Criterion 3: Student Learning and Effective Teaching: The Organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

> *"Through the liberal arts we believe our students will see the interconnectedness of knowledge and develop a spirit of inquiry that will serve them well in our rapidly changing and complex world."*

Introduction

The incorporation of a student into the learning community of Illinois Wesleyan University starts before that student sets foot in a classroom. During the summer before enrolling, each student will be expected to have read a book selected by the First Year Advisory Committee for the Summer Reading Program (http://www.iwu.edu/advising/reading/). The book, a work either of fiction or nonfiction, addresses some aspect of the University's mission. In the week before classes start, all first-year students will meet in small groups to discuss and analyze the book. These groups include not only students, but faculty, alumni, staff, and administrative personnel. The aim of the program is to introduce all incoming students, at the earliest opportunity, to our understanding that Illinois Wesleyan University comprises an inclusive learning community where serious critical engagement and hard intellectual work is welcomed and prized.

Recent results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) offer an encouraging view of Illinois Wesleyan University's effectiveness in pursuing this aim:

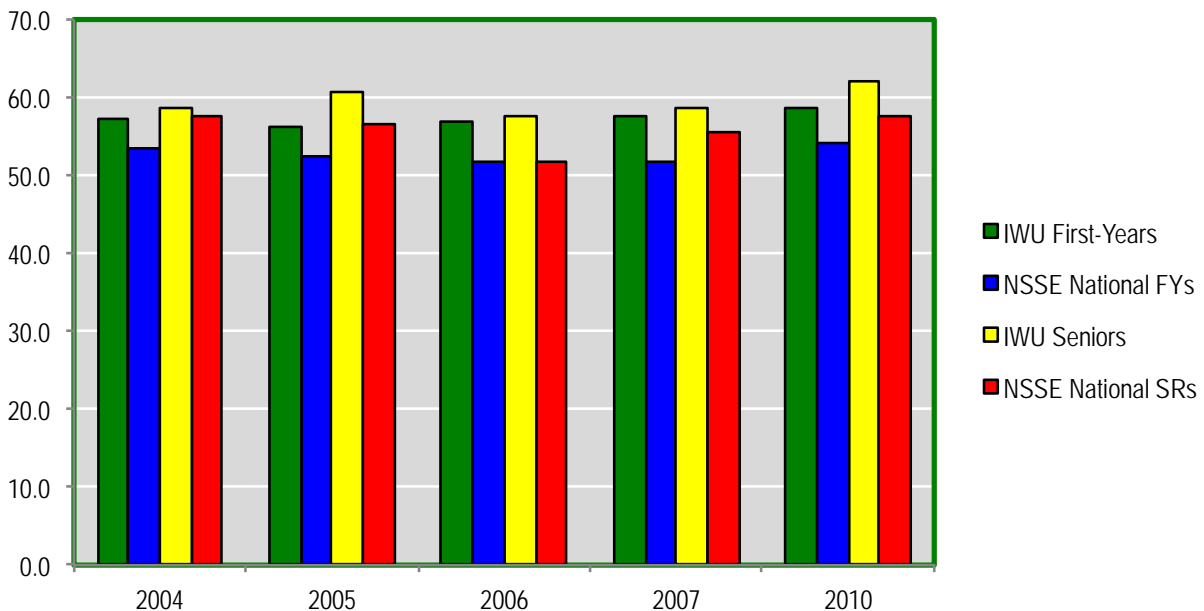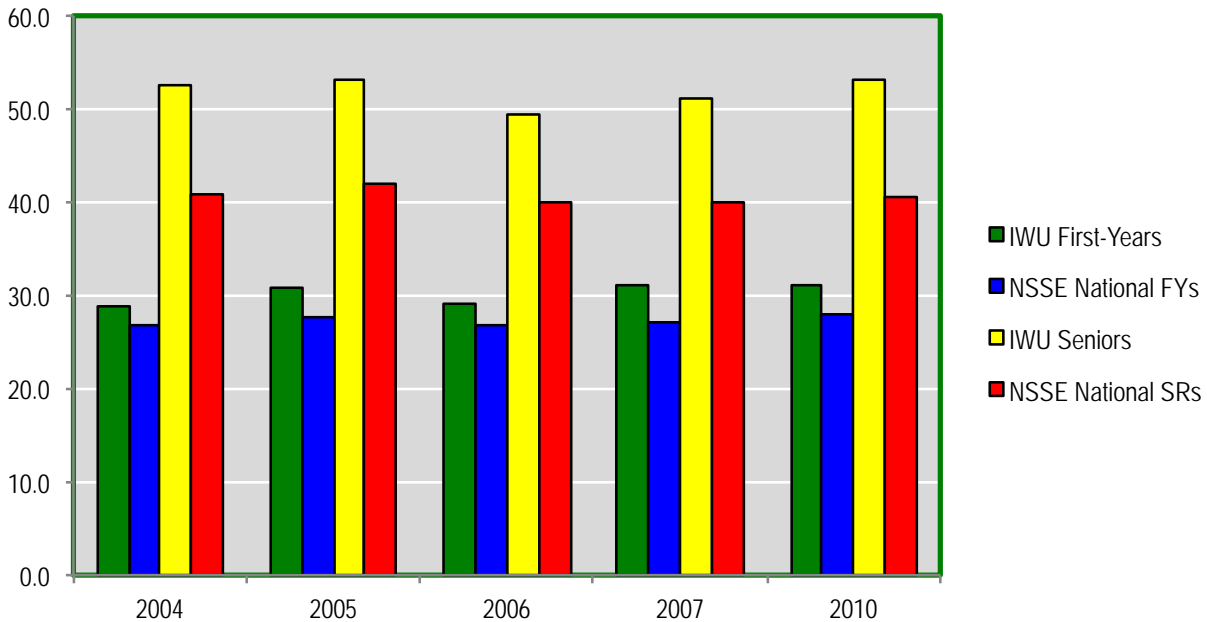Figure : Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark

Figure : Enriching Educational Experiences Benchmark

To be sure, Illinois Wesleyan University's institution-wide commitment to student learning and to the liberal arts is indisputable, and is indeed repeatedly affirmed by all campus constituencies in university surveys (cf. 2007 Identity Survey; 2010 SSSC surveys). Certainly, this commitment embodies the very raison d'etre of the institution as a small liberal arts college, and thus calls attention to the ways in which the University creates opportunities for students to acquire and develop the skills, ideas, and dispositions that the university community values.

At the heart of this project lies the complex nature of learning and its relationship to teaching, most centrally advanced through "a curriculum that is enriched by research opportunities, study abroad options, interdisciplinary programs and superb facilities." In delivering its educational mission through this curriculum, the University highlights two particular strategies. One stresses *individual attention* to student needs, talents, and abilities ("Wesleyan faculty are committed to helping their students chart and pursue a course of study that brings out their best.") The other stresses *engaged learning* in which "learning outside the classroom and beyond campus is a key part of our academic program."(Students find a range of opportunities to collaborate with faculty on research projects, pursue internships and community service, and travel or study abroad.") [Source for all quotes: http://iwu.edu/academics/] Understanding when, how, and why these strategies are most successful, or need nurturing, to advance student learning is a complex task, and one to which the university gives increasingly close and systematic attention.

The essence of the student-teacher relationship is on-going and dynamic communicative interaction. Yet even for those who are deeply committed to the pursuit of the liberal arts through critical inquiry, it can be difficult to gauge or define how this relationship comes to invoke a significant learning experience. Does such learning necessarily involve the completion of a measurable product? If so, how does one assess the efficacy of life-long learning, for which continuous self-reflection is a necessary condition? If the student-teacher relationship is indeed interactive and inter-relational, how does one measure the significance of learning opportunities

made available to students, even if they choose to ignore or fail to pursue them? In a situation whereby both parties share some responsibility for communicating with one another, can one be content to evaluate the significance of the relationship on the basis of discrete outcomes that fail to identify the spontaneous, unexpected, or creative and unplanned events that may make the relationship uniquely significant?

In some ways, these questions illustrate what makes critical inquiry as informed by the liberal arts so special: they evoke a healthy skepticism regarding what one's teaching role should be and how important it is to appreciate the complexity inherent in the teaching/learning relationship. They invite the type of inquiry that lies at the essence of critical reflection, turning it inward to address the very actions in which we as teachers engage. Because the Illinois Wesleyan faculty is deeply committed to engaging with students in order to bring about successful learning, it views its responsibility to teach effectively as an unquestioned professional obligation, and when assessment strategies are presented as opportunities for enhancing one's teaching effectiveness, their importance is understood and in many cases is widely embraced. Such an association is fundamental to the establishment of a "culture of assessment," a process that is ongoing at Illinois Wesleyan. The challenge for the IWU community is to solidify and enhance that process.

3a. The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Although Illinois Wesleyan University offers only undergraduate programs to its students, its curricular offerings are somewhat more complex than those of its small liberal arts college counterparts, because of its pre-professional programs. Few national liberal arts institutions of its size, for example, not only give bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degrees, but also offer the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting, Theatre Design and Technology, or Music Theatre, the Bachelor of Fine Arts with a specialization in drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, ceramics, or graphic design, or the Bachelor of Music (Major in Composition and or Performance) and Bachelor of Music Education degrees. It is thus crucial that students are aware of the specific degree requirements for these programs because the degrees reflect the importance of demonstrating mastery of special fields within the major, with which one would not be immediately conversant. Indeed, the fact that there are seven content areas where one is expected to demonstrate familiarity in order to receive a nursing degree, or that the logic behind offering separate Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in the various theatre fields is reflective of external expectations defining professional competency, is information that is often unfamiliar to students, parents, and faculty colleagues. The necessity of clearly stating learning goals in these areas, for the benefit of all members of the university community, is thus quite clear and compelling.

This imperative extends to traditional liberal arts fields and disciplines as well. A minority of undergraduates begin their university careers with an understanding of what it means to evaluate evidence as would a social scientist or historian, or how one makes logical inferences in reading text as would a literary scholar, or how a scientist would test a hypothesis within the controlled conditions of a laboratory setting. Not only are they largely unfamiliar with what a historian does or how a scientist thinks, they are also unaware of the specific subject matter of most of the disciplinary majors they will select. Given the fact that at Illinois Wesleyan University, students of all backgrounds are encouraged to take many courses in liberal arts disciplines, especially those with pre-professional dispositions, and because a number of students elect to double major

to broaden their specialized competencies, the need to clarify expectations as to what constitutes successful learning experiences, and the contexts in which those experiences occur, is unmistakable. And these learning experiences are not restricted to the conventional major or discipline either, but involve exposure to curricular breadth as well as depth. They include experiences that challenge students to think critically and to extend themselves beyond the familiar in generic as well as specific contexts. This is why the faculty members who create and manage IWU's curricula communicate their expectations for student learning on department and program websites, within the University catalog, in admissions brochures, and in materials disseminated to various constituencies. And it is why student-learning goals for university wide programs such as General Education, May Term, and Study Abroad are similarly disseminated in electronic and in paper formats frequently and periodically.

