful to the teaching and learning of music, and to the production and emendation of music manuals.

To support student learning, experienced musicians among the students are hired as music assistants, who help music classes by playing piano, operating the stereo, or retrieving scores or recordings from the Music Library. An assistant often accompanies the singing in the choral practica. The greatest help offered by student assistants, however, is in class discussion: having recently been through the Tutorial, they can offer thoughtful suggestions to students in the class and help remove obstacles to learning. Assistants meet with students outside of class and have regular office hours in the Music Library for one-on-one assistance in music theory, score reading, paper writing, and playing melodies that the students compose. Assistants regularly remark on how valuable being an assistant is to their own continued study of music.

Our Concert Series offers performances three times a year in place of a Friday Night Lecture. For decades, these concerts have offered free admission for the public to performances by internationally renowned artists. But it is the large number of undergraduates who attend these concerts, and above all the students' focus and attention, that most impresses artists who come to the College.

Recommendation

- The College should look into providing computer technology that would support the teaching and learning of music, and the production and improvement of instructional materials.

Subsection 2. The Laboratory Directorship (AALE 15)

(*Mark Daly, Director of Laboratories; Joseph Macfarland, member of the Steering Committee; Nicholas Maistrellis, Tutor))

In Laboratory classes at the College, tutors and students not only read great books of natural science but also reenact many of the experiments and observations that inspired these books. We turn our attention to those appearances and experiences that stimulate the articulation of theory in order to reflect on how and why such theories are formulated. To help with classroom experiments, the Laboratory Director selects and trains twenty-six student assistants, supervises the setup of experiments, and maintains equipment and resources. The Director is also responsible for assessing the success of the practica and subsequently troubleshooting, designing or redesigning practica, and assisting tutors in doing the same. The position of Director requires not only positive knowledge of biology, chemistry, physics, and the lab equipment, but also familiarity with diverse aspects of the undergraduate program and with seminal texts in the history of science.

Laboratory assistants are students on work-study who are assigned for a year to a specific class and work approximately ten hours per week. They set-up and break down experiments, support students in their laboratory work, and serve as a general resource for the tutor. Assistants are required to attend a weekly meeting with the Director to prepare for the immediate needs of each experiment. The position of laboratory assistant is publicly advertised; students submit an application and the names of tutors who can recommend them. The Director interviews the candidates and discusses their work with tutors. In general, only students with strong recommendations and an inclination toward the sciences are selected. The exact role of the assistant varies from class to class depending on the abilities of the assistant and preferences of the tutor. In a few cases the assistant merely prepares equipment for the practica. But in most cases the assistant is more integrated into the classroom, participates in conversations, shares the curiosity and inquisitiveness of the students, and regards the class as an occasion for intellectual growth. The Director and the Laboratory tutors should be mindful of the more substantive role of the laboratory assistant.

The Director is also responsible for ensuring that safety procedures are followed in the classroom and that the labs are maintained at a high level of cleanliness. At the weekly meetings he presents safety procedures to laboratory assistants; these same procedures are communicated to students in the classroom. With the recent renovations of the classrooms (completed in 2002) new safety equipment has been installed, such as eyewashes, safety showers, fume hoods, and first aid kits.

In the recent renovation of Mellon Hall, the labs were completely redesigned and rebuilt beginning with basic electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and HVAC systems. New cabinets and countertops were installed. The labs were designed by members of the faculty in consultation with the Laboratory Director and interested students. Each lab was designed to be self-sufficient in equipment and materials; only the most expensive pieces of equipment are shared and stored in a central storage area. This self-sufficiency of the labs has allowed us to convert former "prep rooms" for classroom experiments into "project rooms" where small groups of tutors and students can conduct investigations together. This change required us to purchase much more equipment and other supplies. Both the renovations and the purchase of materials were aided by grants from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation. The HHMI grant also allowed us to build and equip a small modern biology lab for faculty and student use. With the new facilities, tutors and students have already conducted joint investigations in the areas of plant ecology, plant tissue culture, neurology, elementary mechanics, and electricity and magnetism. As the possibilities of these new facilities become better known, it is hoped that more members of the College community will use them.

Recommendations

- At the beginning of each calendar year, the Director should ask each Laboratory tutor to answer briefly several questions about the work of the lab assistant in that class, for the purpose of assisting the Director in selecting assistants for the following academic year.
- At the beginning of each academic year, the archon for each Laboratory class should attend the first meeting of the Director with the lab assistants in order to set the tone for the work conducted that year.

Subsection 3. The Library (AALE 15)

(*Lisa Richmond, Librarian; Joseph Macfarland, member of the Steering Committee)

Purpose and Collections. The Library's purpose is to support the College's Mission, pursued through the reading and discussion of great works of the Western tradition. These works are themselves intangible, but are conveyed to us through physical, written books. The Library assists in understanding these works by providing a broad range of editions and translations of the books through which these works have been conveyed—whether currently in print or published centuries ago. While the bookstore is able to supply only those books currently in print, the Library can serve as an historical repository of editions acquired in the past.

The Library supports tutors in their classroom preparation and in the ongoing work of evaluating and modifying the Program. It aims at providing the complete works of Program authors (in the original languages as well as in translation), and works not currently on the Program but which may once have been or which may be in the future. The acquisitions program also provides, to the extent that funds allow, books that may cast light on Program works in the form of commentaries or other scholarly monographs.

Our Mission Statement describes liberal education as having the characteristics of radical inquiry, the capacity to wonder, and the pursuit of wisdom. The Library supports these characteristics, even when the topic does not belong to the Program in the strict sense. If our aims are fully realized, then, as our students become more philosophically adventurous, they will naturally desire to explore ideas and questions that go beyond the Program. The Library provides thoughtful, beautiful, and interesting books for this kind

of exploration, and we attempt to bring these books to the community's attention in helpful ways. Some materials are purchased primarily for students, others for tutors. Intrinsic excellence, in either case, is more important for us than "subject matter" simply. Because acquisitions at St. John's are not made at the request of departments, the Librarian must have a share in the intellectual life of the College and familiarity with the tutors: these promote selections suited to work in the Program and to the inquiries that frequently lead beyond it.

During the last decade, Program works have begun to appear in forms other than the traditional book. We have begun to evaluate these alternative forms for their suitability to the Library's collections. Although our community doubts that the traditional book can be improved upon as the ideal medium for serious reading, other formats can enrich our experience of Program works. An excellent example of this is furnished by digital facsimiles of early editions of Program works that are being offered on CD ROM by the Octavo Corporation. These high quality scholarly editions enable students and tutors to view on screen the Kelmscott Chaucer or the 1543 Nuremburg edition of Copernicus' *De Revolutionibus.*

Part of the acquisitions budget is also spent on Internet-based resources. These enable tutors to keep abreast of publications and developments in fields of particular interest to them, and supply access to a broader journal literature than we can afford for our physical periodicals collection. Students also regularly use some of these resources, such as the Internet version of the Oxford English Dictionary. At present, these digital resources are available to our community only within the campus computer network: members of our community are limited to using the resources either on campus or at home using the dial-in service. The College should install proxy server software on the campus network, which would enable everyone to reach these resources using any Internet service provider. This is particularly important for those who live outside the local area code (and thus incur long-distance charges when dialing in to the network). It is recommended that the College make the provision of this service a priority.

The head Librarian undertakes the acquisitions program with the assistance of a committee of three tutors. The President appoints these tutors, with one of the three rotating off the committee each year. This enables all interests to be represented and balanced over time. Any tutor or student is encouraged to suggest titles for acquisition at any time. A focused acquisitions program is only the first step; once materials are acquired they must be made available to readers and cared for so that they may last as long as possible. Competent cataloguing, effective circulation policies, and book preservation activities are all essential.

The Library employs a librarian to manage the catalogue. Cataloguing is conducted always with an eye to making the collection as searchable and "browsable" as possible for our particular community. One of the biggest changes the Library has experienced in the past ten years has been the conversion of its card catalogue to a database (1995). Staff members attend the database company's national meetings and training workshops each year in order to keep informed of the company's plans and products. An attractive Web-access interface was added to the catalogue in 2001. This Web-based catalogue is accessible from any Internet location and enables more sophisticated searching than was possible from 1995 to 2001. Despite these significant and undeniable gains, we also recognize that some advantages of the old card system have been lost for good. We try to

be reflective and careful in considering the benefits and the drawbacks of potential technological changes, and bring only those changes that demonstrate substantial merit.

In 1999 circulation policies were changed in order to improve service. The changes have increased the availability of materials and enabled better recall of materials when other borrowers need them. This ability to recall books promptly is particularly important because books may be borrowed for an entire semester. In addition, the number of books not returned at the end of the semester has dropped substantially. With less money being spent replacing copies, more is available for new acquisitions.

We are also fortunate to have a bookbinder who trains students in the care and repair of Library materials. We are one of a small number of libraries of our size to maintain a book bindery on site. The head Librarian reads and attends conferences to learn the best methods of preserving paper-based, photographic, audio, video, and digital materials, as well as handling disaster preparedness and prevention.

Staff and Services. We have brought several improvements to this area. Two years ago the head librarian re-organized staff positions in order to bring knowledgeable staff more directly in contact with the Library's users. We added a third librarian for reader services, who staffs the reference desk (which had previously been vacant) and also runs an improved interlibrary

Until 1999 the Library's hours were extremely limited during summer and semester breaks. This was a cause of concern since many tutors spend their extra time in the summer reading or writing projects that draw upon the Library's resources. The Library is now open seven days a week year round (with few exceptions), and has extended evening summer hours.

The Library assesses its effectiveness in a number of ways. We have conducted surveys on occasion and regularly examine use statistics, but obtain our best information through conversation with the Library's users. Tutors' opinions and needs are discussed more formally at Library committee meetings. A recent innovation in service to tutors is the monthly e-mail distribution of the list of recent acquisitions. To improve communication with students, the head Librarian asked the Student Committee on Instruction to elect several students to serve as informal student representatives. This group meets with the librarians once a semester with an open agenda. In addition, during this past academic year the group organized a forum to elicit students' opinions and questions about the Library and its role in the St John's Program.

The Library does provide printed materials, post notices, and publish articles in the student newspaper, but these means of sharing news are less effective than conversation. For this approach to prosper, the librarians need to be personally acquainted with as many students and tutors as possible. It is here that some obstacles have arisen. Our academic program is such that Library use is not a necessity. At other colleges, the acquisition of library skills is essential to the student's academic success, and thus there is a close connection between the library and the classroom. Librarians enter the classroom and professors bring classes to the library in order to teach students how to undertake research assignments. In contrast, the nature of the St. John's Program makes doubtful the librarian's traditional role in bibliographic instruction. As a result, the librarians are relatively unknown to the students, and in some cases also to tutors. It is difficult for the librarians to become better acquainted with the needs and interests of the people the Library serves when there are no structured academic activities that bring them together.

Students do not need to learn to use the Library in a sophisticated way, but if they are using the Library at all, they need to know how to search the catalogue. We also want them to become aware more generally of the books and other Library resources that interest them and are available to be enjoyed. As stated previously, our community recognizes such exploration as a natural outgrowth of the Program. It is our experience that there is a pent-up interest on the part of both students and tutors for the lesser-known resources offered by the Library. When we do tell a student or tutor about something of interest, the most common response we hear is "I didn't know we had that!" The question of how we can best improve this situation, while remaining true to the aims of Program, is a common topic of conversation among the Library staff.

As one means of becoming better acquainted with students outside of the classroom, we have begun hosting an annual Library open house. We promote this event primarily to freshmen, with the hope that by providing this early opportunity to meet one another socially, they will come back for assistance throughout their years on campus. In addition to our open house, we are seeking better ways to participate in the fall orientation program.

Facilities and Budget. The most significant addition to the Library during the past ten years is the new Greenfield Library building. The move to the new building was completed in 1996 and now provides the community with a spacious, light-filled, and very comfortable study space. In addition to meeting study needs, it contains adequate space to properly house and care for the Library's growing collections. The sole defect of the building has been the persistent leaks in the basement annex. While the College continues to probe and patch the sources of these leaks, it is possible that a more costly solution will have to be implemented at some time in the future.

The Library currently provides nine public access computers connected to the Internet. This number appears to be adequate to meet our needs. These workstations are provided and cared for by the office of information technology. From about 1999 to 2001 the Library's ability to serve its users was severely hindered by old computer hardware and a lack of adequate computer support on campus. Since 2001 the Library has benefited from improved computer support, and in 2002 new workstations were installed.

Most lines in the Library budget have grown throughout the 1990's in keeping with increased needs. The acquisitions line has remained at $38,000 for the past ten years, but is supplemented by an additional restricted book-buying fund. When this fund is taken into consideration, we find that money spent on acquisitions has increased steadily each year. This increased expenditure is due to increased book prices rather than to the number of books purchased, which has remained fairly constant. When this restricted fund is depleted in approximately five years, the acquisitions budget will need to be increased by about 20% the first year, and then by inflation-based increments in successive years, in order for us to maintain our steady rate of growth. The very steep increases to the cost of periodical subscriptions during the 1990's is a major concern for many academic library budgets; our Library has not been particularly affected since we have a small number of periodical subscriptions and do not generally carry the expensive science titles. We have not had to drop any periodical titles, but neither have we been able to add any new ones.

The Library continues to play a central role in the life of the community. We are seeking ways to make that role more evident, but our concerns are minor when we

recognize the depth of support the Library enjoys on campus. The Library is not only a repository serving the sustained reading of great books on the Program: it is also a portal to the world of ideas beyond. Its purpose is to provide access not to "information" simply, but to the materials that help us become more reflective about ourselves and our world.