Institutional Assessment of Student Learning

The University's assessment plan, first developed in 1993 and most recently updated in April 2007, recognizes the need for all academic units to go beyond simply stating their learning goals and expectations, and ensuring their realization to the best possible extent. This plan highlights the importance of engaging in authentic outcomes assessment that is effective and subject to faculty control. It also stresses the need to not only implement findings but to also engage in a systematic review of the plan's assumptions to revise its components. In support of these principles, the assessment of student learning occurs at multiple levels in numerous ways at the University.

At the institutional level, (as noted in the discussion of Criteria 1 and 2), data gathering and analysis with regard to all areas of institutional strategic planning, decision-making, and program evaluation have been systematized since the last accreditation. Thus, the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning, and Evaluation conducts activities involving institutional assessment while the assessment of major programs and student learning outcomes falls under the responsibility of the Associate Dean of Curriculum. This arrangement has encouraged University units to more systematically connect program goals with assessment methods, and has led to a more focused understanding of learning environments and in some cases, the need for further curricular revision and faculty development.

The analysis of assessment data, as it relates to student learning, occurs at the institutional level through the collection of benchmark data from the most important and influential national survey instruments, organized according to a multi-year schedule. In year one, for example, first year students complete the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), developed by the Indiana University for Post-Secondary Research. The BCSSE asks questions about students' high school experiences and interactions, as well as their college engagement expectations. During the spring semester, first year students and seniors complete the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), where they answer questions that explore the levels of student engagement with college resources and activities (e.g., classes, peers, faculty). The NSSE also features curriculum-based questions.

In year two during the fall semester, first year students complete the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey, developed by the University of California, Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). The CIRP survey covers a wide range of student characteristics: parental income and education, ethnicity, and other demographic items; financial

aid; secondary school achievement and activities; educational and career plans; and values, attitudes, beliefs, and self-concept. Then, during the spring semester of year two, the Your First College Year (YFCY) survey is administered. The YFCY survey asks questions about students' experiences and interactions during their first year of college. In addition, it allows direct comparison among a number of similar questions that students responded to when completing the CIRP survey. Many aspects of the CIRP and YFCY serve as a pre/post examination of the first-year experience. The CORE Drug and Alcohol Survey, originally developed by the Department of Higher Education and now administered by Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, is also given during students' first and second years (under the auspices of the Office of Student Affairs). In addition, the HERI faculty survey is offered regularly to provide an assessment of faculty perceptions and expectations regarding institutional priorities and student development. For purposes of enhancing student learning, a comparative analysis of the degree to which student and faculty perceptions demonstrate congruence or significant difference regarding students' time on task, motivation, and achievement of specific learning goals is particularly useful. The fact that these instruments are disseminated in an ordered and systematic fashion not only allows the University to guard against the negative effects of over-surveying, but also gives the community the time and space to analyze the data that is acquired, and to respond to concerns that evolve from their analysis.

As we detail below in discussion of sub-criterion 3c, the survey results affirm the institution's success in promoting positive student learning outcomes within the skill and dispositional areas it most highly values. These results are further supported by the performance of IWU students on external exams, necessary for professional licensure or certification. Thus, IWU students who take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses have consistently outperformed their peers and counterparts both within the state of Illinois and nationally, obtaining pass rates of 93-96% over the past five years. Teacher education students who take State of Illinois content area exams prior to their student teaching have achieved 100% pass rate over the past three years, as they have with the Assessment of Teaching Performance exam, a pre-condition to obtaining state certification. The results of students who pursue certification by the American Chemical Society or accounting majors who take the CPA are similarly impressive.

Other information involving student learning is collected through the creation of reports such as the IWU Fact Book, the Common Data Set, and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Feedback Report, with all of this longitudinal data accessible on the IWU Office of Institutional Research and Planning webpage. Here, information can be found regarding graduation and transfer rates, alumni satisfaction, and information that speaks to external institutional accountability issues as they relate to student learning. The OIRP webpage is updated each semester, and an email message is sent out to the campus community listing the newly available information. In addition to making the information available, presentations of selected reports and data elements are conducted at a variety of meetings including the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet Meetings and Retreats, the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee, the Council of University Programs and Policy, the University Council for Diversity, general faculty meetings, Staff Council, and the Student Senate. The OIRP also provides selected reports and data elements on a regular basis to the Academic Advising Center, the First-Year Advising Program, Academic Affairs, Alumni Affairs, the Writing Program, Student Affairs, and to various academic departments for their assessment efforts.

As has been briefly mentioned in the discussions of Criteria 1and 2, Illinois Wesleyan University has participated in two assessment consortia projects, sponsored by the Teagle Foundation, that include other Midwest liberal arts institutions. The first project involved the construction, dissemination and use of comparative value added assessment instruments to determine student-learning outcomes with respect to critical thinking, writing, and civic engagement. Student essays and papers from the cooperating institutions were collected and blindly scored and reviewed by representative faculty from the participating colleges. The results of this project for all participating institutions are summarized in appendix ___, with Illinois Wesleyan student performance documented under the label, "silver." The second Teagle project involves an assessment of faculty labor usage in the implementation of high impact learning practices in support of curricular reform and innovation. As will be discussed later, the results of the first Teagle project have significantly informed major reforms within the University writing program. And while data collection involving the second Teagle project is ongoing, this study is highlighting some of the generic challenges faculty confront in implementing high impact learning practices as a part of their teaching activities while additionally carrying out their regular responsibilities. Both projects are important insofar as they demonstrate the truism that support for student learning involves more than simply collecting data; if the assessment of teaching and learning is not actively intertwined with curricular and pedagogical reform, its significance becomes marginalized. This contention is reiterated throughout the discussion of teaching and learning on the IWU campus, as the University community understands that it is not enough to simply identify learning goals and accumulate information regarding their implementation if the information is neglected or left dormant.

It would also be inaccurate to leave the impression that the only form of data collection that regularly occurs on an institutional basis involves the gathering of longitudinal survey data. As the University Assessment plan matrix indicates, numerous types of data are additionally collected and analyzed across the campus. They include but are not necessarily limited to alumni surveys, exit interviews involving senior majors, student focus groups, external programmatic reviews, external assessments of subject matter and professional proficiency, evaluation of retention rates, etc. Such an eclectic approach to data collection and analysis is important, not simply because different measures present differing degrees of efficacy dependent upon what one is trying to learn, but because in a relatively small community where sampling size may not only vary but may not be robust enough to produce definitive results, it makes sense to use a multiple number of assessment methods to gather the most accurate findings possible.

General Education and the Writing Program

Two of the more important University wide initiatives include the General Education Program and the Writing Program and in both programs, the faculty have played a major role in providing a systematic assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. The current General Education program has been in place for fifteen years and assessment has occurred primarily at the course level, whether by individual faculty members, academic departments, or faculty committees such as the Curriculum Council. Although some revisions were made to the program on three occasions since its inception, in 2008, the Strategic Curricular Review Task Force recommended an extensive review of the program as a whole. Pursuant to this recommendation, the Curriculum Council (CC) began a comprehensive review of General Education (Gen Ed) in 2009 when its Academic Standards Sub-Committee (AS) initiated an assessment of the value of the General

Education categories. Were these the correct categories? Were they meeting the purposes of the faculty? Were they meeting the needs of the students? Such questions were put before the faculty by AS in a series of 15 workshops (one per category) over the course of three semesters. AS also created and administered surveys in each Gen Ed category and received student feedback regarding category goals and students' awareness of these goals. Additionally CC organized three forums in which faculty examined the goals and values of the program, its structure and implementation, and how to improve communication about the General Education program. At the same time, student facilitators were trained by an outside consultant to conduct student focus groups concerning the value they found in the general education courses they took at the University. Finally, comments provided by alumni in a survey administered for this self-study were incorporated into the sub-committee's evaluation.

Some of the general findings of this effort include the fact that the faculty has expressed no need to eliminate or dramatically change the structure of the program. However, there is a general belief that the program should pay greater attention to information literacy concepts. Additional changes in statements of goals and criteria have been proposed, and were presented to faculty at the beginning of the 2011-2012 academic year. Subsequently, data from workshops, faculty forums, and a fall faculty conference were collated to develop specific proposals to refine the General Education categories, to improve the program, and to respond to faculty calls for greater flexibility in the program. In an effort to strengthen the systematic evaluation of General Education, evaluation forms specific to the General Education Program were added to regular course evaluations in both semesters of 2010-2011 and were provided to course instructors at the end of each semester, after having been reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee. It is clear in this case, that systematic assessment efforts have become embedded in programmatic design and evaluation.

The systematic use of assessment data has also been used to revise the University's Writing Program. As has been previously noted, Illinois Wesleyan participated in a Teagle Grant with five other institutions from 2006-2009 that sought to evaluate students' critical thinking, writing, and civic engagement according to the progress they made in these areas through their four-year university experience. The opportunity to measure student progress on a value added basis was particularly compelling, but in comparative terms, the performance of IWU students, particularly with regard to writing proficiency, was somewhat disappointing (appendix ___). The results of the grant thus led to a focused effort to improve the University Writing Program. A summer writing group led an effort to revise the General Education writing requirement and when the faculty eventually accepted its recommendations, students were now required to complete the second of three writing intensive courses before the end of their sophomore year. This change in the timing of the delivery of the writing intensive course was far from cosmetic, for it required departments to make sure that enough of their lower division courses could meet the writing intensive criteria, to allow students the opportunity to fulfill the requirement. The change also required students and their advisors to plan their schedules accordingly as such a change would have an impact upon fulfilling study abroad, external internship, and major course requirements in a timely manner. The need to insure that students received focus attention upon improving their writing proficiency of course outweighed such logistical considerations.

At the same time, the University affirmed its support for further developing its writing program by implementing other recommendations of the Summer Writing group. That group, which

recommended the creation of the position of Writing Program director, also suggested that the program's infrastructure be improved, that incentives be offered for faculty to develop more writing-intensive courses, and that the assessment of student work to support faculty development occur on an on-going basis. In fulfillment of these recommendations, with the support of a Mellon Foundation grant, the program now has director, selected from the faculty with a half-time administrative appointment; it has invited consultants and speakers to campus annually and has conducted annual reviews of student work on a rotating basis, divided into first-year (Gateway), mid-level, and senior level categories. As a consequence of this assessment activity, the program has developed an evaluation rubric for student writing that faculty are able to adapt to their own particular assignments or courses. In addition, the program has created a one-page document of clustered faculty expectations of student writing called the Mappa Wesleyana that faculty members have found very useful. Workshops have addressed the design of individual writing assignments, the norming of the evolving rubric, and student writing at the three levels mentioned above. As a recently conducted external review of the Writing Program evaluated its work in quite positive terms, it is not surprising that in its transparency and rigorous assessment activities, the program has served as a model for departments and programs seeking to improve their assessment measures. The next step the program proposes is to examine longitudinal data as it moves through a second cycle of assessment to search for new strengths or areas of weakness.

Departmental, School, and Programmatic Assessment

As part of the institution-wide effort to systematize assessment, the University began in 2004-2005 to implement a program of comprehensive self-studies in each academic department and program. About a third of all departments and interdisciplinary programs undertook such an exercise in 2005. In subsequent years, other departments and programs have undertaken similar systematic self-studies. Beginning in 2007-2008 all academic programs have also been scheduled to undergo an external review (see schedule of reviews in Appendix_____). The formal self-study is intended to provide a preparatory basis for the external review, and after receiving the external reviewers' report, departments/schools are expected to provide a response and a proposed plan of action based on the reviewers' recommendations. By 2012, eight departments had undergone external reviews according to a schedule established by the Associate Dean for the Curriculum. The guidelines for external reviews are included in Appendix _____. Guidelines that are given to department members for their formal assessment reports (to be submitted to the Provost) include the following:

- A goals/objectives statement that department faculty have established for the department's major program(s)—that is, what should students know and be able to do when they finish the program(s)?
- How you collected the data on which your report is based. That is, what information was used to determine whether program goals for students are being met? Please attach copies of surveys, questionnaires, proficiency tests, or other instruments that you administered.
- A descriptive and/or statistical summary of the results of tests, questionnaires, interviews, or other sources of information.
- An analysis of program strengths that emerge from the data, along with any concerns that your analysis suggests. Indicate as well whether your assessment efforts confirmed your

expectations or served up some surprises.
- How you and other program faculty plan to use the analysis for program improvement.

Both the department assessment reporting process and the external review system are designed with the assumption that they will include strong faculty input. This assumption reiterates the conviction that departmental autonomy and department members' expertise in assessing programmatic strengths and weaknesses are important considerations that deserve to be reaffirmed as part of the assessment process. The assumption also supports a shared belief in the importance of authentic assessment, whereby stakeholders are intimately involved in the design and implementation of their own assessment processes and procedures.

This respect for departmental autonomy and expertise is reflected in the ways that departments and programs state their program goals. Departments and programs have explicitly stated program goals and objectives that reflect expected student learning outcomes, and in the past three to four years, all academic units have revisited, reviewed, and where necessary revised these goals. Some departments make these goals publicly available by posting them on their website. The Religion Department encourages its faculty members to present the department's goals on their course syllabi. However, there is no required format according to which departments must formulate and present their goals. Consequently, the ways in which departments and programs present not only their programmatic goals, but also their learning outcomes varies quite widely, depending on internal departmental cultures or national disciplinary expectations. For instance, the English department provides a detailed list of specific skills in thinking, reading, writing, researching, and engaging in creative activity that department members value and that they expect their graduates to develop. The Economics Department, on the other hand, devised its learning outcomes by surveying the expectations of economics departments across the nation and comparing them with the department's own skills and talents. Some departments' learning outcomes are quite concise; others are quite extensive and detailed. Some focus entirely on disciplinary skills, and almost all stress the importance of learning critical thinking through a liberal arts education. Some programs link their programmatic goals and subsequent learning outcomes explicitly to the University mission. For example, in 2008 the Educational Studies department decided to align its program more closely with the University mission by including within its student learning outcomes a category for 'Teacher-Scholars for Social Justice:' The following examples, derived from departmental self-reporting, attest to the eclectic ways in which student learning outcomes are enunciated across the campus.

Educational Studies Department – Grounding in Social Justice Education:

An understanding of and commitment to social justice education is a global outcome for all Educational Studies students. Teachers committed to social justice first "recognize the existence of an unacceptable achievement gap based on race, ethnicity, disability/exceptionality and socioeconomic status," and then engage in action that interrupts the perpetuation of inequity and injustice. The following social justice outcomes draw upon those articulated by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, the social justice literature in education, and the Educational Studies Conceptual Framework:

1. Demonstrates understanding of:

i.   The impact of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, class, culture, gender, disability/exceptionality, sexual orientation, and language on students and their learning; and

ii.   The role of the teacher in a diverse and democratic society.

2. Commitment:

i.   Demonstrated belief that all students can learn;

ii.   Demonstrated ability to respond to the educational needs of all students in a caring, non-discriminatory, and equitable manner; and

iii.   Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions that facilitate all students' learning, regardless of race, culture, ethnicity, language, class, gender, and/or ability.

The Educational Studies department assesses these particular student learning goals through a variety of specific measures associated with students' status in the program. Thus, one measure is a program admission essay on the challenges of teaching social justice that each student must write in their sophomore year; this measure evaluates student learning from the first two classes in the program. A further measure requires students to provide evidence of social justice teaching in their student teaching evaluations. A third measure is an evaluation rubric for social justice teaching/scholarship that is applied to seniors' portfolio essays. And throughout the program, an evaluation rubric is applied to individual assignments in various courses.

In presenting their student learning goals, several departments also distinguish between the learning outcomes that they expect to inculcate in their majors through the sweep of their curriculum, and the learning outcomes they expect their courses to contribute to the General Education program. For instance, the Hispanic Studies department presents its student learning outcomes as follows:

Department of Hispanic Studies

Student Learning Goals:

The Department of Hispanic Studies has two goals for students why study Spanish: one set of goals is for students pursuing the General Education credit in a second language and another is for our majors and minors. These goals are directly associated with the curricular program traits described in the course catalog.

1. **Communication:**

General Education: Students will acquire the fundamental skills of speaking, reading, listening and writing in Spanish.

Majors and Minors: Students will demonstrate an intermediate to advanced level of communication in Spanish speaking, reading, listening and writing. They will be able to develop and express an extended argument using historical or literary text analysis.

2. **Cultural Understanding:**

   At all levels, students will gain an understanding of the variety and complexity of Hispanic cultures around the globe.

   Majors and Minors: In addition to learning about Hispanic culture in the classroom, majors are required to spend at least one semester abroad in a Spanish-speaking country; minors are encouraged to do the same.

3. **Critical Thinking:**

   At all levels, students will read and interpret Spanish texts, examine cultural interactions, and learn to make evaluative judgments. Students will learn to synthesize arguments and articulate their opinions in Spanish both in speaking and writing.

   Majors and Minors: Students will learn to think analytically about the underlying grammatical Spanish system; distinguish and appreciate different literary styles, and make connections between literature and culture.

As outlined in the matrix displayed on pages 14-15 below, the Hispanic Studies department has established a set of specific assessment measures that it applies systematically to these goals.

An increasing number of departments categorize their learning outcomes in terms of the (disciplinary) knowledge, (cognitive and analytical) skills, and (citizenship) values that they seek to inculcate in their students. A good example of this trend is the learning outcomes goals of the Political Science department, devised in close consultation with the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning and Evaluation following an intensive review of the curriculum and several years of student exit interviews:

Department of Political Science: Student Learning Outcomes

A graduate in Political Science from Illinois Wesleyan University will:

Knowledge

- Know the theoretical traditions, debates, and methodological approaches used in the empirical study of political phenomena;
- Be well versed in the major normative traditions of modern political thought;
- Know the processes, institutions, and contexts that shape politics at local, national, transnational, and international levels.

Skills

- Be able to analyze political phenomena critically, recognizing the implications of diverse perspectives, normative positions, and evidentiary claims;
- Be able to conduct rigorous and original political research, using appropriate analytical frames and methodological instruments to test hypotheses;
- Be able to communicate research findings and arguments in a clear, logical, and persuasive manner, whether in written or oral form.

Values

- Be intellectually curious and appreciate the value of critical scholarly work;
- Appreciate their place, and the place of others, in the broader global community;
- Value civic engagement and appreciate the importance of active citizenship.

There obviously is by necessity, a significant degree of variation regarding the different ways departments, schools and programs develop their programmatic goals and link them to their student learning outcomes as a part of their assessment processes. Some programs draw systematically on external standards of assessment. For instance, the Chemistry department administers standardized tests furnished by the American Chemical Society (ACS) in order to measure student learning in both basic and advanced chemistry courses. The department submits a report to ACS every fifth year marshaling evidence that they continue to meet ACS standards. In response, the ACS provides the department with curricular suggestions based on information it has gathered from industry and graduate school programs. The Business Administration program uses, among other more direct assessment instruments, graduates' passage rates on CPA examinations, participation in Insurance Series examinations (CLU, CPCU), and average starting salaries of graduates into full-time employment. The Physics department points with justified pride to its exceptional record of placing graduates in top-tier PhD programs. In addition, the department has developed specific measures for specific goals in consultation with published scholarship in the field of physics education.

The variation in school, department and program approaches notwithstanding, academic programs and departments have either completed or are refining comprehensive and integrated formal assessment plans while progress in implementing these plans is ongoing. For most department and programs, regular assessment had drawn heavily on such direct measures as student work portfolios or performance in a capstone experience, as well as indirect measures such as senior exit interviews and regular alumni surveys. The following examples illustrate different departmental approaches to linking assessment to student learning outcomes.

Religion Department Assessment Plan

Program Goals

The Religion Department views religion as a significant dimension of all human cultures, past and present. Our courses explore the religious traditions of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the Americas and Europe. The Religion Department encourages students to learn more about their own religious heritage, but especially to venture into new realms.

The academic study of religion offers an interdisciplinary approach to the ways in which human thought, values and ceremonies, literature, architecture, art, community and politics are woven into a cultural religious fabric. Through the study of Religion, we expect students to engage in critical and constructive thinking, to develop their reading, writing and speaking skills, and to expand their empathy toward and aesthetic awareness of other traditions.