Subsection 4. The Print Shop and Bookstore
(*Christopher Colby, Print Shop Manager; Robin Dunn, Director of the Bookstore; Peter Kalkavage, Chairman of the Steering Committee)

The Print Shop. The primary function of the print shop and bookstore is to ensure timely availability of all written material used in the Program. The print shop prints tutor-written manuals, reprints of Friday night lectures, and copier-generated publications. It also prints *The St. John's Review*, two student-run publications (*Energeia* and the *Gadfly*), College letterhead and envelopes, and many brochures used by various offices. It processes mail for the College and can, for example, print, process, and mail information to donors or alumni all in the same day.

The print shop has a Manager, two part-time staffers, plus five students. It is a lean operation that can be sorely taxed during periods of high volume. The current staffing is adequate; and the workload, though at times challenging, is manageable. Effectiveness here derives from a highly motivated staff, good relations with the students who work at the shop, and a strong sense of teamwork and devotion to the College. The print shop does an enormous amount of work in a small but adequate space. The occasionally staggering amount of work, coupled with severe restrictions of time and cost, requires excellent technology, which the print shop fortunately has.

One of the most valuable functions of the shop is to serve as a center for tutors who need copies of materials for both class and personal use. Open throughout the entire workday, the shop regularly responds, often at a moment's notice, to tutor requests. Tutors constantly rely on this service, which the staff offers with unfailing friendliness and sensitivity to the time-constraints of tutors and their classes. The print shop has always labored under an unusually heavy burden of demands and deadlines. One recent change—the addition of a faculty computer room with an efficient copy machine—has made that burden somewhat lighter: faculty can now use this machine for impromptu copying of materials for class, and for making copies on weekends and evenings, when the print shop is closed.

The print shop cannot do its job effectively, and manuals cannot appear in the bookstore in time for class use, unless tutors request manuals in a timely way. Tutors should give more advance notice of printing needs, especially for manuals that have undergone recent revision. This recommendation is reiterated below.

The Bookstore. The bookstore provides the texts used in all classes, and reading material for the College community at large. It works in close cooperation with the print shop. In recent years this collaboration has been very effective. It also acts as a center for special orders and copyright clearance. The bookstore is not only where members of the community buy books: it is also a place where tutors and students run into each other, enjoy browsing, find out about recent publications, discuss the virtues and vices of various translations, and converse. Since the bookstore has a prominent place in the

community of learning, the Manager must be vigilant in maintaining a tone and atmosphere supportive of this communal life.

Recent improvements include the employment of a professional bookseller as Manager, and the establishment of a computerized system of inventory control. The latter has been effective in widening inventory selection, replenishing stock more rapidly, improving the special order and mail order systems, laying the groundwork for a future expansion into online selling, and increasing revenue greatly. Another recent improvement is the expansion of hours to Saturday afternoons.

Although recent staffing has been adequate, facilities are far from adequate. Insufficient space has prevented the bookstore from meeting demand regarding certain books, stationery, and general display space. More space is also required for another computer, which will give customers direct access to real-time bibliographies. The bookstore would also better serve its collegial function as a center of community life if there were more ample space.

Challenges, which occasionally evolve into problems, include lack of reliable, timely information from tutors about additional required texts; poor appreciation among faculty of the importance of copyright clearance; lack of clear and timely communication from faculty about changes to upcoming manuals; occasional difficulties in obtaining materials from the print shop when other offices impose sudden demands on it; faculty who run up large debts at the bookstore; and shoplifting.

To take up this last problem first, a security system would help counteract thievery. The Manager is currently investigating various systems. As for faculty debt, there is, and will continue to be, a limit on credit. But more needs to be done: it is recommended (by way of a return to former practice) that if a tutor runs up a debt that remains unpaid by the end of the academic year, the amount owed will be deducted from the tutor's salary for the month of June, so that the bookstore's accounts can be put in order by the end of the fiscal year. In addition, faculty must be informed, early in the year, of the College's policy regarding the payment of debts to the bookstore.

The College clearly needs to improve communication between the bookstore and faculty. There is a bookstore committee, on which faculty regularly serve. The committee is helpful, but tutors generally need to acquire a better understanding of how the bookstore works regarding the timely provision of texts and manuals, and so become more aware that advance notice must be given to allow for renewed copyright clearance.

Faculty concerns focus on the importance of maintaining a bookstore that is truly distinctive of the College. Some faculty express unease about the prominent display of sale items other than books. In becoming more general and all-purpose, the bookstore runs the risk of losing its St. John's tone and character. With the recommended expansion of facilities, it is important that new space be used in ways that support the Program and preserve the academic imprint of the College.

In former years, the bookstore Manager reported to the Dean. In the 80's this practice was changed in response to concerns about profitability: it was decided that the Manager would instead report to the Treasurer. Given the prosperity of the bookstore over the last ten years, those concerns are no longer an issue. A return to our former practice would provide a more direct line of communication between bookstore and faculty, and would acknowledge the bookstore's rightful place as an academic center of College life.

Recommendations

- Tutors should give plenty of advance notice to the print shop and bookstore regarding the need for books and other printed materials, especially for recently revised manuals.
- The bookstore Manager should consider installing a security system.
- The College should find a way to give the bookstore more space, which should be used in ways that support the Program and are appropriate to our community of learning.
- The College should continue its policy of limiting tutor credit and, in addition, deduct any balance of debt at the end of the academic year.
- The Dean should remind tutors, at the beginning of the year, of the policy regarding bookstore credit, the need for the timely ordering of texts, and the importance of copyright clearance.
- The bookstore Manager should report to the Dean.

Subsection 5. The Office of Information Technology

(*Erin Griffin, Director of Information Technology; Judith Seeger, Assistant Dean; Joseph Macfarland, member of the Steering Committee; Fred H. Billups, Treasurer)

In planning and facilitating the use of information technology at St. John's, our work must serve the Mission of the College in its distinctive conception of a liberal arts education. Installing services for automation cannot be an end in itself. The current Self-Study process provides us with a useful occasion to review the progress made in the last ten years, evaluate our current capacities, and consider future needs in light of the Mission of the College.

Since the last Self-Study, computer technology has become pervasive at St. John's, and the College has made extensive changes in the staffing, systems, financial support, and overall sophistication of information technology resources. The position of systems administrator was established in 1993, and over the last ten years the staffing has gradually increased to six IT professionals. In 1994 the use of the Internet was launched, driven forward by the needs of the Admissions Office. At the same time, the College drafted a long-range plan to develop a campus-wide infrastructure in order to connect offices that share information. In accord with this plan, the College selected a new software vendor, Quodata, and the software was installed campus-wide 1996-1998. The installation required that the College substantially upgrade its hardware as well as install fiber optic cable throughout the campus. Internet access was provided for students by cabling all dormitory rooms.

The Office of Information Technology employs a staff of six IT professionals and several part-time students. This office makes all technology purchases for the campus, controls all license agreements with vendors, and maintains technology assets campus-wide. Although the office is quite small, its size reflects both the lack of emphasis on technology in the Program and the strong intellectual resource of the student employees. The dependence on student employees presents a challenge to the office: first, students work only part-time; second, our ability to find specific, deep skills varies with the pool of students from year to year. In addition, the full-time staff continually requires costly and time-consuming training in new technology. A second challenge lies in the office space: although the office was renovated in 2002 in order to better utilize available space, space constraints continue to adversely affect the work environment.

Most full-time employees of the College have dedicated workstations maintained on a four-year life cycle. All members of the College community have access to computers

through the workplace or a dedicated lab. Each computer is configured with a current operating system, a suite of productivity applications, a Web browser, access to email, and access to a local or network printer. Where appropriate, other approved software is installed. This configuration, while minimal, is robust and technologically current, directed to ease of use and administration.

With regard to the maintenance and use of desktop computers, the IT office faces two challenges: first, in order to maintain currency and functionality, desktop computers need to be transitioned to a three-year life cycle. Second, because staff hiring practices do not currently emphasize computer skills, many staff members are not fully capable in the use of their workstation.

This second challenge has taken an especially complex form in the case of tutors, who were not supplied with workstations. In the past, by purchasing computers at their own expense and for their own use, tutors did not typically keep current with changes in hardware and software. As a result, their software was often not compatible with the recently installed Exchange 2000 messaging system, creating the perception among some tutors that "things don't work." As a result, the IT office spent many hours trying to support non-standard software. In order to relieve the pressures of this situation, the IT director proposed that the College provide each tutor a workstation with the configuration used campus-wide. Projections indicate that the cost of the hardware will be more than compensated by the reduction of hours spent by IT staff supporting non-standard software. The plan has been approved by the President, in consultation with the Dean, Treasurer, Instruction Committee, and faculty at large. In the future, tutors will be assisted by the IT office in the same manner as other College staff. It is hoped that this will help to relieve tension between some tutors and IT staff.

St. John's College provides direct Internet access through multiple T-1 lines. Network connections are primarily 10 Base T in dormitory rooms, and a mix of 10 and 100 Base T in the office and public areas. Network access ports in public areas are logically segregated from the administrative network for data security reasons. All users are managed through Active Directory and are provided with email accounts, authentication capability, and shared storage space on network servers. The network is protected through the use of firewall appliances. Windows 2000/Active Directory allows for simple administration of the logically segregated networks, and also provides better integration with the Santa Fe campus. The principal challenge here lies in maintaining a sufficient capacity: the currently installed 10-Base-T infrastructure lags behind current standards because of the cost of upgrading. As the College becomes more dependent on networked applications, this will require funding. Increases in student demand for personal-use Internet access will also require additional investment, since students are highly computer-aware and utilize significant bandwidth.

Our previous administrative database system, Quodata, was purchased in 1999 by Jenzabar. This company also purchased CARS, the product in use on the Santa Fe campus, thus facilitating our plan to integrate data between campuses. This product supports work in accounting, advancement, and student affairs. The product has been unimpressive; furthermore, IT staff members have not been satisfied with their working relationship with staff at Jenzabar. We are, however, working at improving the relationship with Jenzabar, and users have been more satisfied with the database over the past year. Continuing the relationship with Jenzabar should facilitate the further integration of Annapolis and Santa Fe databases.

Other shared applications include Exchange 2000, the College's collaborative messaging platform. This is an excellent tool for our environment, simple to administer and robust in nature. We use Outlook Web Access to provide mail service to non-administrative or shared computers, including off-campus access to mail. This application serves our community well because it permits mail to be accessed from any Web-accessible location, whether by tutors working from home or by students living off campus. Finally, we provide a limited number of educational shared applications, including access to online services such as the Perseus project, and research databases such as JSTOR (see report on the Library).

The IT office has focused on providing services and facilities to the College for the sake of automating operations formerly completed by manual calculation and paper-intensive filing systems. We have also installed high-speed access to the Internet and related services for the benefit of admissions and student life. In addition, we should consider how computer technology might be utilized in order to further the ends of a liberal arts education as it is conducted at St. John's. At a College where education proceeds primarily through the reading and discussing of great books, computer technology will play an auxiliary role, but we can probably make better use of this technology, and it should be included in our continuing deliberations on the improvement and refining of instructional aids. For example, as mentioned in the report on the Senior Laboratory, we could make use of software that illustrates phenomena and simulates experiments in wave mechanics and cellular biology. Our newly renovated labs are wired for computer workstations but they have not been installed. Similar programs could serve as instructional aids in our study of geometry and astronomy, and even music. In addition, tutors frequently produce on their own initiative instructional aids such as translations or notes to mathematical works; these instructional aids are often passed from tutor to tutor largely by chance. All such documents could be converted to digital format, catalogued for easy discovery, and made available to the College community for convenient retrieval and study.

Since tutors in the course of their usual activities have little need to expand their computer skills, infrequently do they find themselves in a position to discover such resources and experiment with their use at the College. Thus, the gradual development of such resources will require continued reflection by the College and a deliberate effort to provide faculty or staff with the resources and time to explore such improvements. Progress will also require improved communication and greater coordination between the IT office and the teaching faculty. An ad hoc committee was formed to improve communication in the spring of 2002, but it has met intermittently and its future status remains undefined. The College might investigate formally establishing an advisory committee similar to the committees that advise the Library, Art Gallery, and other College resources. Such a committee would bring together tutors who desire to employ information technology to serve the Program and staff members, who have the expertise to determine what is feasible and how it could be accomplished. As faculty reflect on how computing systems could be used to benefit liberal education as we conceive it, the College will be better situated for planning future improvements for the IT office and the campus infrastructure.

Recommendations

- The College should explore ways to give the IT office more space.

- Tutors should be given workstations.
- We should explore ways in which additional IT services could serve the ends of the academic program.
- The College should explore the possibility of an IT advisory committee, composed of tutors and IT staff.

Subsection 6. The Elizabeth Myers Mitchell Art Gallery
(*Hydee Schaller, Director of the Gallery; Thomas May, Tutor and member of the Faculty Advisory Committee)

The Elizabeth Myers Mitchell Art Gallery, established in 1989, serves the St. John's community as well as the wider communities of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County through exhibitions of museum-quality works. Its primary purpose is to establish possible connections between the visual and the liberal arts and to promote exhibits of unique historical and regional interest. The Gallery compensates somewhat for the absence of the study of visual arts in the academic program, and provides students with the opportunity to see great art and engage in art educational programs.

The Mitchell Gallery hosts traveling exhibitions of diverse types and occasional self-curated exhibitions that are directly related to the academic curriculum of the College. Annual attendance is approximately 10,000 visitors and the Gallery has had 74 exhibitions open to the public to date. It is the only fully secure, climate controlled fine arts facility in the county. During each exhibition, the Gallery hosts lectures, gallery talks, family programs, and tours. Original works by artists such as Rembrandt, Bruegel, Durer, Tiepolo, Whistler, Renoir, Bonnard, Dove, Moore, Calder and Picasso have been featured, as have historical cartography, Japanese prints, and ceramics from the ancient Asian and Maya civilizations.

The staff consists of a full-time Director, a half-time art educator, and a half-time membership and volunteer coordinator. The art educator position was introduced after the last Self-Study, demonstrating the College's continued support of the Gallery's educational outreach. Seven St. John's students work as Federal Work Study security guards, and six volunteer docents assist the art educator.

Two main advisory groups work with the Gallery: the Mitchell Gallery Advisory Board and the Mitchell Gallery Faculty Advisory Committee. Since the last Self-Study, notable changes have been made to improve the efficiency and functioning of each group. The Mitchell Gallery Advisory Board consists of 30 Annapolis residents. Previously established as a subcommittee to the Board of the Friends of St. John's College, the members voted to become a separate board due to the independent character of their volunteer work. The primary purpose of the Advisory Board is to support the Gallery and to bring it recognition from the outside community. Because of the College's relatively small body of students and alumni donors, for the Gallery to succeed it must be regarded as a community resource and have patrons and financial support from the Annapolis community. In the last decade, membership has increased from 200 to 550 as a consequence of the Advisory Board's dedicated efforts.

The second advisory group, the Faculty Advisory Committee, consists of the Vice President of the College, four tutors, the Gallery Director, the art educator, a local artist, and three students. The student members (added since the last Self-Study) assist in the effort to reach our own community. This committee selects exhibitions from traveling exhibition services and determines some programming. Since 2001 this committee has

renewed its efforts to make the Gallery a greater campus resource by selecting exhibitions with the Program in mind.

The Gallery has had two self-curated exhibitions: the 1996 *Space and Place: Mapmaking East and West*, and the 2002 *The Sweet Uses of Adversity: Images of the Biblical Job*. Both demonstrated our commitment to complementing the Program: *Space and Place* made numerous associations with science and mathematics classes, and *Uses of Adversity* coincided with the sophomores' reading of the Book of Job. While the Faculty Advisory Committee firmly believes that self-curated exhibits are a primary means to elicit an engaged response from the College community, they involve notable financial and time constraints.

In 2001 six students formed the Mitchell Gallery Student Subcommittee (under the Student Committee on Instruction) for the purpose of providing a direct link between the Gallery and the student body. This subcommittee has planned several programs, including tutor and student-led discussions of exhibitions, an art study group, related art films, museum field trips, and exhibits of student work.

The two most important challenges remain those stated in the last Self-Study, despite progress made in each: support and involvement of the St. John's community and the development of the educational outreach program. Students make greater use of the Gallery, and more tutors use it as a resource for their classes, but we need to encourage more widespread use. For the outside community, we have extended the interpretive programs offered and plan to increase the number of visitors among both adults (through our new docent program) and children (through our family programs), always being careful to maintain the quality of our exhibits and interpretive programs with their strong connection to the College. We must also continue to attract patrons and foundations from the local community, assisted by the generosity, enthusiasm, and imagination of the Advisory Board.

Chapter Five: EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORT
Section B. Student Support Services (MSCHE IX, AALE C1-C7)
(*Judith Seeger, Assistant Dean; Fred H. Billups, Treasurer; Noreen F. Craven, Registrar; Roberta Gable, Director of Placement; Donna Jay, Internship Coordinator; Paul Mikesell, Chief of Security; Leo Pickens, Director of Athletics; Andrew Ransom, Director of Student Services; Brenda Robertson, Director of Counseling; Laura Sutton, Associate Director of College Health Services)

Subsection 1. The Assistant Dean's Office
A draft of the following report on the Assistant Dean's Office was given to several students for their responses and suggestions, all of which were read by members of the Steering Committee.

The Assistant Dean's Office is perhaps the office whose structure has changed the most since our 1993 Self-Study. The office then consisted of two Assistant Deans (both tutors) and a secretary. It now consists of one Assistant Dean, the Director of Student Services, the Coordinator of Student Services, a part-time secretary, and a student aide. Consistent with the Mission of the College, the Assistant Dean is a member of the teaching faculty, invited by the Dean to take this position for a three-year term. We are well aware that the price of this decision is a certain break in continuity and a lack of professional training in administrative services. We are persuaded, however, that only a tutor, with experience in the Program and insight into the particular challenges a St. John's student faces, can help students address those challenges and help parents understand what they entail. In this office we work together to provide the best services possible in this community, where students on the whole spurn institutional impositions beyond the largest mandate of the College: that they will study a particular curriculum in a particular way.

Our academic program is primary—a point with which our students concur unreservedly—but since human beings, with human needs, are engaged in that Program, the College is charged with helping them live as well as they can while they are here. The Assistant Dean's Office is the umbrella under which Student Services reside. We administer discipline and provide support services, including the switchboard, monitoring and enforcement of the attendance policy, freshman orientation, resident assistants and senior residents, and housing (both on-campus and off-campus assistance). The Assistant Dean also supervises security, health services, and counseling services.

Our community is characterized by smallness (468 students at this writing), intensity, and a sense that it actually is a community. The small size of the College and the fact that we are all engaged in a single academic program have a deep impact—usually for the better, sometimes, perhaps, for the worse—on everything we do. We know each other more intimately than would be possible at a larger school where students follow different courses of instruction. This provides a strong, informal network of support consisting of students, faculty, and staff members. Individuals may fall through that net, partly because we respect everyone's right to privacy, but the social fabric is impressively tight. One disadvantage is that students may feel scrutinized and judged by others, and sometimes they are. Also, relationships from outside the classroom may spill over into the classroom despite our attempt to separate our classes from everyday life (for example, by insisting that in class everyone address everyone else formally). The possibility of transfer to the Santa Fe campus, which many students employ simply to experience life in another part of the country, acts as a safety valve to release pressures that may become intolerable in such a small community.

The intensity of the community is another feature that has primarily positive effects but also potentially negative ones. Students do not remain at the College unless they are committed to the Program. This commitment does not end when class is over, but continues late into the night after seminar and pervades their waking hours. The intensity is exhilarating, but we ask a lot of our students, who may become exhausted: they often come to this office for help in finding ways to cope with stress.

With respect to disciplinary matters, our conviction has always been that students should learn to take responsibility for themselves and each other. On the whole, this works well at the College: in nearly every case in which some form of discipline is involved, the Assistant Dean is alerted to a situation by someone in the community: the Assistant Dean is involved when a situation has gotten beyond the point where it can be addressed by a community member. In this respect, the Office is properly reactive.

Disciplinary procedures are promulgated in the Student Handbook (revised every year in consultation with officers of the College), beginning with a statement of the three virtues we expect of every member of the community—civility, responsibility, and honesty—and continuing with ranges of discipline applicable to specific forms of misbehavior. Students are told at freshman orientation that they are responsible for knowing its contents. Separate sections describe formal grievance procedures for discrimination in general, and sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault in particular. The Handbook is currently undergoing thorough revision in order to incorporate the undergraduate and graduate handbooks into a single volume, improve its organization, and clarify language that over time may have become confusing.

We feel that it is important to be severe in disciplining offenses we deem intolerable, but we also take into account mitigating circumstances in individual cases. No one likes to be disciplined, and sometimes, inevitably, the friends of those disciplined question the punishments, but on the whole the community recognizes the need for disciplinary procedures administered by this Office. In the interest of fairness, we will now keep a separate record, without names, of punishments meted out for misbehavior. This will be a more efficient way of tracking discipline in an office whose officer changes every three years. In accordance with our goal of fostering responsibility, we have recently begun assigning community service in lieu of all or part of what would otherwise be a monetary fine. This has been very successful. When a case arises not covered by the Student Handbook, decisions are made and new policies are devised, in accord with the sense of the community and, when appropriate, the advice of the College lawyer.

Responsible alcohol use is an ongoing concern at St. John's College, as it is at any college or university. We address abuse with a range of punishments promulgated in the Student Handbook. The Assistant Dean's Office is also considering several changes in an attempt to reduce the prominence of beer at certain campus events. Among the steps being considered are: reducing the amount of beer available; requiring the club to charge for the cost of beverages; and limiting the hours of parties and the time alcohol is available. Primarily, however, we would like our students to do a better job of policing themselves. We also need to make our expectations and the reasons for them clear. To this end, we are meeting with organizers of parties and senior residents on this subject. Students reviewing this section expressed confidence in their classmates' capacity to conduct social events responsibly and expressed the hope that the Assistant Dean's Office will consult student organizations when formulating new rules.

Although we all have a single end, we are not entirely single-minded. Numerous student organizations exist, some formalized by the participation of the student government, others maintained simply by the motivation of individual students. We give students a great deal of responsibility for governing themselves. Perhaps the most important of the ongoing organizations is the Delegate Council, whose members the students elect from among themselves. This body, among other functions, holds the purse strings for a considerable amount of money, including the student activity fee of $100/semester, portions of which it awards to organizations proposed by students and chartered by the Council. A partial list illustrates the vitality and range of student activities: the Student Committee on Instruction, Gadfly, King William Players, St. John's Chorus, Madrigal Choir, Chamber Orchestra, Game Club, Midnight Dodgeball, Storytelling Club, Garden Club, Environmental Club, Photography Club, Waltz Club, Christian Fellowship, and on and on . . .

Recommendation

- In the interest of fairness, we should keep a record, without names, of punishments meted out for misbehavior.

Subsection 2. The Director of Student Services

The Director of Student Services is responsible for helping the Assistant Dean in the supervision of the non-academic lives of our students. To this end, he monitors undergraduate absences, organizes student housing, supervises the senior residents and resident assistants (RA's), works as the administrative advisor to student publications, and supervises the Switchboard. This position became full-time in June 2001.

Attendance. Because we believe that classes should be an occasion for active learning, class attendance is mandatory. The attendance policy is conveyed to freshmen at orientation and is described in detail in the Student Handbook. Tutors report absences to the Office of the Assistant Dean. After a certain number of absences, the student receives a letter from the Director of Student Services requiring that he or she come to the office to discuss the problem. The student is then put on absence probation. Subsequent absences require a discussion with the Assistant Dean. Excessive absences may lead to dismissal from the College. Extenuating circumstances, of course, are taken into account. But after a certain number of absences, whatever the reason, a student's education may be too severely compromised for the student to continue. Such cases are resolved through conversations with the student and the student's tutors.

Tracking absences has had the positive effect of alerting us to problems. There are many reasons why students may not attend class, some of them more serious than others. Conversations about absences frequently reveal underlying difficulties while there is still time to help a student. While violation of the attendance policy can lead to dismissal from the College, the question arises whether its primary function is support or discipline. Our current practice is uneasy accommodation between the two. Because classes depend on discussion, absences have a great effect on the entire class. The attendance policy can function as a kind of a stick, forcing students to do their duty. As a disciplinary tool, however, it has flaws. One of these is the dependence on tutors for reporting absences. Most tutors presently do report absences, and we are in the process of making reporting easier by allowing them to do so online. Not all absences are reported in a timely

manner, however, and a few tutors do not report them at all. This raises a question of fairness: How can we dismiss a student for excessive absences when another student can acquire as many or more absences without coming to our attention? Another difficulty arises from the necessary promulgation of our regulations: some students regard the limit as an allotted number of absences that they may safely accrue. The policy works as well as it does because the majority of students and tutors take attendance seriously.

Housing. The availability of on-campus housing is predicated on the belief that not all students will want to live on campus: we have never had, nor do we plan to have, housing for all students. Currently, we have 300 beds for a student population of 468. This number, however, is now not enough for all those who want to live on campus, largely because of diminishing availability of affordable off-campus housing in downtown Annapolis. Our long-term project is to build two new dormitories. When they are complete, including upgrading of current dormitory space, we will have added some 55 beds to the campus. In the mid term, with a new dormitory that we hope will be ready by August 2004, we will add some 45 beds.

Our room drawing, the process of selecting dormitory rooms for the following year, has been based on an old policy that required students to live on campus unless they had particular reasons for not doing so. Current policy requires only freshmen to live on campus, though again, exceptions are made in certain cases. Since juniors and seniors are older and more experienced, and thus are generally a stabilizing force, the College has also given them priority for on-campus housing. An unavoidable side effect, given our inability to house everyone, has been to diminish the housing available for sophomores. At the time this policy was initiated, finding housing in town was much easier and more affordable. Now there are many more students who wish to live on campus. More upperclassmen enter the room drawing, and because juniors and seniors have priority, they take space that would have gone to sophomores. The result is that sophomores are disproportionately being forced to live off campus, and we have begun hearing from them (and especially from their parents) that we are pushing off campus students who are less mature and have less experience with finding housing in this area. To respond to this complaint, and in the hope of developing a lasting policy that will be more suitable to all, this year we will change the room drawing process to make it more equitable.

Since affordable housing in Annapolis is increasingly difficult to obtain, the Assistant Dean's Office offers a part-time off-campus housing service that attempts to serve as a conduit of information between students and landlords. The Off Campus Housing Office was started in the academic year 1998-99. There are two problems with this office. One is that some students expect the College to "find" housing off campus for them: some parents share this expectation for their son or daughter. The purpose of the office, however, is to *facilitate* that search—not to find housing for students, or advocate with landlords on students' behalf, or intervene when unscrupulous landlords victimize students. The office is staffed by a graduate student who is paid for ten hours of work a week, and who does not have the funding to solicit information from those in the community about their rental units. The service, to repeat, is offered to help start a search—not to find something suitable for each student in need of off-campus housing. Upon reviewing this part of the report, some students expressed concern that the College, in the short term, lacks a plan sufficiently comprehensive to address adequately the lack

of on-campus housing and the difficulties of finding off-campus housing, problems that will be fully solved only by the completion of the new dormitory.