Thus, in congruence with the IWU Mission, the Religion Department seeks to, "foster creativity, critical thinking, effective communication, strength of character and a spirit of inquiry," and, most importantly, helps to prepare students for, "life in a global society."

I. Student Learning Goals

The Religion Department has identified the following student learning goals for the major. Each of these goals is directly associated with the curricular program traits described in the course catalog.

1. **Content Knowledge**
   Students will develop an in-depth understanding of the culture and history of *at least* two religious traditions, as well as an awareness of the most significant themes in comparative religious studies**;**

2. **Methodology**
   Students will be able to demonstrate a high degree of fluency with the critical methods used in studying religion.

3. **Research and Critical Thinking Skills**
   Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to perform in-depth research in a selected topic in Religion and to think critically about the data collected.

4. **Conceptual Understanding and Empathy**
   Students will understand the concept of "religion" and the difficulty in its definition and study. In addition, students will understand and empathize with diverse world religious traditions.

II. Methods of Assessment

Student learning will be assessed using a series of direct and indirect assessment measures. These measures, the associated student learning goals, the context in which these tools will be used, and the use of the resulting information are presented in the following chart.

TABLE OF ASSESSMENT MEASURES TO STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Measures & Tools	Goals				Context	Use and Frequency
	1	2	3	4		
Senior Audit	x	x	x		**Direct:** Review of the courses taken by majors and minors	Faculty assess courses taken to ensure coverage of traditions and core courses *Performed annually*
Senior Seminar (Religion 460) Capstone Course	x	x	x	x	**Direct:** Faculty assessment of students on an individual level concerning the culmination of studies, including an extensive research component (written).	Faculty assessments are shared with the department on an annual basis for program evaluation and revision, as necessary. *Course offered annually*
Senior Portfolio (Majors Only)		x	x		**Direct:** Collection of student work produced by each student major. 1) A representative paper from a course in one of the required sections of the major other than methods 2) Methods course (290's) paper 3) Senior seminar paper. 4) Exit interview.	~ The assessment is reviewed and discussed for program evaluation and revision, as necessary *Portfolio collected annually*
Senior Presentation in Religion Colloquium			x	x	**Indirect**: Students give 10-15 oral presentations of their Senior Research projects from Religion 460	*Annual Event*
Exit Interview	x	x	x	x	**Indirect:** A three-page series of questions eliciting responses concerning multiple aspects of the major program.	~ The assessment is reviewed and discussed for program evaluation and revision, as necessary. *Exit interview administered annually*
Returning Alumni	x	x	x	x	**Indirect:** Visiting department alumni engage with current majors & minors about their perceived quality of experiences with peers, faculty, and the program in general as well as post-graduation success in the field.	to assist with their post-undergraduate preparation and outlook. *As can be arranged with alumni*
External Review	x	x	x	x	**Direct:** External faculty assessment of the effectiveness of the program in fulfilling goals related to student engagement, learning and success.	~ The assessment is reviewed and discussed for program evaluation and revision, as necessary. *Performed as necessary*

Hispanic Studies Department Assessment Plan

TABLE OF ASSESSMENT MEASURES TO STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Measures & Tools	Goals			Context	Use and Frequency
	1	2	3		
Placement Exam	x	x	x	**Direct:** Information concerning the written communication skills of entering students which is used to place them at the appropriate, point for studies.	~ Students are placed in the appropriate class.
Internship	x	x	x	**Direct:** Faculty assessment of students on an individual level concerning the use of skills in real world situations (written).	~ Faculty assessments are shared with the department on an annual basis for program evaluation and revision, as necessary.
Study Abroad	x	x	x	**Direct:** Department Chair pre- and post-assessment of students on an individual level concerning the real world - transformative experience (oral).	~ Chair assessments are shared with the department on an annual basis for program evaluation and revision, as necessary. ~ Share stories with current majors & minors who will study abroad in the future to assist with their preparation.
¡Háblame! Tutor	x			**Direct:** Students in Span 201 have 20-minute weekly guided conversation with tutor (in conjunction with class material); **Indirect:** A 1-page series of questions eliciting responses concerning multiple aspects of the ¡Háblame! experience.	~The assessment is reviewed and discussed for program evaluation and revision, as necessary.
Survey of basic sequence	x	x	x	**Indirect:** A two-page survey eliciting responses on reading, grammar, and culture learned in Span 101, 102 and 201.	~The data is collected, graphed and assessed by chair and language coordinator as part of the evaluation and revision of the basic sequence program.
Capstone Course	x	x	x	**Direct:** Faculty assessment of students on an individual level concerning the culmination of studies, including an extensive research component (written).	~ Faculty assessments are shared with the department on an annual basis for program evaluation and revision, as necessary.
Senior Portfolio (Majors Only)	x	x	x	**Direct:** Collection of student work produced by each student major. 1) Span 303 composition or any 300 level. 2) Cultural paper (314, 316, or 320). 3) Senior seminar paper. 4) Exit interview. 5) Department check-list.	~ The assessment is reviewed and discussed for program evaluation and revision, as necessary.
Written Exit Survey	x	x	x	**Indirect:** A three-page series of questions eliciting responses concerning multiple aspects of the major program.	~ The assessment is reviewed and discussed for program evaluation and revision, as necessary.
Returning Alumni	x	x	x	**Indirect:** Visiting department alumni engage with current majors & minors about their perceived quality of experiences with peers, faculty, and the program in general, as well as post-	~ Share stories with current majors & minors to assist with their post-undergraduate preparation and outlook.

The professional schools at Illinois Wesleyan University strive to maintain a balance between meeting the expectations of accrediting professional associations and maintaining their own enthusiasm for immersing their students as much as possible in the liberal arts core of the university. Providing the requisite training for professional work after graduation along with the breadth of learning offered by general education requires careful planning on the part of advisor and student, as well as careful attention from the faculty in these schools as to whether student need is being met as measured by both internal and external criteria.

The schools stand out by dint of their assessments at multiple stages of a student's career within that particular school. The School of Music, for example, makes a student's continuation into advanced courses contingent upon satisfactory appraisal provided at the end of the sophomore year. Review results may take three forms: approval to advance, conditional or probationary approval, or denial of advancement. Thus students are afforded an early and objective review of their talent and potential. The School of Theatre Arts conducts a similar sophomore review that concludes with an individual conference with a faculty member at which specific strengths and challenges are identified which, in turn, informs future curricular planning for the student. The School of Nursing offers pre-exam testing in two courses before they sit for the final certification examination in order better to identify issues involved with test taking or *lacunae* in their preparation. The School of Art requires a sophomore exhibition at the end of the second year, providing faculty an opportunity to reflect with students on individual strengths and challenges as well as their own developing critical abilities. It is to be noted that all of these soundings of skill development occur well before or very early in the senior year, and all involve direct methods of assessment: juries, exhibitions, testing. It is an examination of student work itself that offers faculty in these schools an opportunity to reflect on student development relatively early in the student's career.

Closing the Loop

Though the link between student learning outcome goals and assessment is drawn with different degrees of specificity, a culture of reflecting critically on the curriculum and student experience is well established in all schools, departments and programs, and there is extensive evidence that academic units respond to the feedback that they receive from their assessment processes, whether those processes are formal and direct or informal and indirect. A few examples of curricular innovation informed by careful planning and a sensitive analysis of information that has been gathered with reference to disciplinary trends, both outside and within the University, illustrate this feedback loop in action:

- The Political Science department has made two major curricular changes in response to student survey results. First, a research methods course was added to assist students in preparing for the Senior Seminar, first implemented in the 1990's. Second, a mandatory off-campus learning opportunity was added as a requirement for the major. This allows students, who are pursuing the major, but don't expect to enter law school or graduate school upon their graduation, to investigate alternative careers where they can make use of the skills acquired as a political science major.
- The Religion department has identified a common textbook for its Senior Seminar and is using final seminar papers as a foundation for a portfolio of student work.

- Hispanic Studies Department faculty were made aware, through exit interviews with their students, that a number of students wished to take courses that did not emphasize literary or cultural studies. The creation of Spanish 240 (Spanish for Social Justice) addresses that need.
- The Biology department, in analyzing the findings of its external review, realized that its introductory General Biology sequence was not serving the needs of its students well. Offered as a segmented team-taught two course series, the curriculum has been redesigned and as of 2011, two- faculty will be responsible for the delivery of the courses within a co-teaching structure, allowing for greater instructional continuity and more effective planning.
- The Mathematics department learned from exit interviews with graduating seniors that students desired more support on actuarial exams and more focus on applications in general. In response, the department approved a new course, "Regression and Time Series," which uses statistics to solve a variety of real world problems.
- In the wake of a survey of best practices at peer and aspirant institutions, the History department decided to adjust its curricular requirements for majors. Beginning in the Fall 2011, the department now requires students to take three 100-level courses in three geographic areas, and to take at least one course in pre-1800 history.
- The International Studies program, drawing on data generated for its 2005 self-study, student performance in senior research projects, as well as senior exit interviews, determined that studying abroad for a semester added extraordinary value to the major curriculum. Consequently, the program revised the major in 2009 to require students to study abroad for at least one semester in an appropriate and approved program.
- In order to better prepare students for the NCLEX-RN, the School of Nursing has used t the Health Education Systems Incorporated (HESI) assessment in both the fall and early spring terms to provide for an individual predictions of success. This testing is followed by an NCLEX-RN preparation program that "may contribute to improved aggregate performance" on the part of test takers.

These examples of programmatic curricular reform are indicative of the various ways in which serious curricular planning occurs. In some cases, faculty engage in planning from the back, forward, focusing upon expected student learning outcomes by the end of their undergraduate years. The emphasis upon the capstone or upper division level experience, be it through the senior seminar or off-campus learning opportunity is an example of such a focus. For others, it is more important to make sure that students are acquiring disciplinary skills prior to the capstone. Curricular reform in these instances occurs in the initial years of one's disciplinary engagement. The common thread that is apparent in all of the above examples, is that faculty have a strong general sense as to what learning outcomes their students should experience, and they seek to focus upon revising specific curricular elements in support of those anticipated outcomes.