The second difficulty is that, logistically, the Off Campus Housing Office is not a place that can be easily supervised. The Director of Off Campus Housing (we plan to change the name to "coordinator") is supervised by the Director of Student Services, yet the two have very little contact because their offices are across the campus from each other: for the students' sake, it would be much better to have them closer to one another.

Freshman Orientation. We are constantly reviewing freshman orientation in an effort to provide the best possible introduction to the not-strictly-academic side of college life. In the interest of helping new freshmen get to know their RA's better, for example, we had campus and town tours led by the RA's. This did not work as well as expected, but the feedback was useful: we now know that the groups need to be smaller; that they should be comprised of students other than those who live on the same floor; and that they should be led by upperclassmen other than RA's (to introduce freshmen to the larger community). We are currently basing the new orientation plan on this feedback. Several weeks after orientation, we have a meeting with the student orientation leaders to receive their assessment of the event. We also plan to ask the freshmen for their assessment but have not yet decided exactly how or when it is best to do so.

Resident Assistants. To help our freshmen adjust to college life, each dormitory floor with freshmen has at least one resident assistant, often, two per floor. RA's are responsible upperclassmen who live in the dorms and assist other students in their adjustment to college life, but their positions differ from those of their counterparts at other schools. Unlike the majority of RA's at other colleges and universities, they do not enforce policies and are not required to develop "programming" for their residents. Their jobs are to help incoming freshmen learn how to study, how to socialize, and how to live here. Self-governance is a cornerstone of the community, and the College expects students to act like responsible adults on their own. For this reason, we do not have RA's on all floors in the dormitories.

RA's are selected in a process involving an application and interview. We have no formal training program and are currently considering options that would better prepare RA's for their positions. For example, we are attempting to define more clearly the alcohol policy. We offer the following support for RA's: the Assistant Dean and Director of Student Services are available for individual consultation; and RA's as a group meet twice a semester with the Assistant Dean and the Director of Student Services to discuss individual students and happenings on campus; on occasion they receive specialized briefings (a meeting with the Assistant Dean and Director of Student Services before orientation, for example, and with College nurses and counselors shortly after the beginning of the year). The RA's are particularly active during freshman orientation. This year, they worked as orientation leaders, taking the freshmen on their floors around campus as a group to help them acclimate to the College and begin the community-building process as early as possible. On the whole, our RA's have done a good job: students seem to regard them as a real resource in times of trouble. Some individuals, however, turn out to be more suitable than others for this position, and we have not been able to devise a system that would make their selection foolproof.

Senior Residents. In addition to RA's, the College employs three senior residents who, under the supervision of the Director of Student Services, provide adult presence on campus after hours and on weekends. One of the senior residents is the Director of Student Activities, who organizes excursions and extracurricular events, both on and off-campus. Another coordinates storage for undergraduates. The third also acts as a resident assistant in Humphreys Hall. All senior residents are assigned times to be on call for emergency situations. An important part of their job is to help students enforce the College alcohol policy at parties. They have the authority to shut down parties that get out of hand, though disciplinary matters are referred to the Assistant Dean. This is a delicate position, and some individuals are better suited for it than others. We routinely choose senior residents from among former undergraduates and present or former Graduate Institute students, since we have found that it is to their advantage to be familiar with the academic program. We have found that this system works well enough and have no plans for substantial change. It is a vast improvement over the arrangement in previous years, when the position of senior resident did not exist. Nevertheless, as in the case of the RA's, we need to devise a clear statement of our expectations for those holding these positions, and find ways to clarify and convey those expectations.

Switchboard. The Switchboard is open from 8 A.M to midnight on each day that students are living on campus, and is staffed by a full-time supervisor, a full-time operator, and five student workers. Its purpose is to serve as an information point for members of the community or visitors to the College. The switchboard used to be located in Campbell Hall, where students socialize constantly. Previous supervisors permitted and even encouraged this. The office was recently moved to diminish the party atmosphere, but difficulties related to full-time staffing, supervision, and the student workers linger. The switchboard is not in a good position to fulfill its purpose easily. As an information center, it is located inconveniently—neither near the students' common areas nor closely connected to the main offices on campus. Furthermore, it is overseen by the Assistant Dean's Office but is not in a location that allows for easy supervision. The lack of contact has been the root of several problems over the past several years. As supervision has improved, it has become clear that the office itself is problematic: because of its set-up and size, only one person can work there at a time. We therefore have a situation in which the switchboard supervisor does not have regular contact with the other employees. The switchboard needs to be in a place that can accommodate more people simultaneously, and needs to be in a location that allows for better supervision. Also, students need to be relied on less than they are now. A better system would have three full-time employees staggered throughout the week to cover all hours. We need to have trained personnel on campus to help deal with potential emergencies, and—for reasons of experience and confidentiality—these people cannot be students.

Recommendation

- We should devise a way to ask freshmen to evaluate the freshman orientation program.
- We should devise ways of better preparing RA's for their positions, and come up with a clear statement of our expectations.
- To remedy the problem of student housing, the College should build a new dormitory.
- To address the problem of sophomores who are forced to live off-campus, we should make the room drawing process more equitable.

- The Housing Office and the Off-Campus Housing Office should be closer to one another.
- The switchboard should be in a place that can accommodate more people simultaneously, and can be better supervised.

Subsection 3. The Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office fulfills multiple essential functions in support of our students, notably including the annual design of the undergraduate master academic schedule, record keeping and other scheduling and student services. Like all College offices, it works to support the Program, both undergraduate and graduate, taking into account the various needs of the members of the community; like all College offices, it continually re-evaluates principles and procedures. Ongoing issues include keeping abreast of changing laws and regulations for both domestic and foreign students, improving coordination with the Santa Fe campus, and increasing use of computerized methods of record-keeping and scheduling.

The Registrar maintains student records in a secure vault protected by an approved Halon system and alarm system. Only the Dean, Assistant Dean, Registrar, and Assistant to the Registrar have access to the vault. Student records are microfilmed—grade sheets, registration forms, Graduate Institute Director and Registrar Reports, Convocation sheets and Mandates—every year or two. Copies of the microfilmed reels are stored in the Treasurer's vault, in the Registrar's vault, and in the Maryland Hall of Records. Our FERPA policy (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) is published in the Student Handbook and our students are apprised annually of their rights under FERPA. The College attorney meets regularly with staff and tutors to speak about FERPA regulations and issues. We are in the process of preparing a FERPA Guidelines publication for staff and tutors. College employees, including student employees, are apprised of FERPA regulations at the time of employment.

The Registrar's Office keeps records of transcripts; in addition to grades, the transcript contains information about the Program. Because of the all-required curriculum, such information is necessary so that those unfamiliar with St. John's can assess the transcript for transfer credit, graduate school admissions, or employment. The transcript changes little from year to year but is reviewed regularly for any adjustments. Information on how to obtain a transcript is posted on the College website and in the Student Handbook. Transcript requests are filled within two days during non-peak request time. Consistent with our policy of de-emphasizing grades, students are not routinely informed of their grades. They can, however, request to see their grades at any time. Grading policies, published in the Student Handbook, are distributed to the faculty with grade sheets each semester and are regularly reviewed by the Dean and Instruction Committee.

As the scheduling needs of the College are unique and extremely complex, all scheduling is done manually. The master schedule is designed anew each summer. The scheduling procedure takes into consideration factors including individual tutor teaching requests, room constraints, and student assistantships. For example, the Music Tutorial requires that three classes meet together for a double period every week. Additionally, all our Laboratory and Music classes have student assistants, who must attend both their own classes and the ones they assist. Don rags are scheduled so that each student receives the proper amount of time. Hour-long senior and master oral examinations, with three-member examining committees, are scheduled so that tutors, who may have as many as nine oral examinations, will have adequate time to prepare for examinations. All

scheduling procedures are documented, and are currently being reviewed with the goal of having at least some of the master schedule computerized.

Many other tasks fall within the scope of the Registrar's Office: managing classroom space for extracurricular use; publishing the undergraduate Student Directory and the Weekly Calendar of events; and reviewing annually the academic calendar and appropriate policies in the Student and Parent Handbooks. In addition, the Registrar organizes fall and spring registration, and is one of the principal organizers of the commencement ceremony. Grading, withdrawal, readmission, and transfer policies are continually reviewed and updated as deemed necessary. The policies are published in the Student Handbook and on the appropriate forms. The Registrar's Office also keeps enrollment statistics, which the College reports to federal and state agencies in keeping with the mandated timetables set by those agencies. Internal enrollment statistics on attrition, transfer, withdrawal are maintained and used for enrollment projections and studies (see Support Documents). In spite of the numerous difficulties regarding scheduling, and the inevitable compromises that must be made to accommodate tutors' lives and schedules, our procedures work well in serving the ends of the College.

Subsection 4. General Promotion of Student Well-Being

a. The Health Center and Counseling

The Health Center. The health services offered by the College have changed significantly in since our last self-study. In 1993 the College had a single nurse. Beginning in 1996 we contracted with Better Life Health Care Systems, enabling us to staff the health center more fully. We have also acquired internet access in the Health Center and an electronic medical record system, enabling the nurses to record student interviews more efficiently. Currently a nurse practitioner is on duty two days a week and a registered nurse three days a week, from 9 AM until noon and from 1 PM to 4:30 PM, on a walk-in basis, for primary health care services: diagnosis and treatment of common health problems, health education, and attention to health maintenance needs. After hours care is provided by a registered nurse, who lives above the Health Center. The nurse practitioner may diagnose and prescribe treatments. On days when a registered nurse is on duty, a nurse practitioner is on call. A physician is available by telephone. Nurses refer to specialists when necessary; students needing sutures, x-rays, or urgent surgical consults are sent to the local emergency room. All services provided by health center staff are free to students; students may receive free on-campus testing for sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, and strep throat. Commonly prescribed medications are dispensed free to students. The nurses also maintain the students' medical and vaccination records.

Visits per year run 1800 to 1900. The most common illnesses seen among the students are upper respiratory infections, allergies, musculoskeletal injuries, gastrointestinal distress, and skin problems. Other concerns are fatigue, headache, insomnia, and depression. The most commonly sought health-maintenance services are annual gynecologic examinations and immunizations. The most commonly sought health education is about diet, stress, exercise, sexually transmitted diseases, and birth control.

Communication about services offered by the Health Center is always a concern. The center's hours are posted on the door, on the center's voicemail message, provided at orientation, and printed in the Student Handbook. To further communicate with students,

nurses meet with the Resident Assistants each year: they describe available services and ask for comments about students' needs.

Two years ago, the Health Center implemented a continuous quality improvement program. In order to address health risks in this generally healthy population, the following steps were planned: 1) learn how to conduct performance measures and outcome studies; 2) analyze the health risks most common in the student population; 3) analyze the process used by staff to address these health risks; 4) install a searchable electronic medical record system; 5) identify and implement ways to increase attention of staff to addressing health risks; 6) track the progress of the health center staff at asking the students certain question about their behavior and lowering risks; 7) reevaluate annually. Steps 1-5 were implemented in 2000-01. Steps 6-7 were implemented in 2001-02. In 2001-2 the major interventions were a) to use the electronic medical record software to prompt the nurse to ask students certain questions at each visit, whether the reason for the visit was illness or wellness and b) to implement a smoking cessation program. The quality questions were: a) For what percentage of students did the Health Center nurses address five health care maintenance issues during the school year? and b) What percentage of students took action to quit smoking? The health maintenance issues chosen, as relevant to this population, were: testicular self-examination, use of automobile seat belts, depression, smoking, and alcohol use. The percentage of students consulted in each of the first two years increased substantially in each category, for example, from 44% to 69% for alcohol abuse. Regarding smoking cessation, in Year 1, less than 1% of students took action to quit smoking. In Year 2, 4% took action to quit. Yet smoking continues to be widespread at the College. In order to address smoking, we will have to address stressors; we are trying to develop ways to collect data on depression and anxiety.

We believe that students now have a greater awareness of these issues. We plan to continue this quality monitoring, improving the results each year.

Counseling. The counseling service, located in the Harrison Health Center, provides brief psychotherapy, long-term psychotherapy, and crisis intervention to students who are referred by the Assistant Dean or who come on their own. The total number of students seen recently has tended to be 75-85 each year. The Director of Counseling coordinates psychiatric evaluations, maintains a close relationship with health center staff, and offers referrals to other mental health practitioners. In some cases, she confers with parents and with students' former psychotherapists. The Director of Counseling also acts as a "gatekeeper" for psychiatric services to the College.

In addition to providing direct counseling services to students, the Director of Counseling meets weekly with the Assistant Dean in order to provide coordinated services to students. She also meets each semester with the resident assistants in an effort to provide ongoing training for them. Resident assistants are encouraged to meet with counseling staff whenever they encounter particular problems. This coordination assures coherent provision of services and treatment of the "whole student."