Indeed, institutional evaluation of the curriculum is a quotidian process. Approval for new courses, changes in course titles and content, General Education courses, May Term courses, changes in course requirements, the revision of existing major and minor programs, and/or the development of new programs is contingent upon successful peer review on the part of the Curriculum Council and agreement of the entire faculty. Proposals for courses that form part of University wide programs are evaluated according to established criteria enumerated within the

Curriculum Development Handbook; those that are specific to department programs must speak to University guidelines involving the level at which they are proposed to be taught, the resource issues involved in their creation, development and implementation, and their significance to the curricular program with which they are associated. The evidence presented in support of new tenure line requests, summarized in the discussion of Criterion 2, can also involve discussions involving the curricular directions a new faculty hire might pursue, while in making the case for tenure and promotion, faculty regularly include syllabi and assignments for review, and offer evidence for the importance of the courses they teach to their department, ancillary programs, and to the university more generally. Be it through environmental scanning, adherence to established curricular guidelines and protocols, or an appeal to the authority of specialized individual expertise, faculty members are required to make the case for course approval on its merits, offering information in support of their claims, which is then subject to peer scrutiny and evaluation. It is thus safe to conclude that at the institutional, programmatic, and course levels, faculty are intimately involved in the assessment of curricular and pedagogical initiatives designed to promote student learning.

Effective assessment of student learning at Illinois Wesleyan University is not simply a possibility or a goal; it is a real and visible component in the community's collective effort to enhance student learning. It is also clear that assessment occurs in numerous ways and in multiple contexts. Nonetheless, there are a number of challenges that if addressed, would make current assessment efforts even more powerful and more effective. For example, the faculty associated with some major and minor programs are farther along than others in developing program goals, assessment rubrics, and short and long-term plans. It would therefore be useful if a centralized repository of assessment data along with a listing of short-term and long-term plans for majors and minor curricular programs was established. In addition, there is no clear mechanism in place for systematically sharing and using information as a basis for further assessment. The Self-Study Steering Committee therefore looks forward to the establishment of a university-wide assessment committee, as it views such a structure as being able to offer supplemental assistance to ensure that assessment is conducted more effectively, that programmatic results are shared with peers and students across the campus with a greater degree of consistency, and that its presence will offer further support for strategic curricular decision-making. As has been noted, the creation of the Associate Dean of the Curriculum position has given impetus for important campus wide discussions involving strategic curricular planning, and assessment has always played a major role in these discussions. In the view of the Self-Study Steering Committee, an active assessment committee would give further support and direction for these activities.

3b. The institution values and supports effective teaching.

The discussion of Criterion 1 in this report highlights the importance of effective teaching to the University's mission and its sense of integrity. Consequently, the University approaches the challenges of advancing teaching effectiveness deliberately and with an appreciation that, although teachers have numerous natural communicative, organizational, and cognitive gifts that influence their professional success, teaching well is not simply a natural occurrence. The assumption that teaching is a natural calling and that teaching skills are based upon inherent immutable strengths that one may or may not possess is simply not a defensible proposition. Instead, at Illinois Wesleyan, teaching is viewed as a craft that must be continuously refined. A

commitment to teaching excellence therefore presupposes a belief in the importance of continuous improvement; it views evidence of one's effectiveness in contextual and transitory terms, and it associates accomplishment as a part of one's desire to improve throughout one's career.

It is for this reason that in the liberal arts setting at Illinois Wesleyan, effective teaching necessarily involves more than a set of skills for which one exhibits demonstrated mastery. In recognition of its complexity and in appreciation for the context in which undergraduate-level teaching within a liberal arts setting occurs, effective teaching is supported through active inquiry and repeated self-reflection. The same intellectual tools that one uses to further disciplinary understanding in one's field of scholarly expertise can thus be applied to an analysis of one's teaching effectiveness. The connection between dispositions that embrace scholarly inquiry with those that express interest in improving teaching effectiveness is therefore not accidental, for the importance of engaging in scholarship in support of one's teaching is an important institutional value as expressed within tenure and promotion criteria and more generally, throughout the *Faculty Handbook*. Indeed, it is this seamless connection that differentiates teaching at the liberal arts undergraduate level from that offered to younger students in compulsory public or private school settings.

Institutional support for teaching excellence begins with hiring outstanding faculty to accommodate the changing needs and interests of the University. The University strives to attain the ideal of a liberal education while providing unique opportunities with its distinctive curricula and programs. Position announcements stress the importance of upholding "…a tradition of teaching excellence and scholarly productivity" through its hiring decisions. As hiring procedures have evolved, the University has consistently hewed to the principle of coordinating the various interests of departments, the general faculty, students and the University administration. The evaluation process for hiring prospective tenure-line faculty members includes input from the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, the members of the search committee, the chair of the department, faculty within the department, and a faculty member external to the department. Other members of the University community including department chairs, school directors, students, and program officers have occasion to meet prospective candidates during campus interviews, and written evaluations are solicited from all of those on the candidate's itinerary. Although the hiring department in consultation with the Provost's Office determines a candidate's specific itinerary for the onsite interview, job candidates are generally expected to deliver a formal presentation, speaking about their scholarship and/or their teaching. A number of departments require their candidates both to deliver a formal talk and to teach a regularly scheduled class. On-site interviews are thus rigorous and last for at least a full day to a day and a half. A significant component of one's job application is expected to include documentation of a candidate's teaching effectiveness, including course evaluations from a previous or current institution. The care that is taken to evaluate candidates for tenure-line positions reflects the institution's seriousness of purpose in selecting candidates who understand the teaching mission of the University and demonstrate the potential to deliver excellent teaching to our students.

A new teacher arriving on campus is formally and repeatedly apprised of the institution's expectation for developing teaching excellence through *Faculty Handbook* language that addresses this concern (in Chapter Two, Section B, Article I, Chapter II, page 3, and in tenure and promotion guidelines, Chapter IV, page 12). New faculty (tenure line and visitors) also

participate in an extensive year-long orientation program where strategies for enhancing teaching effectiveness are shared. During their first day-long orientation session, they are introduced to new colleagues who are experienced teachers and who offer advice about university expectations for student achievement; they have lunch with undergraduate students who discuss their expectations for professorial behavior; and they learn about the general profile of the University student body from the Director of Counseling Services and the Dean of Admissions. In 2009-2010 and 2011-2012, they collectively read Ken Bain's *What the Best College Teachers Do* that served as a source of discussion during subsequent meetings. They met with members of the University Council on Diversity and discussed strategies for addressing diversity issues within the classroom and also shared advising, grading, and syllabi construction concerns. New tenure-line faculty also are assigned an experienced mentor who resides outside of their department, who offers advice and support on a confidential basis during the academic year. Mentors are selected from a list of previous teaching award winners and are among the most respected faculty on the campus. As peer bonding often occurs during one's first year at the University, the group is encouraged to meet together on a more informal basis during their second year, where initial discussions involving curriculum, pedagogy, and student needs are extended.

Of course, the faculty development opportunities that are designed to enhance teaching effectiveness are by no means limited to new faculty. Numerous workshops are held for faculty regardless of rank or time served at the institution. Without replicating the summary of these opportunities noted in the discussion of Criterion 2, a few examples will illustrate in specific terms how they contribute to teaching improvement:

a. *Campus Workshops*

- Workshops are regularly held for new Gateway instructors where course expectations, syllabi construction, and best practices involving writing and critical thinking assessments are discussed. The Gateway Colloquium seminar, which is limited to 15 or 16 first year students, emphasizes the teaching of critical thinking through writing and is the first of three required writing intensive courses offered during a student's time at the University. Although there are formal expectations for assignment work that are enumerated within the University General Education Handbook, because this is the one course that formally and directly introduces students to the University's academic expectations, its conceptual importance is widely understood. However, since individual faculty address course goals through themes and topics specific to their own interests, according to their own pedagogies, it is essential to address issues of comparability with particular regard to assignment and assessment rigor. All instructors who teach a first-year Gateway Colloquium for the first time are required to attend a workshop directed by the Writing Center Director. During these sessions, actual student papers are graded and normed, with the resulting discussions not only addressing issues of student writing per se, but also raising interesting concerns involving more global aspects of student learning.

- With the acquisition of the Mellon Foundation Writing Grant, a series of workshops concerning the teaching of writing across the campus were held from 2008-2009 through 2010-2011. Among other issues, these workshops specifically addressed discipline-based

writing as well as the use of information literacy in designing writing course. Nationally prominent external speakers, including Professors Bill Condon of Washington State University, Bill Broad of Illinois State University, Chris Anson of North Carolina State University, and Molly Costanza Robinson of Middlebury College participated in these workshops.

- The Instructional Technology office and the Mellon Center for Faculty and Curriculum Development regularly offer workshops to faculty in support of teaching improvement. For instance, given the marked jump in the number of faculty using Moodle as a software course management system, to the point whereby over half of the faculty are now taking advantage of its capabilities, it was decided to offer workshops explaining how the tool could enhance classroom instruction, by informing faculty of initiatives undertaken by their peers. Sessions have been held over the past two years whereby faculty share their efforts to establish robust chat rooms and discussion forums for their students, where they have used the software to deliver online quizzes and exams that can be easily graded, where they have incorporated visual imagery, film, and audio tapes to facilitate formal readings, and where they have established blogs and less conventional spaces in support of student writing. A similar set of regular workshops has focused on the advantages of using the Google.docs software. Cognizant of the fact that faculty have specific technology needs, IT staff in 2010-2011 created a series of Tech Tuesday sessions, whereby faculty drop in for twenty-minute periods and learn skills that can be used to specifically support their teaching. In 2011-2012, a program examining the use of mobile computing in support of classroom instruction was implemented.

- The Thorpe Center, a collaborative endeavor between Information Technology, the Mellon Center and the Ames Library, offers support for the use of technologies inside and outside of the classroom, assistive technologies, and digital video editing, to expedite the integration of audio and video into presentations and projects. In addition to the IT workshops such as ones described above, throughout the year, workshops are offered whereby faculty and staff share their technological expertise and discuss relevant applications for their work. These efforts are further supported by the university's Teaching, Learning, and Technology Roundtable, a group that includes members from constituencies throughout the campus and meets regularly to facilitate the use of technology. The IT staff sit regularly with faculty on the Teaching, Learning, and Technology, Roundtable, and has encouraged members of the TLTR to participate in *EduCause* webinars. TLTR members have themselves offered informal "non-org" talks to the faculty regarding relevant issues involving the interface between technology and pedagogy and in 2011-2012, they evaluated proposals for using innovative technology in the classroom, with three award winners receiving iPads for their successful proposals.

b. Two day campus-wide workshops

Two day campus-wide workshops involving faculty and staff were held in June, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2011, where themes involving sustainability, the changing nature of technology, globalization, and the assessment process were discussed among all of these constituencies. In addition to infusing these themes more broadly in curricular efforts, the workshops raised awareness of specific issues related to embedding the University mission into campus culture and activities. For example, the decision to create a faculty/staff travel seminar to Morocco in 2009 was heavily influenced by discussions held during the globalization workshop in 2008. Greater awareness of sustainability issues that arose as a result of the sustainability workshop in 2006 contributed to the successful implementation of a geo-thermal heating system in the university's newest building, the Minor Myers Jr. Welcome Center. The most recent workshop on assessment allowed faculty to share departmental and programmatic assessment plans across the campus.

c. Teaching Circles, Reading Groups and Ways of Knowing Faculty Teaching Colloquia

In an effort to promote developmental feedback on faculty members' teaching practices, the Mellon Center has sponsored teaching circles for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years. Under this program, faculty, in groups of three - none of whom are in the same department, visit each other's classes and offer constructive feedback with regard to syllabi and assignment construction, and the use of pedagogical methods in a live classroom situation.

Faculty and staff members also have the opportunity to join organized reading groups in which they collectively read a number of books and/or articles on a common theme and topic. $3600.00 is provided by the Mellon Center in support of this program to allow books to be purchased for reading group members. In 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, Social Science and Higher Education reading groups were the ones that were most active, involving approximately 20 faculty and staff members.

Since 2011-2012, a "Ways of Knowing" teaching colloquium series has also been established, allowing faculty to share new pedagogical and curricular initiatives and ideas with one another. This series, along with the more established faculty colloquia, described in more detail in the discussion of Criterion 4, represent an additional way in which the faculty and the University as a whole recognizes the importance of outstanding teaching and its connection to scholarly engagement.

d. Inter-institutional faculty development opportunities

- Midwest Faculty Seminar: "The Midwest Faculty Seminar brings faculty members at the University of Chicago into continuing conversation with faculty members at private liberal arts colleges. [It] now includes 24 liberal arts colleges and the University of Chicago." (http://mfs.uchicago.edu/pages/about.html). Illinois Wesleyan University has been a longstanding participant in this program and since 2009, nine IWU faculty members have attended different faculty seminars.

- IWU-ISU faculty workshops: Since 2009, three workshops have been sponsored by the IWU Mellon Center and the Illinois State University Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology for faculty from both campuses. In 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012,

Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State Universities established a series of joint workshops dedicated to support teaching improvement through the sharing of ideas and strategies among the institutions' faculties. Although the universities differ tremendously in size, mission, student body, etc., many of their faculty are seriously concerned about enhancing student learning, and these workshops have been established to support those members. In 2009-2010, two workshops were held, one on each campus, whereby faculty discussed common readings, case studies, and shared experiences in dealing with students with hidden disabilities. Many of the readings focused upon universal design principles in higher education but what was also useful were shared experiences involving disability sensitivity, legal issues involving appropriate student accommodations, etc. In the spring of 2011, a further joint workshop addressed issues of teaching international students. In this session, international students from the two institutions spoke of their own experiences negotiating different educational systems with their culturally specific curricular and pedagogic expectations. An example of student writing was analyzed, not so much for its mechanical and grammatical errors, but for the cultural assumptions embedded in notions of audience and organizational structure. 14 faculty attended the two workshops in 2009-10, and 11 faculty attended the workshop in 2011. A joint workshop investigating the uses of mobile technology in the classroom is being planned for 2012.

- Teagle Workshops: The University has participated in two Teagle Foundation grant programs. The first, conducted between 2005-2009, involved the collection and analysis of data focusing upon student writing, critical thinking, and civic engagement. Ten IWU faculty participated in three workshops where data with all consortium members (IWU, Augustana, Luther, Alma, Gustavus Adolphus, and Wittenberg Colleges) was analyzed through student paper assessment based upon rubric scoring. IWU faculty played a lead role in creating the rubric used for the critical thinking assessment component. In 2009, IWU joined the other colleges and Washington and Jefferson College for a second Teagle Foundation grant, lasting three years, whereby the need to employ high impact learning practices through one's teaching while balancing time and work pressures resulting from such activities is being analyzed. With the receipt of this grant, eight faculty were funded in two person teams for two years to develop curricular projects that included high impact learning activities that would also serve as models for curricular innovation across the curriculum. IWU hosted a workshop for representatives of all consortium members in the fall of 2009, and in June 2010, three faculty participated in a workshop held at Luther College to discuss institutional progress in implementing the grant at the various campuses. Also, in 2011, the Associate Dean of the Curriculum funded a mini-grant program that encourages selected faculty to work closely with the IWU Action Research Center in developing internships as well as curricular and co-curricular activities that advance civic engagement priorities.

e. International faculty development opportunities

- IWU operates its own island study abroad programs in London and Barcelona (previously in Madrid) where students can study for an entire semester under the directorship of an IWU faculty member. The Madrid program was suspended in the spring of 2010, due to concerns regarding the expense of its operations, and a new program in Barcelona was created for the spring of 2011. Faculty directors, who are selected on a competitive peer-review basis, teach one class and are responsible for the administration of the programs on the ground level. Since their inception in 2000 (London) and 2005 (Madrid/Barcelona), 17 faculty have had the opportunity to direct and teach in these programs.

- Individual faculty also have had the opportunity to participate in study abroad travel seminars sponsored by private program providers. Over the past three years, three faculty have participated in such seminars. Faculty also have the opportunity to make site visits at international study abroad centers in order to evaluate those programs. A competitive program sponsored by IWU offers up to $500.00 for faculty who are in the region to conduct a specific site visit and write a report to the International Office. 21 faculty have participated in the IWU site visitation program.

- In 2009, five faculty and three staff members participated in a study abroad travel seminar to Morocco and since that time an institutional agreement with Al Akhawayn University has been signed that will allow faculty from both campuses to teach and conduct research for specific periods of time on the sister campus.

- Each year, one faculty member takes two students to Japan for a two-week period as part of an exchange funded by the Tanaka Foundation of Technos College in Tokyo. All expenses are paid by the Tanaka Foundation and IWU with the stipulation that the faculty member has not previously lived in or spent a significant amount of time in Japan. Faculty applications, which must indicate how the experience will contribute to the faculty member's teaching, are peer reviewed and are chosen on a competitive basis.

- As an institutional member of *ASIANetwork*, IWU faculty are eligible to apply for faculty development programs sponsored by that consortium. Since 1998, 5 faculty have received Freeman Foundation Fellows grants to take students to Asia, where they have jointly conducted research during the summer. In addition, one faculty member was selected in 2011 to participate in a newly created India Seminar, composed of faculty from a number of ASIANetwork liberal arts colleges who traveled to India for three weeks.

- During the fall of 2010, seven faculty participated in an international conference on Globalization and Childhood, organized by an IWU professor who is an international

expert in the area of Russian Children's Literature, and was co-sponsored by IWU and ISU. In September 2011, six participating IWU faculty attended a follow up conference in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

f. Speaker series and additional development resources

Individual departments and programs regularly invite speakers to campus that offer disciplinary and interdisciplinary insights. Moreover, over the past two years the Mellon Center has sponsored five noted speakers to address teaching and faculty development and issues. They included: Kathleen McKinney, Professor of Sociology at ISU and a leader in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Movement; Mary Huber, Senior Fellow Emerita from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; Carol Colbeck, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; and Chuck Darrah, Professor and Chair of Sociology at San Jose State University. They all spoke about strategies for addressing work and personal life balance issues. In addition, Professor Mary Beckman, Associate Director of the Center for Social Concerns at Notre Dame University, spoke to different faculty groups about methods for enhancing teaching and research by involving students in civic engagement activities.

A list of teaching resources including blogs, articles, teaching center webpage addresses, and best practices links has been made available on the Mellon Center Associate Dean of the Faculty webpage. A chairs' handbook, including relevant documents, dates, and best practices suggestions was completed in 2010 and is available on the Mellon Center website. Assessment tools and information regarding best practices are available on the Associate Dean of Curriculum webpage.

The internal grant programs that support faculty development in the broad sense of the term have been noted in the discussion of Criterion 2 and have been mentioned in other sections of this report. But the curriculum development and instructional development grant programs are noteworthy in their specific support for curricular and pedagogical innovation. CD grants have encouraged the creation of new courses and the revision of existing curricular programs; ID grants have allowed faculty to purchase equipment or bring in guest speakers to supplement their course offerings. CD grants include funds for stipends or budget items, while ID grants allocate funds for budget items only. Together, they represent significant institutional support for curricular and pedagogical innovation. Their importance is also noted in the discussion of Criterion 4.

Table : Curriculum and Instructional Development Grants

Year	CD	ID
2002-2003	$34,000	$5,882
2003-2004	$50,937	$2,941
2004-2005	$17,415	$1,000
2005-2006	$33,434	$1,250
2006-2007	$28,234	$2,000
2007-2008	$36,500	$3,386
2008-2009	$30,829	$979
2009-2010	$32,687	$2,293
2010-2011	$28,000	N/A

CD: Maximum award = $2,000;
ID = Maximum award = $500.

Whereas the IWU internal grants programs are meant to reward faculty with modest sums so that they can pursue their teaching and scholarly goals, the Office of Sponsored Programs and Foundations Relations assist faculty who desire to pursue external funding for their work. Staff from the office meet with new faculty to discuss grant-writing strategies; they also directly assist faculty of all ranks in crafting their grant proposals, and providing feedback with regard to the interpretation of initial reviewers comments when resubmissions are in order. Two recent grants stand out. One is a Title VI Department of Education grant to the University to develop Asian Studies on campus. Under this grant, six new courses have been developed in ___ departments, eleven courses have been substantially revised, and nine Study in Asia Scholarships have been provided to students for a semester. The other notable grant, in excess of $451,000 from the National Science Foundation, was awarded to a team led by IWU physics professor Gabe Spalding to improve laboratory instruction in physics for undergraduate college students in the United States. This project was developed in response to a national survey of laboratory instructors spearheaded by Professor Spalding's team working with The Ames Library of IWU.