Because of the peculiar nature of the College, it is important that our Director of Counseling be a member of our community, someone familiar with the particular challenges our students face. We put this into practice in 1994, when the College for the first time employed a full-time Director of Counseling. Both the staffing structure and the availability of counseling services changed significantly at that time, and for the

better. In other recent changes, the College no longer employs a psychiatrist on retainer, a change that permits it to contract with more than one psychiatrist if needed. Also, during the past year, our permanent Director of Counseling took on part-time status, and the College contracted with a second counselor who provided supplementary counseling under the supervision of the Director. This situation worked well, providing both stability and flexibility, and will be continued for the foreseeable future, with the possibility that our second counselor will also become a part-time employee of the College.

b. Athletic Activities

Athletics at St. John's are an integral part of College life. Just as in our classrooms, where students of all levels of experience and aptitude take a leading role in their education, so it is in our athletic program, where sports belong to all. The entirely volunteer sports program is designed to offer the community opportunities for physical exercise, development of skills, participation in team sports, recreation, and fun. The athletic program must remain largely intramural; it must be sufficiently non-competitive to welcome all students; and training schedules must not interfere with study. The athletic program at St. John's complements and enhances our students' academic experience. The program has not changed in principle since 1993, though there have been physical improvements in accord with the recommendations made in the last Self-Study Report. The men's locker room has been renovated, for example, and the racquetball rooms have been converted into a dance studio and a cardiovascular room. Long-term plans call for construction of racquetball courts in a separate structure.

The College provides an extensive intramural program for men and women. Team sports include soccer, European team handball, basketball, volleyball, softball, and flag football. Students who wish to play are strongly encouraged to participate. In addition to the team sports, there is an annual marathon relay and an active fencing team. Students may choose from classes in Tai Chi, Aikido, aerobics, weightlifting, and yoga. Classes in other pursuits are formed whenever there is sufficient interest. Croquet, too, has a large following, and each spring a team from St. John's takes on the Naval Academy in a celebrated match for the Annapolis Cup. Tournaments are regularly held in tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. The College also has a boathouse, which serves as headquarters for an active water sports program that includes sailing and rowing.

The chief ongoing questions of the athletic program are: How can we maintain strong participation in a non-compulsory setting where academics clearly have top priority? How can we provide a nurturing atmosphere for young people of intellectual bent who have never played athletics? How can we foster an environment in which non-athletic women may learn how to be athletic and competitive? How can we provide operational support, facilities, and equipment on a very limited budget? To help him address these questions, the Director relies on both faculty and students. The Director is advised by a small faculty committee in considering problems that arise in the vigorous program (the Director is an alumnus of the College and, by the Polity, an associate member of the faculty who reports to the Dean). In the day-to-day running of the program students are deeply involved. The captains of the men's teams, with the Director, form an administrative council to manage the men's sports, while the Women's Athletic Advisory Council, with the Director, manages the women's sports. However, there is no rigid

distinction between managers and players; everyone gets involved in everything that needs doing, including officiating.

We have no single way of determining how successful we are in meeting our goal of making the program accessible and valuable to all members of our community (that is, students, faculty and staff), particularly as our students resist responding to surveys. But since the community is so small, we have ways of getting a sense of what is working and what is not, as well as the flexibility to respond. A sign of increased interest in the intramural program in recent years is that games are no longer forfeited for lack of players. But because interest in volleyball and softball has flagged, we have substituted team handball in the intramural schedule with great success. As more people are using the cardiovascular and weight-training machines, we are acquiring more of them and providing instruction on their use. The Athletic Director suggests new activities, asks students what they would like, and is known to be open to suggestions from anyone. He and students write regularly for the Gadfly, letting the community know what is going on in the athletic program. The general feeling on campus is that the program works well and requires no fundamental change.

c. The Food Service

The food service is managed by *Bon Appétit*, a national firm headquartered in California. This provider has been on campus for the past five years, following a seventeen-year period in which the food service was managed by the Marriott Corporation or its affiliate. Our 1993 Self-Study report included a recommendation that we run our own food service, but, given the complexities of such an operation, we decided that doing so would be counterproductive. In our present system, all students living on campus are required to be on either a 14 or 21-meal plan, with service only in the Dining Hall. An additional 50+ students routinely and voluntarily sign up for a 5-meal plan (for non-residents only). We regard this as a sign of success, as it rarely occurred prior to the tenure of *Bon Appétit*. There is also a Coffee Shop, located in McDowell Hall. This service is managed by another provider, and a limited menu is available at mealtimes.

The past five years have been generally positive in terms of student satisfaction with the food, although it should be made clear that this is a relative statement. Prior to the arrival of *Bon Appétit*, both students and parents expressed serious concerns. In the past five years there have been various complaints about the food, but rarely have students made serious efforts to be released from the food service. The Food Service Manager can meet nearly all dietary requirements. Some students who are dissatisfied have requested a system in which they can pay directly for the food they choose to eat, rather than being committed to a set menu. The College has looked into the feasibility of such a system, but economies of scale make it impossible.

Concerns with the food service are addressed by a Food Committee that includes students and the Food Service Manager. It is the conduit for generally communicating about the service or planning special meals. In recent years it has been difficult to find students who will take the time to meet. Meetings are well publicized, and everyone is invited. There is also a comment box available to all students, which is used with some regularity and which receives both concerns and compliments. Responses are made to all comments, which are then posted for all to see.

d. Security

"The test of police (or Security) efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police (or Security) action in dealing with them." So wrote Sir Robert Peel in 1822. St. John's College Security epitomizes this principle in striving to reduce crime on campus to its lowest possible level. We employ twelve Security Officers, who are commissioned as Special Police for the State of Maryland. The officers patrol the campus grounds, buildings, and parking lots in twos and threes, at all times. Some are trained in CPR and basic life-saving skills, as well as the use of an automated external defibrillator, and we have plans to train those who are not. They also receive training from the Annapolis City Police and Fire Department.

A device known as a Morse Watchman is used to ensure that all buildings and other locations are checked at least six times a day. This device, which is similar to the old watchman's time clock, requires a security officer to tour the grounds and make contact with magnetic stations located throughout the campus. While security does not patrol the dormitory halls, potential trouble spots such as mechanical rooms are on the watchman tour. A state-of-the-art access system is employed to keep campus buildings safe from unwanted intruders. The system uses cards that have to be placed near a reader in order to unlock a door. The system is almost infinitely programmable to allow certain cards to open certain buildings at pre-designated hours. It has just been expanded to the Mellon building to bring improved security to classrooms, music practice rooms, and the art and pottery studios.

St. John's Security is committed to Community Oriented Policing. Therefore, perhaps the officers' most important training is in the interaction with the students, faculty, and staff of the College. Security Officers endeavor to understand the needs and concerns of the community in order to support their quality of life. Statistically, the St. John's campus is a safe place. To maintain the quality of life the community deserves, however, its members must also have the perception of being safe. This can only be accomplished through interaction of officers with other members of the community. Community Policing fosters a non-adversarial relationship with students, who see the Security Officers as allies and not as authoritarian figures.

e. The Placement Office

For the most part, our students are equipped with everything they need both to decide upon a career and to pursue it; but for many, both the deciding and the pursuing seem foreign activities, easily postponed until push comes to shove, a bad time for making good decisions. The Placement Office seeks to assist students in the following ways:

Many of our students are generalists; they don't know what they want to do because they can do so much, and choosing one thing seems to require giving up others. Their experience at the College, however, hones the very skills that are essential for them to find their way, such as relentless and honest self-examination and an ability to articulate complex arguments. The challenge to the Placement Office is to help students use these skills in their own behalf. Approaches include: one-on-one counseling, which is helpful for those willing to come in but does nothing for the unmotivated or shy; publications and events (two monthly newsletters as well as forums on individual careers and general topics); and the Hodson Internship Program, an excellent way to explore areas of employment. In order to ensure that the students least inclined to make use of the Placement Office do so, we must make the newsletter more interesting and readable.

We encourage students to put a résumé together and to learn to present themselves well to both schools and employers; and we assist them in every step of the application processes for fellowships, graduate schools, professional schools, and jobs. The challenge to the Placement Office is to support students in all these tasks, which may be time-consuming and vexatious. Approaches include: maintaining accessibility, a positive and encouraging attitude, openness to students' needs, and treating the students as adults. We should consider making a stronger and earlier overture to students to begin this process. Coming up with a résumé profile may lead to clarification of goals, and may give otherwise reluctant students the impetus to begin that more daunting task.

The challenge to the Placement Office is to assist the students to find out what they need to know, while keeping the responsibility for learning it squarely on their shoulders and not letting information masquerade as more than it is. Approaches include: letting students know about the multi-faceted office resources and encouraging them to use them; extolling the virtues of Internet searching; and aiding them in networking. This last approach is both the most important and the most in need of development. We are creating an alumni-networking database to help connect questioning students with knowledgeable alumni.

The students' first essential step in finding a post-college life is to begin thinking of themselves as something other than students. The challenge to the Placement Office is to respect the students' work at the College, while at the same time encouraging them to develop and follow up on their ideas of where their education might take them. Approaches include: being a non-intrusive but intriguing presence; making sure that every student is aware that all services of the Placement Office are available to alumni; and maintaining good relationships with faculty, who can be very helpful in this task.

The effectiveness of the Placement Office is, on the one hand, not measurable. The true measure of our success would be how happy our students are with the life they subsequently carve out for themselves. We are succeeding if our students are finding their calling rather than just making their way. This result can be only crudely assessed with survey tools. On the other hand, anecdotal evidence (through both direct and collegial report), directory information about alumni employment, and the willingness of alumni to participate in networking with students all demonstrate that many alumni are very satisfied with how things have turned out and have achieved impressive worldly success. It should be noted, however, that it is typical for at least half of a graduating class to have no idea what they are going to do next. There will always be some who need a year or two of exploration after graduating, but it behooves us to do what we can to make the transition to life after St. John's less to be feared and more to be embraced.

PART TWO: INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Chapter Six: COMMUNITY AND INTEGRITY (MSCHE VI; AALE 5)
(*Harvey Flaumenhaft, Dean of the College; Deborah L. Anawalt, Director of Personnel; Caroline Christensen, Director of Financial Aid; Barbara Goyette, former Public Relations Director; Marilyn Higuera, member of the Steering Committee; Judith Seeger, Assistant Dean)

Section A. Community

The College considers itself to be a true community of learning. What pervades and constitutes it is serious conversation. To do our work, we rely on conversation rather than on decrees and votes; we insist on mutual respect and strive for consensus. Pathologies in which turf is defended and rank is asserted are avoided by a prudent overlapping of functions that promotes wide and frequent collegial consultation without diminishing responsibility. The Dean and the Assistant Dean are drawn temporarily from the teaching faculty; and committees include the teaching faculty along with members of the staff. Administration is kept ministerial by a refusal to identify bigger with better or to allow quantification improperly to replace judgment.

The student body is kept small enough so that the whole community can be held together by face-to-face relationships. Offices are sufficiently close together, but also sufficiently scattered in multi-use buildings, to promote informal encounters between staff members and between members of the staff, the faculty, and the student body. Rules are necessary, and are enforced, but their application involves small numbers, thus permitting great discretion. The extraordinary formal status of the Dean and the manner of the Dean's selection help to keep the President, and the other officers, attentive to the concerns of the faculty; and the Dean's involvement in all the managerial deliberations and decisions of the College helps to keep the specifically academic affairs of the College from proceeding without due regard to feasibility. Faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to speak informally with the Dean and the President about their questions and concerns, and regular meetings are scheduled to ensure that opportunities for doing so are provided to those too shy to avail themselves of the open-door policy of the Dean and the President. In particular, the absence of faculty ranks and of departments fosters the sense of a single community held together by discussion. Furthermore, we encourage college-wide participation in extracurricular activities (study groups, athletics, theater, and music), which are open to faculty and staff as well as students.

A frequent subject of discussion among us is whether our growth in size and complexity threatens the preconditions of our distinctive mode of operating. The question is raised whether measures taken to improve the provision of means for us to flourish will have the unintended consequence of subverting our end of being a true community of learning. It is difficult to be small, simple, and conversational without being poor, improvident, and insecure. In an ever-changing world, we cannot avoid having to keep thinking about what modifications in our arrangements are necessary in order to keep serving our ends. Subsidized study groups and subsidized auditing are now necessary to do some of what was once done, for example, by casual encounters in the coffee shop, when most of the faculty lived within walking distance of the campus and few of the faculty had working spouses.

But we must also avoid a drift or headlong rush into changes that would impede full dedication to our ends. For example, as we make ourselves better known beyond our

walls, pressures grow to take on ever more outreach activities, which could weaken the network of relationships that constitutes our community of learning, distracting us from our core mission, and draining our limited resources of time, energy, and attention. And as we seek to improve our management of a single College operating transcontinentally on two campuses, we run the risk of subverting the two campus communities, which alone can be true communities, face-to-face and small.

Section B. Integrity

The integrity of our policies, processes, practices, and manner of implementing them is periodically assessed by the following: the Instruction Committee (consisting of six elected members of the faculty plus the President, chaired by the Dean, and meeting weekly)—which deals with curriculum, appointment and reappointment (including tenure) of faculty, teaching assignments, enabling of students to continue beyond the sophomore year, and setting requirements for granting of degrees; the Finance Committee (chaired by the President, and consisting of him and the other officers—Vice President for Advancement, Treasurer, and Dean—and meeting monthly)—which deals with spending, getting and keeping friends, and management; the Management Committee (consisting of the President and Dean from each campus)—which meets eight times a year, with its Chair (designated annually by the Board) exercising executive authority over the College as a whole with respect to matters assigned by the Board; the Board of Visitors and Governors—which meets quarterly to plan and review the working of the institution, and quinquennially reviews the Polity (by-laws); the Hay Committee (elected by the staff to ascertain the weight that should be afforded to the responsibilities of the various staff positions). Consideration of integrity also takes place in the monthly meetings of the Administrative Council and of the Staff Council.