In an important, if less direct sense, institutional support is also offered to faculty who participate in May Term programming. May Term, whereby students take one course intensively over three and a half weeks and receive the equivalent of semester credit, is designed to promote curricular and pedagogical innovation. To that end, the May Term office offers faculty assistance in planning and managing travel courses, and the University also allows faculty to teach a May Term course as part of their regular teaching load. The demands of teaching on campus during the May Term are not insignificant, given the necessity of engaging in intense curricular planning for a three-hour-a-day, five-day-a-week schedule. However, the program offers instructors and students an opportunity to engage in sustained learning activity that is not conducive to shorter contact hours. For instance, several courses involve film study and encourage students to shoot and edit their own films. Travel courses offer the students an opportunity to engage in sustained experiential learning; instructors integrate formal learning assignments into the travel experience or provide a coda that helps students systematically analyze the experiences they have witnessed. By way of example: in recent years, students participating in specific May Term courses have learned about modern Chinese history through interacting with peers at Peking University; they have lived in poor urban areas and have then attended relevant Congressional legislative hearings in Washington, D.C.; and, they have

participated in the creation of public musical and dance performances that reflect Latin cultural norms, after learning about the interconnection between politics and art in South America.

Institutional support for faculty travel, noted in the discussion of Criterion 2, has allowed faculty to actively participate in their professional associations. Demonstrating an institutional belief in the importance of sustained engagement with members of one's own discipline, the University provides differential allocations to those who present their work at national or international meetings, or those who are actively involved in leadership roles within their associations, as opposed to faculty who simply wish to attend a meeting. As noted previously, IWU faculty continue to be able to participate actively in the most important of their meetings despite the elimination of funding for extraordinary travel in light of budgetary pressures. The amount of funding available to individual faculty members in comparison with that offered at peer and aspirant institutions is in the mid-range. However, as noted in the discussion of Criterion 4, some faculty who regularly attend multiple conferences annually have expressed a strong desire in the SSSC Survey to increase travel funds to accommodate their needs. Nonetheless, it is not surprising that a number of talented faculty have taken advantage of the opportunities for professional travel funding and have assumed leadership roles within their national and international professional organizations. Their number include the current Executive Director of *ASIA*Network, the Past-President of the Advanced Laboratory Physics Association, and the President of the John Updike Society, to name a few, and while the academic accomplishments of the faculty are quite numerous, noteworthy among their ranks are multiple Fulbright award recipients and a Guggenheim award winner.

Finally, pedagogical and curricular innovation is supported through budgetary allocations that allow different curricular programs to hire student tutors and instructional staff. The University Writing Center, for example, trains tutors who assist students with their writing for various courses, including but not limited to Gateway Colloquia and writing intensive courses. Departments such as Hispanic Studies, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, Biology, Mathematics, and Chemistry also employ student tutors to assist students who need extra help mastering the concepts and information germane to specific areas of study. In addition, select departments are able to hire instructional staff who assist in operating science and language laboratories or coordinate placements for students in professional programs in need of field experiences. Their presence allows faculty to be aware of students who may need extra assistance, or in the latter case, allows faculty to concentrate upon teaching improvement without having to spend time engaged in routine tasks that are related to but may not be as central to their work.

Of course, offering support to enhance the effectiveness of teaching is not equivalent to evaluating and formally recognizing effective teaching. The latter is accomplished through the tenure and promotion process and the designation of deserving faculty as recipients of endowed chairs and professorships. Guidelines to department chairs from the Promotion and Tenure Committee, for example, speak directly to the evidence for teaching effectiveness a candidate needs to present, as well as how the department chair should address Committee concerns:

Are there special roles the candidate fills in your department or school? Does s/he teach courses that few others can? Has s/he been responsible for developing new courses or programs? Does s/he bear any special responsibility in advising students, working with student groups, or acting as a liaison to

individuals or groups outside of your department or school? Does the candidate teach courses that students find unpopular because the courses are required and challenging?

The Committee recommends the supervisors conduct a careful reading of students' course evaluations and synthesize those comments in their letters.

Concrete details on the candidate's teaching abilities are very helpful whereas broad descriptions without specific examples to back them up are not. Broad sweeping, enthusiastic observations ring hollow, the more detail the better. A description of what you have observed during classroom visits is especially helpful.

The Committee appreciates your situating the candidate's teaching and scholarship in a context that people outside the discipline can understand. Think about your audience as being as far away from the discipline as possible.

Please comment on the candidate's teaching according to the levels or clusters of the courses they taught. For example, you might organize your discussion around; general education courses v. major courses, lower level v. senior level, required v. elective courses, etc. Is the candidate's instruction level appropriate? Do lower level classes establish appropriate levels of groundwork for advanced courses? Does the candidate's teaching include appropriate levels of rigor for the level of the course?

The Committee would like to see an assessment of the candidate's development of their teaching over a course of time, including an understanding of its trajectory. For example, did s/he come from a large school where the candidate taught large lecture classes and had to adapt to teaching a small seminar class at IWU? Please talk about the rigor of the courses as evidenced through class visits, syllabi, assignments, exams and evaluations. Do all of these items taken as a whole demonstrate the same level of rigor: Do they seem to be in agreement?

What is especially noteworthy within these guidelines is the expectation that all candidates demonstrate the ability and willingness to teach students at different levels, that their expectations for student performance are rigorous and appropriate, and that a case be made for their effectiveness over time, rather than in a few specific instances. An evaluation of candidates' teaching further requires the use of multiple assessment measures, including a self-assessment by the candidate herself, based on the various data. The evaluation is thus indeed authentic.

Receiving the award of an endowed professorship or chair is perhaps the highest honor that the University can bestow upon a faculty member. The standard criteria for receipt of such an honor, in addition to specific criteria that might be stipulated by the donor, not surprisingly involve outstanding accomplishment in teaching, scholarship, and service, with all successful candidates demonstrating excellence in each category. Teaching excellence here is defined as, "Mastery of teaching at all levels, from introductory to advanced level courses, and a sustained record of active engagement of students in the cutting edge issues of the discipline by involving students in scholarship and/or artistic activity. The successful candidate should be widely recognized as a role model for teaching on this campus (endowed professorships.pdf)." It is useful to recognize that, unlike some of its counterparts, Illinois Wesleyan University values teaching excellence as much as scholarly and/or artistic accomplishments in its criteria for awarding endowed

professorships. This criterion reflects the value the institution places upon its support for recognizing teaching excellence.

Finally, it is worth re-asserting the role and importance of peer review in faculty development at Illinois Wesleyan University. In the same way that peer review is an essential element in determining the worthiness of one's scholarship and/or artistic performance, teaching excellence is enhanced at IWU through peer evaluation and peer support. The processes through which teaching is evaluated for reappointment (adjuncts and visitors), for tenure and promotion, for the receipt of a sabbatical or junior faculty leave, or through the post-tenure review process all involve a crucial faculty peer review component in determining one's teaching effectiveness and potential for improvement. It is evident in decisions involving the awarding of endowed chairs and professorships where teaching excellence is a primary consideration, and it is in evidence through the formal award recognition given to teacher of the year recipients. Peer review is used to select faculty who participate in the annual faculty colloquium series as well. As has been noted in the discussion of Criterion 2, the peer review process extends to decisions involving the receipt of internal grants in support of artistic and scholarly development and curricular development. In less formal settings, faculty share ideas with each other during faculty development workshops, and offer advice and assistance to one another through mentorship, teaching circle, and new faculty orientation programs. All of this makes perfect sense because good teachers are receptive to new ideas that come from their peers and those who are most often able to enhance their teaching effectiveness are individuals who are constantly sharing and learning from one another.

The success of these efforts is evident in the NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) benchmark data whereby IWU students repeatedly indicated that the level of academic challenge they experienced at Illinois Wesleyan University was high, in comparative scores that exceeded the NSSE national average, as the table below attests.

Table : Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark

Level of Academic Challenge	2004	2005**	2006**	2007**	2010**
IWU	58.7	60.6	57.6	58.8	62.1
NSSE National	57.6	56.5	51.7	55.6	57.5

* $p < .01$; ** $p < .001$

Definition: Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance.

Level of Academic Challenge Items:
- Hours spent preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, etc. related to academic program)
- Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings
- Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more, between 5 and 19 pages, and fewer than 5 pages
- Coursework emphasizes: Analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory
- Coursework emphasizes: Synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships

- Coursework emphasizes: Making of judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods
- Coursework emphasizes: Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
- Working harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations
- Campus environment emphasizes: Spending significant amount of time studying and on academic work

With regard to the extent to which the University supported active and collaborative learning and the degree to which the University created a supportive campus environment, senior responses from 2004-2010 closely mirrored national NSSE averages as indicated below.

Table : Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark

Active & Collaborative Learning	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010
IWU	52.8	53.6	49.9	50.3	50.9
NSSE National	51.4	51.5	50.4	50.1	51.4

*$p < .01$; ** $p < .001$

Definition: Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and asked to think about what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after college.

Active and Collaborative Learning Items:
- Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Made a class presentation
- Worked with other students on projects during class
- Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
- Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
- Participated in a community-based project (e.g. service learning) as part of a regular course
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)

Table : Enriching Educational Experiences Benchmark

Enriching Educational Experiences	2004	2005**	2006**	2007**	2010**
IWU	52.6	53.3	49.5	51.1	53.1
NSSE National	40.9	42.1	39.9	39.9	40.5

*$p < .01$; ** $p < .001$

Definition: Complementary learning opportunities enhance academic programs. Diversity experiences teach students valuable things about themselves and others. Technology facilitates collaboration between peers and instructors. Internships, community service, and senior capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate and apply knowledge.

Enriching Educational Experiences Items:

- Hours spent participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student gov., social fraternity or sorority, etc.)
- Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment
- Community service or volunteer work
- Foreign language coursework and study abroad
- Independent study or self-designed major
- Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc. Serious conversations with students of different religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values
- Serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own
- Using electronic medium (e.g., listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment
- Campus environment encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
- Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together

To be sure, learning occurs in many ways throughout life and its effects are apparent whether that learning occurs under intentional or unintentional conditions. One does not need to be exposed to formal instruction in order to learn. Indeed, it is our hope that we give students the space and encouragement to learn on their own. However, learning is enhanced through exposure to purposeful teaching activities that are designed in planned and systematic ways, that include a clarity with regard to expectations for one's learning outcomes, and involve ways of determining whether or not one's students have met such expectations. A major virtue of the Illinois Wesleyan learning environment is the intimacy within which teaching and learning occur. Because of generally advantageous class sizes, because the community is small enough so that it is expected that one will know one's students well enough to gain a sense of their learning styles and capabilities, and because it is easy to meet colleagues throughout the campus with similar interests and teaching insights, the University is able to successfully address the high expectations for teaching effectiveness that it is committed to achieve.