The Staff Handbook is periodically reviewed by the Personnel Director, under the oversight of the Treasurer; the Student Handbook and the Parent's Handbook by the Assistant Dean, under the oversight of the Dean; the Faculty Handbook by the Dean. The Board periodically reviews its policies on conflict of interest, selection and work of its members, audit, investment, budget management, financial oversight, fund raising, and governance of the College.

In matters relating to standards and reporting, the officers of the College are responsible for fulfilling all applicable requirements of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

Honesty and truthfulness in our public relations announcements are the responsibility of our Director of Communications, who reports to the Vice President for Advancement; in the case of our advertisements, the responsibility of the Director of Personnel, who reports to the Treasurer; and in the case of our recruiting and admissions materials, the responsibility of the Director of Admissions, who reports to the Dean. The Director of Communications reviews all written materials for consistency with Mission, integrity, honesty, and truthfulness. Appropriate policies governing news releases and public announcements describing the College or explaining its position on various issues are the responsibility of the Director of Communications, who reports to the Vice President for Advancement and works in collaboration with the Dean.

Factual information about the College is accurately reported and made publicly available to the College community through the website maintained by the Director of Communications, the College magazine, memos from the various offices, the various

handbooks mentioned above, announcements at the weekly meetings of the Associates and of the Instruction Committee and at the monthly meetings of the Administrative Council and of the faculty, and the student newspaper.

Students and the public have easy and continuing access to institutional information through the website maintained by the Director of Communications and through the catalogue and other publications available from the Admissions Office.

Students may have their concerns or allegations of policy violation addressed in a variety of ways. They are encouraged to speak with the Assistant Dean, the Dean, and the President; to the Associates and staff members who manage the various offices; and to members of the faculty. In addition, their voices are heard when they speak at meetings of the Student Committee on Instruction or write in the student newspaper. Letters to the President, Dean, Assistant Dean, or Instruction Committee receive careful attention and considerate replies. Each of the four classes of students meets annually with the Dean, Assistant Dean, and President to voice and discuss any concerns they might have. Policies are fair and impartial, and various modes of appealing their application are provided. Policies and modes of appeal are published in the Student Handbook; some are mentioned also in letters from the Dean and from the Assistant Dean. Student concerns are addressed properly, appropriately, and equitably. Appropriate confidentiality is observed.

The Personnel Director, under the supervision of the Treasurer, ensures that we have fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of employees on the staff, as well as having adequate faculty and staff handbooks that describe promotion, tenure, and grievance procedures. Fair and impartial practices in the appointment, evaluation, and reappointment of faculty (including Associates) are the responsibility of the Dean in consultation with the Instruction Committee, with appropriate advice from the Personnel Director.

We treat our constituencies equitably and appropriately in curricular revision, student evaluation, student discipline, faculty compensation, faculty retention and review, staff retention and review, administrative review, and institutional governance and management.

In the area of faculty salaries, determining salaries through formula allows us to avoid invidious distinctions that generate bitter controversies about equity. In recent years, we have given special attention to improving our evaluation procedures so that students and faculty are given early warnings about what needs improving. We have adequate policies and practices for student grievance and discipline, but we still need to work out general procedures for handling employee grievances: our Personnel Director is currently preparing for that work.

The College provides a climate of freedom for academic inquiry by regarding the teacher not as a dispenser of authoritative truth, but rather as a fellow student authorized to raise questions and help preserve civility and order. Students are not expected to follow some particular line, but rather to show why they find it reasonable to follow whatever line they do.

The College provides a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration for a range of backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives. In soliciting applications for admission, the College especially seeks to obtain students diverse in wealth and income.

In our teaching, scholarship, service, and administration, we have sound ethical principles and respect for individuals. Our Board avoids conflicts of interest, or the appearance of such conflict, by requiring each of its members to file an annual statement specifying any conflicts of interest. The Board—in particular those of its members who are the Chairman, Presidents and Deans—is responsible for ensuring that such conflicts are avoided in all our activities and among all our constituents.

Recommendation

- The College should formulate a policy to address employee grievances.

Chapter Seven: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE (MSCHE IV-V, AALE A1-A7, A11)

(*Christopher Nelson, President of the College; Harvey Flaumenhaft, Dean of the College; Jeffrey Bishop, Vice President for College Advancement; Fred H. Billups, Treasurer; Eva Brann, former Dean)

The Board of Visitors and Governors is charged with the ultimate responsibility for the governance of the College on both campuses. It consists of up to 60 members from all across the United States (current membership is 57) and meets four times annually, twice in Annapolis and twice in Santa Fe. It has 7 standing committees and several ad hoc committees appointed annually by the chair (currently we have another 13 such active committees with specific charges assigned to them). College governance is controlled by the Polity, a document reviewed by the Board and faculty every five years and amended still more frequently as the needs of the College dictate. Board members may serve not more than two 3-year terms before they must leave the Board for a period of at least a year. The Board Chairman is elected annually and appoints all Board committees annually. By the Polity, the Board has delegated much of its responsibility to the campus officers.

The Board assists in generating resources necessary to support adequately the Mission of the College, as the support documents concerning the strategic plan demonstrate. Individually, Board members give generously from their own wealth, and lead the efforts for all major institutional campaigns for endowment and capital improvements.

One College with Two Campus Communities. St. John's College is in many respects a single College, although it is located on two separate campuses of roughly equal size, 2100 miles apart in Annapolis, Maryland and Santa Fe, New Mexico. The College offers a nearly identical program of instruction on each campus, taught in the same way, in classes of equal size, by faculty of nearly the same size. A single college-wide Instruction Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Program is the same on both campuses. Students admitted to one campus are considered admitted to the other. Students and faculty transfer between the campuses frequently. The campuses' admissions offices recruit jointly, and the advancement offices raise money jointly. Nonetheless, each campus has its own, peculiar community of learning, and attention to community must be handled at the campus level.

Until 2000, each campus had its own President, who reported solely to the Board for final authority. In other words, the College had two separate but equal chief executive officers, each of whom had authority on a single campus only but was nonetheless responsible for the whole College, governed by a single Board. The Presidents had to agree upon which aspects of the College's functions required unified or coordinated treatment and which did not. Absent such agreement, the Board had to act to resolve the differences. This structure encouraged each President to attend most closely to the offices of his own campus, which was good. While it acted as an incentive for the two Presidents to find common solutions and reach compromises, it also encouraged them to find ways to agree to disagree and to let each campus go its own way. This resulted in growing disparities between the campuses: growing inequalities in endowments, faculty salaries, faculty development funding, campus size, deferred maintenance, publications,

budget management, IT capacity, admissions policy, financial aid policy and even tuition and fees. This was generally acknowledged to be unhealthy.

The Board resolved upon a new trial governance structure, premised on the notion that certain things (like those disparities noted above) should be treated on a college-wide basis, while all others should be handled locally at the campus sites. A new Management Committee was formed, consisting of the Deans and Presidents from each campus. The Committee has been functioning since January 1, 2000 and will cease to exist after December 31, 2004 if not made a permanent part of the Polity before then. The committee is advisory to its Chair, who is one of the Presidents. (The Annapolis President, Mr. Nelson, has served as Chair from its formation, and will serve in that capacity at least until July 1, 2003, when the Chair could move to the Santa Fe campus.) The Chair is charged with responsibility for leading college-wide strategic planning, coordinating advancement efforts on the two campuses, overseeing public relations and publications intended for the College as a whole, managing capital campaigns, overseeing alumni relations, managing a process for consolidating resources, preparing a college-wide budget, establishing appropriate business office practices and policies college-wide, implementing a college-wide IT system, and approving policy for admissions and financial aid on each campus. The College has only one college-wide employee, the Vice President for College-Wide Advancement, and has no intention of building a large college-wide infrastructure. Our reasons for not building a college-wide infrastructure are primarily two-fold: 1) it is desirable that the campuses be treated as equals and that they therefore also assume equal responsibilities for leadership, governance and administration; 2) a principle of maximum feasible devolution of authority to campus-level leadership helps to insure that each campus community can continue to enjoy the benefits of self-governance and, hence, self determination, within the limits permitted by the program of instruction itself. All this means that the Management Committee's success depends on a great deal of good will in executing the Chair's policies at the campus level and a very good working relationship among the Committee's four members.

The Formal Relationship Between the President and Dean. While each President has executive responsibility for the instruction, discipline, government, and financial management on his campus (except with respect to those duties assigned to the Chair of the Management Committee), each Dean is responsible directly to the Board for the organization of the academic program followed by the tutors and the students. The Dean is responsible for instructional matters, while the President is responsible for the execution and administration of the Program. This tension is thought by the Board, President, Dean, and faculty to be healthy and consistent with the principle that this particular College IS its academic program, and that the College has no independent administration as such. Both President and Dean are members of the faculty; both are tutors; both are concerned with the classroom and with the administration of College affairs; both are on the college-wide Management Committee overseeing certain college-wide matters on the two campuses; both sit on the Board's Executive Committee *ex officio*. (The President also serves *ex officio* on the Board's Finance and Nominating Committees.) While the President chairs the faculty meetings, the Dean chairs the faculty's Instruction Committee (on which the President sits as an active member), which is responsible for all recommendations concerning instructional matters, and faculty

appointments and reappointments. The Program is intended to be a coherent, seamless integrated whole; the administration of College affairs is intended to serve it and is dependent on the supremacy of the academic program and the integrity of the functions that support it. Thus, while the administration of the Admissions Office and the Library, for example, are clearly pertinent to the health of the Program and are supervised by the Dean, the President has ultimate executive authority over both offices and control of the purse strings. The key to the success of the relationship between President and Dean is the recognition by both of the precedence and centrality of the Program and the need for considerable overlap in the functions and responsibilities of each of the two offices.

In addition, the Polity and our general practices contemplate that the faculty, staff, and student body all have important functions in the governance of the College: these are discussed below.

Faculty Governance. Among the Practical Commitments of the Mission Statement of the College is the following: "Continued involvement of the faculty in the governance of the College—through joint deliberation, guardianship of our communal way of life, and willingness to perform duties in addition to classroom teaching and meeting with students." For a discussion of the important role of the Instruction Committee and function of the faculty meetings, see Chapters Three and Four herein. In addition, we maintain over twenty standing committees of the faculty and several joint faculty and staff committees to perform important duties in the service of the Program and College life generally—from advising on compensation to deciding upon student internship awards and prizes, and from determining what books to purchase for the Library to advising on all changes in the physical plant. Most committees are appointed by either Dean or President, though a few are elected by the faculty at large. They report regularly and perform or oversee many of the administrative duties that elsewhere might be done by staff. The faculty also elects non-voting members to the Board of Visitors and Governors who participate in Board deliberations and on Board committees.

Staff Council. The College staff elects its own council, with officers and committees. The staff council meets regularly to review concerns of the staff, elect non-voting members to the Board of Visitors and Governors, and advise the officers of the College concerning issues ranging from the welfare of staff to staff employment policy and compensation.

Student Polity. The students have their own Polity, or by-laws for student governance. They elect a Delegate Council (DC) to govern the affairs of the student body that are delegated to it by the college's officers. They also elect a Student Committee on Instruction (SCI) to undertake a review of student concerns with the academic program (for a description of the composition and work of the SCI, see Chapter Four, Section C). The DC meets weekly and has responsibility for chartering, funding, and overseeing the activities of all student clubs, e.g., the Film Society, the Gadfly (student newspaper), the yearbook, the King William Players (theater), Fencing Club, etc. Funds are provided to the DC from student fees collected by the College. Students also elect non-voting representatives to the Board of Visitors and Governors who participate in Board committees and deliberations. Officers of the DC and SCI meet with the President, Dean,

and Assistant Dean as the need arises, sometimes frequently but always at least once or twice a semester.

In our consideration of the appropriate governance structure, several issues have presented themselves. Below are either our answers to these questions or the process we are now following to resolve them.

Should the Management Committee continue? In the period since its formation, the Management Committee has come to grips with and resolved (or put in place a plan to resolve) most of the intercampus disparities which were dividing us and which required college-wide attention instead of just campus specific attention. Budget disparities between the campuses are shrinking, and college-wide funds are now available for use where needed. Faculty salaries are equal on both campuses. In place is a plan that calls for the equalization of faculty development opportunities between the campuses soon. Budgets are now strong enough for class sizes and classroom staffing to be equal. Tuition is now the same, and admissions and financial aid policies are nearly identical. Our first college-wide strategic plan has been prepared, and a plan for a college-wide IT system is being implemented. Going forward, the Management Committee must carry out the plans now agreed upon, lead a college-wide capital campaign, and keep the College on its course with the coordination of intercampus responsibilities, and oversight of budget preparation and resource allocations between the campuses to ensure balance. The Management Committee has recommended that it continue as now constituted, with the same powers (with two minor additions to its authority). A Board committee with faculty membership is now looking at the question, with the expectation of making a recommendation to the Board some time in late 2003 or early 2004, before the Polity's sunset provision takes effect. All constituencies need more education about the Management Committee's work, but no big issues have yet surfaced to suggest that we will need to make radical changes in the current governance structure, which the College's officers think is working quite well.

Are the composition and structure of the Board appropriate to the advancement of the College's goals? This too is a question being actively reviewed by a new committee of the Board, the Committee on Trustees. We doubt that there is consensus on the question whether a Board of 60 members is best suited to the governance function, and that question is being considered along with several others (e.g., should the Board meet less frequently? Are we using our members' talents well?). Board and committee meetings for most Board members extend across three days, four times a year and the commitment of member time, energy and resources is extraordinary. We think this commitment ensures that the College meets its goals. The Board, on the whole, knows quite a bit about the Program and has a committee that meets for six hours quarterly to consider such matters (the Visiting Committee). More than half of the Board members are alumni and have thus been through the Program: they love it sufficiently to protect it fiercely.

The Board has an annual orientation program for new members led by the Presidents, Deans, Board Chair, and Visiting Committee Chair. All new members are placed on the Visiting Committee for at least one year when they join the Board (and usually for two or three years) in order that they may receive a more complete orientation and meet more regularly with students, staff, and tutors.

The College has a conflict of interest policy and surveys Board members and employees annually, taking action when appropriate.

The Board reviews the Presidents' performance in a thorough two-month process annually, ending in oral interviews and written evaluations between the Board Chair and each President. Quarterly performance with respect to all goals is monitored carefully by the Presidents' Review Committee. (See Chapter Ten for a more thorough description of the process.) While the Polity has long provided a satisfactory procedure for the selection of the Presidents, we are unsure whether a consensus now exists that the procedure we have is the best one for us. A Polity Review Committee of the Board is currently undertaking this issue, in light of concerns expressed by some Board members that the most recent search process for the Santa Fe campus President might not have properly channeled faculty and staff opinion on the matter.

Some Board members have asked whether the Board has sufficiently assessed its own performance, and see this as one of the principal reasons for the formation of the Committee on Trustees. On the other hand, an active Executive Committee assesses committee performance as needed, and open dialogue in the Board meetings seems to serve the ends of assessment reasonably well. The Nominating Committee conducts interviews with each Board member at the end of each member's three-year term. The interviews are written up, discussed by the Committee, and shared with the Board Chair, who may use them as a further occasion for discussion of assessment adequacy at Executive Committee meetings.

Delegation of Duties to the Dean. As time has passed, less and less of the Dean's time, energy, and attention have been available for attending directly to the tutors and students in our campus community of learning. More and more, the Dean has had to devote himself to the interface between our academic work itself, and the workings of the administrative environment and the wider world on which it depends.

Until 1990, Deans led one class each year while fulfilling the duties of office. Such manifest interconnection of roles emphasized our priority on academic activity and de-emphasized compartmentalization into administrative offices. Students benefited from seeing a Dean relish the inquiry of the classroom and learn along with them, and came into direct contact with a visible unity of life and learning, leadership and thoughtfulness. The community also benefited from this arrangement because daily interaction allowed the Dean to keep a finger on the pulse of the student-faculty community. Since 1990, Deans have had to sacrifice time in the classroom in order to keep up with increased administrative responsibilities ranging from an enormous number of committee meetings to travel involving our sister campus, to assistance of educators interested in our Program. These responsibilities have assumed greater significance for the unity of our community: the various offices of the College, and the faculty, rely on the more comprehensive perspectives of the President and Dean in order to make well-informed decisions.

One way to alleviate the demands on the Dean would be to do more of something that we already do: increase the funds available to the Dean for compensating tutors whom he asks to accept very time-consuming extra tasks. The Dean already asks much of tutors, who respond graciously to requests for help, but hesitates to ask for as much help as is needed. Asking is easier when the task involved will provide some compensation for the tutor. There is some of this already—for example, in putting together the teaching slate

and in providing an orientation program for newly appointed tutors. But we would benefit from more—for example, in handling the many requests from other institutions for us to arrange visits in which their faculty and administrators can observe our Program in action and discuss it with members of our faculty. Funds will be added to the budget to ensure that these functions will be performed at their optimal level.

Delegation of Duties Between the Dean and the President. We have asked ourselves whether the delegation of authority from the Board to the Presidents and Deans is appropriate to our ends. We are satisfied that the tight interrelationship and overlapping functions are not just reasonable but necessary at a College where the administration of affairs depends upon the supremacy of the academic program.

Recommendations:

- The Board should resolve in 2003-04 upon the status of the Management Committee as an ongoing governing committee of the College.
- The Board should review the work of the Board's Committee on Trustees and decide whether any changes are required in the composition or structure of the Board.
- The Board should establish a reference file of "best practices" for future presidential search committees.

Chapter Eight: ADMINISTRATION (MSCHE V, AALE 9-11)

(*Fred H. Billups, Treasurer; Deborah Anawalt, Director of Personnel; Jeffrey Bishop, Vice President for Advancement; Noreen F. Craven, Registrar; Harvey Flaumenhaft, Dean of the College; Erin Griffin, Director of Information Technology; Stephen E. Linhard, Assistant Treasurer; Sidney, R. Phipps III, Superintendent of Building and Grounds; Judith Seeger, Assistant Dean)

The administration of St. John's College is unusual when compared with that of other liberal arts colleges. The most significant factors are the interactive nature of the operational roles of officers, and the primary focus on the academic program in relation to administrative decisions.

In the previous chapter on Leadership and Governance, the relation between President and Dean was outlined in detail: the President has overall responsibility for the governance and management of the campus, and the Dean for the academic program. What is distinctive here is that the Dean reports, not to the President, but directly to the Board—even though, from an operational standpoint, the President has complete responsibility. This practice makes clear to faculty and staff alike that the focus of the College is the program of instruction. It is of the utmost importance that office staff members understand this reporting structure, both because of the obvious need to be clear as to whom they ultimately report, and also because staff must be aware of the centrality of the Program, and how it is affected by operational decisions.

The administering of organizational activities is directed on a day-to-day basis by the officers of the College: President, Dean, Vice-President for College-Wide Advancement, Vice-President of Advancement for the Annapolis campus, and Treasurer. These officers meet at least monthly as the Campus Finance Committee, which makes decisions on campus-wide matters. All other offices of the College report to one member of the committee.

A recent change in the organizational structure of the College was the establishment of a new position (mentioned above): Vice-President for College-Wide Advancement. This new position consolidates the advancement activities on both campuses and, in addition, enables one person to have primary responsibility for the upcoming capital campaign duties. The Vice-Presidents for Advancement on both campuses report to the Vice-President for College-Wide Advancement.

One of the most important ingredients for a positive and healthy environment is the ability of College officers to interact in a collegial and cooperative manner. One example of this requirement is in the working relationship between Dean and Treasurer. The Treasurer works directly with various offices on a daily basis: Financial Aid, Advancement, and the Assistant Dean's Office. Each of these offices reports to the Dean. Were the Dean and Treasurer not able to work together in a collaborative manner and in an atmosphere of trust, discussions and decisions would have to go through additional sets of meetings and reviews, thereby taking unnecessary time away from other duties.

Over the past ten years, enrollment has increased from 395 to 468 undergraduate students. Reporting and information requirements have become more complex, resulting in a growth in the number of staff positions in many offices. With the addition and replacement of personnel, there has been general improvement in the level of skills in specific disciplines compared with campus capabilities a decade or two ago. The upgrading and addition of staff has produced a higher level of professionalism and competence—but it has also given rise to concerns. Some within the community,

especially tutors, feel that the staff population has grown too large and that this growth has adversely affected the quality of life at the College. The sense among staff, however, is that the scope and amount of work has increased and continues to increase, that the need for information is continuing and even accelerating, and that even more staff positions are needed. Factors governing deliberation on this matter include availability of space, budgetary constraints, the overall efficiency of staff, and the effects that an increased staff population has on the community of learning. Although new positions will be filled in the next decade, most are custodial jobs necessary to accommodate the addition of buildings and parking areas.

The faculty is an integral part of all aspects of College life. At the same time, many decisions are made routinely in offices that are not directed by tutors and where there is no interaction with tutors on a consistent basis. The directors of some offices are Associate Faculty: this provision enables these critical offices to interact and communicate more efficiently with teaching faculty. Associate Faculty includes the Assistant Dean, Librarian, Registrar, Directors of Financial Aid, Director of Admissions, Director of Placement, Director of Athletics, and Director of Alumni. The Assistant Dean's position is the only one that must be filled by a tutor. The reason is that, while all the Associate officers and their staff have substantial interaction with students, the Assistant Dean must have specific knowledge and understanding of the academic program as it relates to students and their activities. This position rotates among tutors on a period basis. Within the Assistant Dean's Office there is also the Director of Student Services, who has responsibility for housing and other services. This position is relatively new and is in its first year on a full-time basis.

The office organization structure of the campus works well and cohesively. There are regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year with various offices that routinely need to interact with one another. These planned meetings offer an established time for communicating information and raising necessary questions regarding issues of coordination and implementation. Although communications are generally good, there is always room for improvement. For example, we must make sure that office directors and managers who meet properly share with those reporting to them the communicated information that could be pertinent for others in their offices. Many offices have also made progress in reviewing their methods of operating, and changes have been made over the last ten years. With the steady revision of federal and state requirements, changes in technological systems and organizational and procedural adjustments, it is important that a review process continue to ensure that efficient operating practices and proper office structures are in place throughout the campus. (For statements of College policies regarding conflict of interest, and charts outlining the organizational structure of College offices, see Support Documents.)

Chapter Nine: FINANCES (MSCHE V, AALE 8-11)

(*Fred H. Billups, Treasurer; Deborah Anawalt, Director of Personnel; Jeffrey Bishop, Vice President for Advancement; Erin Griffin, Director of Information Technology; Regina C. Minante, Accounting Manager; Stephen E. Linhard, Assistant Treasurer)

Since the last Self-Study on the Annapolis campus, there have been significant changes in the financial base of the College. In the Fiscal Year ending in June 1993, the operating budget was $11.9 million. At that time, there were stringent actions being taken to address a range of financial issues. The primary concern was the excessive endowment withdrawal rate, which had reached a high point of 9.6% in 1992. By 1993, the rate had fallen to 8.2%, but had not yet reached the targeted goal of 5%. The endowment market value as of June 1993 was $24.4 million. Faculty salaries, which had been frozen in 1992, along with staff salaries ranged from $30-54,000. There was a list of major campus maintenance and construction items that needed to be addressed, totaling over $22 million. It was a period during which planning and initial steps had been taken to resolve numerous financial deficiencies, but the campus was in the early phase of implementing its plan.

In the years from 1993 to 2002, numerous changes have occurred that today allow the Annapolis campus to function with a considerably stronger financial foundation than was the case ten years ago. The following areas cover the most immediate issues regarding the finances of the College.

Endowment. In the early 1990's, an excessive endowment withdrawal rate made it impossible for the endowment to grow substantially until 1995. By then the endowment draw had declined from 9.6% to 5%. A new policy was adopted that had the effect of maintaining a remarkably steady endowment draw averaging 5% of the endowment market value. In times of strong market performance, the draw fell as low as 3.7%; in down markets it would rise up to today's 5%.

With the decline of the endowment withdrawal rate, the endowment was able to grow, also aided by new gifts and an exceptionally strong stock market. The June 1993 market value of $24.4 million rose by June 2000 to $65.8 million. With the severe market conditions of the past several years, the current value of the Annapolis endowment stands at roughly $50 million as of June 2002. Between 1995 and 2002, the endowment revenue in the operating budget dropped from 18.3% of Educational and General Revenues to 14.2%.

Continuing growth of the endowment is critical to the well-being of the College. With a very widely diversified asset allocation, the endowment is in a very strong position for long-term growth. It is, however, not large enough today to support the Program as we want to see it supported in our plans. Nor will it likely grow fast enough to keep up with current demands, not to mention future plans. The College is committed to maintaining its class sizes and its small enrollment; more revenue is needed to support its financial aid program and the cost of inflation than tuition increases can satisfy; tuition is already as high as we think it can be in relation to other colleges; thus, Program maintenance will require aggressive attention to increasing annual gifts or the endowment. Improvement of the Program along the lines envisioned in our Strategic Plan will almost certainly require a major campaign to raise endowment funds.

Plant Maintenance. The Annapolis campus is comprised of 16 buildings that date back as far as 1720. More than half of the structures are at least 100 years old. Because of the substantial amount of maintenance that was needed in the early 1990's, a ten-year schedule was first prepared in 1992 that initially addressed the most severe problems. Each year the plan was updated and projects were targeted for specific years, depending upon the nature of the work as well as availability of funds.

Since 1993, funds for addressing the physical plant improvements have been available through two State capital grants of $2.9 million each, a 1998 bond issue of $7.8 million, and substantial capital gifts that have paid for approximately half the construction activity.

Today the campus is in a much-improved condition compared to a decade ago. More than $27 million has been spent on the physical plant since 1993. There remains a list of $7 million in maintenance projects, but the present list is different from the 1993 $22 million compilation of projects, as there are no "crisis" issues in the present list, and included in today's projects are some "wish list" items rather than only serious maintenance problems. Most of the work must be accomplished during the time available between graduation and the following year's registration. This leaves limited time for projects and seriously hampers work being done on more than one dormitory in a given summer.

The planning for the maintenance of the physical plant has become more controllable in recent years, as the urgency of repairs has diminished. The improvement to the facilities has been dramatic, but because of the work still to be accomplished, as well as the natural aging of the buildings and equipment, ongoing maintenance activities will always be necessary. As budgets tighten, there will be fewer surplus dollars to address the physical needs of the campus. This is an additional reason for the development of a larger endowment fund.

While the improvement of the appearance and proper maintenance of the campus has been welcomed, the construction work that has been necessary has been a cause of concern on campus. Although most of the work is accomplished during the summers, there are also ongoing activities throughout the year. The most significant concern centers around parking, which will remain an issue until the final parking area is developed in 2004. There has been much discussion on campus about the disruptive effects of construction on campus, particularly because of parking problems, the 18-month renovation of the largest building on campus, and the noisy exterior repair of McDowell Hall, which could not be completed during the summer months alone. Over the next few years, even though maintenance projects will continue, the concerns of the community should be greatly minimized. Parking will be less troubling and projects will not be as noticeable. (For a list of maintenance and construction projects that have been completed on campus between 1993 and 2002, see Support Documents.)

*Debt***.** The use of debt on the Annapolis campus has been intentionally increased over the past ten years. Prior to 1993, there was limited outstanding debt. In 1989, the campus received a $2.5 million Department of Education loan and in 1992 a bond issue of $2 million was made in order to repay a bank line of credit and to cover charges against the plan fund. In 1998, a repayment of the $7.8 million bond issue was undertaken. This public offering, that incorporated the repayment of the $2 million bond issue of 1992, was issued with a campus rating of BBB+ by Standard and Poor's. The bond issue, plus

the balance of the Department of Education loan comprise the $10 million of long-term debt presently being held by the Annapolis campus.

In early 2001, a $12.9 million project was begun in Mellon Hall, the largest building on campus. This project is now completed. Because of the limited time availability of a state grant of $2.9 million, the project had to be started before all funds were in place. At the present time, there is a total of approximately $2 million that must be obtained to complete the funding of the Mellon Hall project. It is expected that this will be accomplished through gifts in the near future. To cover these funds, a construction loan, with a rate of one-month LIBOR plus 35 bases points, will be used over a short term period. Even with the debt that has been incurred in recent years, the debt service of 4% of the operating budget is well below the accepted levels of most colleges. As plans develop for additional construction projects, it will be important to fund a significant portion of the work through gifts rather than over-burdening the budget with debt service. Future budgets anticipate debt service in the range of 6 to 7%, but more than that would put too great a strain on the operating budget.

Tuition and Financial Aid. Tuition represents the most significant portion of revenue for the College. In Fiscal Year 1998, tuition constituted 64.2% of the Educational and General Revenues. As of Fiscal Year 2002, tuition was 68.6% of E&G Revenues, which is approaching a more consistent percentage relative to other liberal arts colleges nationwide. This percentage increased as the endowment revenue percentage gradually increased.

Since 1993, tuition has increased from $15,400 to $25, 790 in 2002. At the same time the applicant pool has increased by nearly 60%, and the undergraduate tuition discount has dropped from a high in the mid 1990's of 33.8% to 28.2% in Fiscal Year 2002. Institutional aid as a percentage of tuition revenue has decreased due to the growth of the applicant pool, which has generated a larger number of students who are able to pay the entire cost of tuition. With the stabilizing of the campus enrollment in the range of 450 students, there are more than enough applicants to fill classes. Future budgets project a gradual increase in tuition discount over the next five years; however, a sizeable increase in the tuition discount would undoubtedly affect the ability of the College to maintain balanced budgets, and would bring into question the size of enrollment. Our plans call for a slight change in our financial aid policy in order to moderate the growth projected in the budget over the next 5 years.

State Support. The Annapolis campus is fortunate to be located in Maryland, a state that has developed programs that support independent colleges and universities. In Fiscal Year 1993, the St. John's operating budget was being reduced to restructure the endowment draw; at the same time, the State of Maryland was faced with financial hardships of its own. Reductions in the annual state operating grant were made with little advance notice to the college and universities that were affected. The 1993 grant totaled $336,000, which was 10% below the prior year support level.

The state grant, which is based upon the number of students enrolled, began increasing in 1994 because of the higher rise in our enrollments, which rose from 430 undergraduates in 1993 to 468 in 2002, and also because the state legislature gradually raised the per capita allocation to students. In the next few years following 1993, the grant gradually increased to $500,000 in 1997. By 2002, with strong enrollments and a

larger per capita grant, the grant to St. John's rose to $867,000. This grant program has many supporters in the legislature, but it annually requires that voices be raised in its defense, especially during those years in which exceptional budgetary constraints are necessary. Over the past ten years, there have been several sessions in which the program was in danger of substantial reductions in size. The funds that have been available to the College because of this program have made a substantial difference to the financial health of the Annapolis campus, and the continuation of the program will remain an important ingredient in the well-being of the College.

Gifts and Grants. The College has a single college-wide Advancement Office charged with raising funds for both the Annapolis and Santa Fe campuses. That office is staffed with a single college-wide Vice President for Advancement, reporting to the two campus Presidents. Each campus has a Vice President for Advancement reporting to the college-wide Vice-President. The Advancement Office, college-wide, has raised over $30 million in cash over the last 5 years, and has raised $20 million in cash and pledges since July 1, 2001, when the College began counting toward the current capital campaign, still in the quiet phase. Funds are raised for annual operation, capital projects and endowment support—all in the interest and for the benefit of the program of instruction.

With the financial changes that have occurred in the past years, the campus is substantially better equipped to the deal with unusual events that could affect the fiscal stability of the Annapolis campus.

Chapter Ten: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING (MSCHE II, VII)

(*Christopher Nelson, President of the College; Harvey Flaumenhaft, Dean of the College; Jeffrey Bishop, Vice President for Advancement; Fred H. Billups, Treasurer)

All institutional planning and assessment is intended to further the aims of the Program as outlined in the Mission Statement. The five practical commitments set forth in the Statement are the practical principles that form the basis of our planning process. Our assessment process is tightly integrated with our planning process so that we can regularly determine the effectiveness of our planning, measure it against our Mission, and make adjustments as plans are implemented.

Planning and assessment are performed along both horizontal institutional lines (short-term and long-term) and vertical functional lines (office by office, each function or service at a time).

Long-Term Planning. The College has a long-term strategic plan that is reviewed and updated annually, and is a work product of the entire College community. We have a Long Range Planning Committee, chaired by the Treasurer and consisting of representatives from various parts of the community, including the Dean, Assistant Dean, Vice President for Advancement, President, Personnel Director, Graduate Institute Director, a tutor, a member of the Staff Council, Admissions Director, and the Chair of the Campus Planning Committee (a faculty committee responsible for the planning that affects the physical plant).

Members of the Long Range Planning Committee are responsible for meeting with other members of the community and bringing recommendations intended to serve our Mission. (It functions annually just as our Self-Study Steering Committee has functioned this past year.) For example, the Dean is responsible for initiating discussions concerning class size, instructional materials, faculty development, and the appropriate size of the campus. Frequently, he will use the occasion of writing his bi-annual *Statement of Educational Policy* to address such concerns (as this Dean has done). The *Statement* may be reviewed by the President and Treasurer to provide any needed financial information that might help guide the discussion; it is reviewed by the campus Instruction Committee and then by the full two-campus Instruction Committee; rewritten; then reviewed by both halves of the faculty in Annapolis and Santa Fe; presented by the President to the Board of Visitors and Governors with an account of the faculty discussion; reviewed in some depth by the Board's Visiting Committee and reported by that committee to the Board for general discussion. If the document makes practical recommendations that require action or funding, the recommendations are taken up by the campus Finance Committee (President, Dean, Treasurer, and Vice Presidents) and the Long Range Planning Committee, where implementation is planned, funded and implemented or set upon a time line for long-term attention.

Virtually every initiative in our strategic plan has undergone this kind of planning process (less critical ones follow a more streamlined process). From time to time, this strategic plan is presented to a Board committee for review and presentation to the Board. The current version contains a ten-year vision and plan, has been approved by the Board of Visitors and Governors, and will form the basis of a needs assessment and case statement for the next capital campaign. Each major initiative and goal of the strategic

plan falls right out of our Mission Statement: 1) maintain and improve the integrity of the academic program and improve its instructional materials; 2) maintain the small classes and low student to faculty ratio; 3) keep the campus from increasing its enrollment, thus providing a community best suited to learning within the Program; 4) improve tutor salaries; 5) provide more time and funds for faculty study; 6) provide a physical environment best suited to learning; and 7) increase funds available for financial aid to support our commitment to need-based assistance to all who belong at the College regardless of their financial circumstances.

Five-year budgets have been projected on the basis of assumptions approved by the Board's Finance Committee; these budgets address the strategic needs identified in the plan. Further projections and plans have then been added to these on the basis of various capital campaign scenarios that address those needs requiring more funds than we would expect to receive in the absence of a campaign. Performance against that plan will be monitored by the Board's Campaign Committee, Finance Committee, and Presidents' Review Committee. (For copies of the current strategic plan, long-range budgets and campaign scenarios with priorities, see Support Documents.)

Short-Term Planning. The College also has a short-term, one-year strategic plan that sets forth the campus's annual strategic plans and objectives in a document prepared by the President, reviewed by the College's other officers, presented to the Board's Presidential Review Committee (consisting of the Board's principle officers) and discussed, negotiated and reduced to writing. (The annual plan is informed by the long-term planning that has framed the long-range strategic plan.) The President's annual performance is measured against these annual goals and is reviewed quarterly by the Board's Presidents' Review Committee. Progress in meeting the goals is reported monthly to the faculty at the faculty meeting, and quarterly to the Board as a whole. In August, after the year has ended, the President issues annual reports to both the Board and faculty, assessing the year's work against the plan, advising them what is still left to be done, and projecting what to expect in the coming year. These reports are discussed, and comments are taken into account by the President and the campus Finance Committee in setting the direction and goals for the coming year. The short-term annual goals are taken from the timetable contained in the long-term strategic plan; some of the goals can be accomplished without a long lead time for planning and thus never make it into the long term strategic plan. Nonetheless, they undergo the same kind of college-wide involvement in planning (for example, the recent decision to provide Greek lexicons to all incoming freshmen, or the formation of a weekend faculty study program, each of which has been reviewed by two committees and the faculty as a whole before being implemented).

In the spirit of the fifth practical commitment of the Mission Statement (cooperation and consultation among the offices), nothing is implemented without wide consultation among all those affected, and very little is done that has not been reviewed by the President and Dean, acting together. (For examples of the annual goals, plans and projects, the quarterly and annual reports, and the President's self-assessment, see Support Documents).

Functional Planning and Assessment of Officers. Each of the campus offices and budget centers (30-35 of them) is reviewed annually by the President and the campus Finance

Committee against the goals and plans set by the office staff, working with the officers. Each office director is asked to report on his office's achievements during the prior year, its projects, operating plans and needs for the coming year, and his judgment of how the President can best help his office achieve its goals. These reports are shared with all of the officers and reviewed by them. Budgeting and planning for the following year are based on this assessment and are approved by the President with the campus Finance Committee. Those long-range projects that are approved find their way into the strategic planning process. Major, short-term projects find their way into the list of projects contained in the annual short-term plan that is submitted to the Presidents' Review Committee, against which the President's own performance is assessed.

Additional assessments of performance of each of the directors (and their employees) are performed annually by their supervisors and find their way into the employees' personnel files. These personnel assessments are widely but not universally used and are not equally effective in all cases. Nonetheless, the conversation on campus is sufficiently integrated that each of the offices understands what its function is in respect to the College's overall Mission. The offices do not function independently but work with one another and with the officers of the College to make sure their work serves a proper end of the College. (For example, a five-year information technology plan is reviewed by a faculty/staff IT Committee and the Campus Finance Committee before being approved by the college-wide Management Committee. Portions that might be seen to have an effect on the program of instruction or the life of the tutors or students are reviewed by the Instruction Committee and even by the faculty as a whole. Changes in the IT mission, priorities, and plans have been made because of this extensive review and the assessment of progress against the plan.)

Evidence shows that the internal office assessments are helpful, candid aids to planning. Although not all needs can be satisfied, sufficient attention is given to them over time so that a remarkable transformation has taken place since our last Self-Study. Office personnel are professional and demanding, largely because they have been getting attention where it is most called for. Individual offices themselves are raising their standards each year because they can actually see the good effect produced on the College by their improvements. (For copies of the 2002 office reports, see Support Documents.)

Assessment of the President. While many of the long and short term plans find their way to the Board for comment and review (and some originate with the Board and get reviewed on the campus), the responsibility for implementation rests with the President, who makes the judgment when to go forward and on how many fronts at once. The planning is, in the end, only useful if it is seen through to implementation and if implementation is assessed to be successful.

The Board's assessment of the process, through the presidential review, is more thorough than any previous process undertaken at the College. No one recalls a formal, rigorous review of presidential performance before 1997, but the current process is taken very seriously. Quarterly progress meetings are held, quarterly reports given and discussed, and an annual self-assessment submitted by the President. The Board committee then conducts a wide range of interviews among Board committee chairs and College officers and has an annual, formal, in-person interview with the President about his performance that is later reduced to writing and preserved.

Just as the planning that went into the President's list of goals and timetables has been rigorously tied to the Mission of the College, so the Board's assessment of the President is in effect an assessment of the effectiveness of the whole planning process, including the appropriateness of the goals intended to serve the College's Mission.

Relationship between Institutional Assessment and Educational Assessment. Just as the College's planning involves a process that ties all goals to the educational purposes and involves faculty and staff alike in all decisions, so also all institutional assessment is grounded in the educational assessment described in Chapter Four. The President is a member of the Instruction Committee and attends meetings of that committee regularly. Consequently, he is present to observe all forms of educational assessment undertaken by that committee (assessment of student learning, of tutor teaching and learning, and of the quality and success of the programs of instruction). Institutional planning starts with this educational assessment, and the President's participation in and observation of the educational assessment process informs and supports all institutional assessment.

Recommendations

- We should continue to update, revise, and assess the long-term plan annually, even as we update the short-term plan and conduct short-term assessments quarterly.
- We should assess the quality of the supervisor's evaluations of staff and associates, and make improvements where required in our personnel evaluation procedure.