3c. The organization creates effective learning environments.

The formative experiences that shape the lives of undergraduates who reside at small liberal arts residential institutions are often powerful and transforming. Whether they are curricular or co-curricular, or whether they involve faculty and staff or fellow students, the cumulative effect of a student's time spent at such an institution is deeply influential and often profoundly moving. This is why it is common to see one's graduates assume leadership roles throughout their future lives. The fact that significant learning occurs in so many varied domains within the undergraduate experience is not accidental though, for it requires concerted planning and coordination based upon informed assessments of best practices as they relate to the differing environments within which our students interact. The discussion below outlines IWU's attention to these challenges in terms of the specific learning environments that the University regards as central to its institutional identity: the curriculum, close individual attention and research opportunities for students, and opportunities to learn beyond the classroom.

31

a. **Curriculum:**

A brief discussion of changes that have occurred within the University's General Education, May Term, Study Abroad, and interdisciplinary programs demonstrates how careful planning based upon data collection and analysis has informed curricular development in line with the University's mission. Though the General Education program is described more fully in the responses to Criterion 3(a) and Criterion 4, it is useful to note here the range and interdisciplinary nature of the categories in which students are required to take courses: Analysis of Values; Arts; Contemporary Social Institutions; Cultural and Historical Change; Formal Reasoning; Intellectual Traditions; Literature; Natural Sciences (one class in the physical sciences, and one in the life sciences; one class must include a lab, the other must be an 'issues' course). (for a full description see **catalog?**) In addition, students are required to demonstrate second language proficiency at the three-semester level and writing competence through the completion of three writing intensive courses. Finally, they are required to complete two flagged courses that address topics focusing upon U.S. and Global diversity. Generally, students complete 11-13 courses within the General Education program. The interdisciplinary nature of the program categories as well as the fact that at least some courses can count toward both the General Education program and the student's major course of study allows for some programmatic flexibility.

Although students are not required to complete a May Term course, that program is extremely popular. Its distinctiveness lies in its "emphasis on immersion in learning," with a focus on curricular experimentation, crossing traditional boundaries, student/faculty collaboration, intellectual transformation, and/or service. With an average class size of 12, it offers students the opportunity to learn in intimate and supportive settings. There have been a number of challenges in developing a program that is both innovative and appropriately rigorous while also being accessible and cost effective. These challenges have been addressed periodically through the program's evolution. Issues of access and cost effectiveness have arisen because in its inception no extra fees were charged students who participated in the May Term program. As a result, student demand for May Term courses was and has generally remained quite high, with a significant number of adjunct faculty hired to fulfill that demand. Of course, due to its experimental nature, it is in the institution's interest to hire instructors with unique talents and gifts in support of the May Term philosophy. However, a number of courses were developed to also meet General Education requirements, and the questions as to whether the unique nature of the May Term philosophy was being compromised, or whether the courses offered during May Term were fully deserving of course credit equivalent to that offered to semester length courses have been raised. Other issues have arisen with regard to the management of May Term travel courses, whose numbers have declined somewhat in the aftermath of the 2008 recession.

The University has responded to these challenges through careful planning based upon data gathered through environmental scanning. In 2007, in response to student concern expressed through Student Senate, the administration enforced policy guidelines that privileged students who had never before taken a May Term course when registering for May classes. In 2011, after examining comparative tuition costs at local and regional community colleges and state institutions for summer courses, a $500.00 fee was imposed upon students taking on-campus May Term courses. Although that fee resulted in fewer students enrolling in the program, it is

expected that the program will regain its popularity as students and parents become more used to the new fee structure and understand its comparative value.

With the creation of the Associate Dean of Curriculum position, whereby the May Term and Study Abroad offices are now overseen by a single administrator, there has been greater coordination in support of faculty participating in May Term travel courses so that best practices involving study abroad situations, familiar to study abroad professionals, are shared with the faculty. This has proven particularly useful with respect to insurance and liability issues. At the same time, under the direction of the Associate Dean of the Curriculum and the faculty May Term Advisory Committee, evaluations of the entire May Term experience are solicited and reviewed, and as a matter of general procedure, new May Term courses are subject to Curricular Council approval. The need to balance concerns for course rigor while maintaining the commitment to innovation is an ongoing concern, but it is being addressed in increasingly systematic terms.

The University's success in promoting study abroad opportunities for its students has been previously noted in the discussion of Criterion 1. Because the nature of international education is subject to rapid change, it is extremely important to keep abreast of new trends to successfully confront existing and future challenges. Study abroad at Illinois Wesleyan includes the short-term course, usually completed as a May Term travel course or a summer course at another institution for which a student receives University course credit, participation in one of the University's semester-long island programs in London or Barcelona, enrollment in a private provider program, or participation in an exchange program with one of the universities with which IWU has a formal agreement. Over the past 10 years, IWU has sent between 112 and 151 students on semester-long (or summer) programs annually. Over the past ten years, students from 34 majors or minors have studied abroad in 51 countries. From 2000-2010, the most popular countries in which students have studied are Spain, France, Italy, Denmark, and Austria and as has been mentioned, the percentage of students studying abroad is nationally significant. IWU'S strategy of offering options in the island, short-term, private provider, and exchange agreement categories, reflects national trends, although unlike the experiences of some institutions, these options are growing rather than shrinking in the aftermath of the 2008 recession.

The Illinois Wesleyan London and Barcelona programs are open to all students, and are not language-intensive. They are designed to attract University undergraduate students at the lower levels who may be interested in international study but are reluctant to study in a unfamiliar environment so soon after having entered IWU. An Illinois Wesleyan faculty member is selected to serve each year as director through a competitive peer-review process. In addition, this faculty member offers one course in the program. Courses are registered as University courses, and may count for general education credit as approved by the faculty. Students who participate pay a program fee in addition to University tuition and housing although this fee may vary each year depending on differing exchange rates. Each program has undergone review in the past four years resulting in significant changes. The London program was reviewed in 2007, and a rebidding process was initiated resulting in awarding the contract to the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS). This change strengthened the program, while relieving the program director of certain administrative duties and allowing her or him to focus more on the academic content of the program. The rebidding process also resulted in considerable cost savings for the University.

In 2005, the University established a second island program in Madrid. However, because of budgetary pressures, the program was suspended in 2010 for one year and restructured for 2011. During the 2010-2011 year, faculty committees including the Curriculum Council and the May Term Advisory Committee evaluated all options with regard to the Madrid program. After careful review, it was determined that costs could not be cut without adversely affecting the integrity of the Program. They decided that maintaining an institutional presence in Spain was important to support that part of the institutional mission that speaks to the need to promote global awareness. The University then sought alternative proposals from organizations in Madrid, Grenada, and Barcelona and selected the Barcelona option, enabling the University to keep its presence in Spain while reducing programmatic operating costs. Students who participated in the program under its Barcelona iteration were able to contribute to its first successful semester during the spring of 2011.

Of course, most students who study abroad do so under the aegis of a private provider organization (Council for International Educational Exchange, IES Abroad, School for International Training, etc.) or study at a university with which Illinois Wesleyan has an exchange agreement (Keio University, Japan; Pembroke College, Oxford University; Al Akhawayn University, Morocco). As the University continues to develop additional exchange agreements with sister institutions, the expanded opportunities for study abroad, let alone other forms of cross-cultural exchange will further enhance its importance as a significant part of the curriculum. We know that study abroad experiences often involve high impact learning; we also know that typical challenges including culture shock and reverse culture shock are ones that our students regularly negotiate. The University International Office therefore works closely with students, offering assistance with advising prior to their departure, making them cognizant of scholarship opportunities, sponsoring study abroad fairs where representatives speak about their own programs, while also encouraging blogging and photo contests as vehicles for addressing culture shock and reverse culture shock perceptions. In addition, the International Studies faculty have worked with the International Office to promote events such as "The Road Less Traveled," where former students who have studied in the developing world share their experiences with peers who are contemplating similar ventures. Such activities not only give space to returning students whereby their experiences are formally validated, but they encourage students to consider less Euro-centric options when thinking about study abroad possibilities. The President of the University also hosts a regular dinner for returning study abroad students. As is true for many high impact learning experiences, their integration with the formal curriculum is necessary so that newly found understandings can be appropriately placed within larger conceptual frameworks. It is thus significant that as has been previously mentioned, a number of formal programs require or strongly recommend study abroad experience, as a necessary pre-requisite to more fully appreciating the academic nature of the course of study.

Curricular innovation, informed by careful planning and a sensitive analysis of information that has been gathered with reference to external trends or those specific to the University, is also reflected in the University's deliberate approach to the creation and development of interdisciplinary programs. Since 2002, the University has moved ahead on several fronts, responding to national educational trends, institutional mission, and student demand. In 2003, Women's Studies, an interdisciplinary program since 1993, became a major as student numbers in the minor rose. At the time of the major design, special attention was paid to several factors that would support on-going assessment of the program, including student surveys in key courses

and a senior capstone course with review of the seniors' papers. In 2005, the Environmental Studies program, established in 1998, was accepted by the faculty as a major. As noted in the discussion of Criterion 2, the program provides the central institutional vector for the University's commitment to sustainability. The major was designed on the basis of an extensive faculty-led process of comparison and benchmarking with IWU's peer and aspirant institutions. A similar close cooperation between faculty and administration marked the adoption of the African Studies concentration in the International Studies major in 2005, the establishment of the Chinese language program in 2008, and the Asian Studies proposal funded by the Department of Education in 2009. The African Studies concentration followed the strategic hiring of three new faculty – one in French and Francophone Studies, one in Anthropology, and one in Political Science. In the case of the Chinese language program, the International Studies program worked closely with the Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures program to develop a pilot program which could service both the languages program and the Asian Studies concentration.

Although the interdisciplinary programs have generally been a remarkably successful addition to the curriculum, they have consistently been constrained by their dependence on other departments for faculty participation and course delivery. At times, this 'poor cousin' status has made it difficult for some programs to meet their curricular needs or to plan effectively for future development. As noted previously, however, the University took a major step towards remedying this situation in 2011, when the faculty voted to allow interdisciplinary programs to apply for their own faculty lines.

The value of high impact learning practices is widely recognized throughout the higher education community, whether they involve undergraduate research, learning communities, common intellectual experiences, capstone courses, civic and global learning, collaborative assignments, information literacy, etc. (Kuh, 2008). As has been mentioned, through a second Teagle grant, beginning in 2009, Illinois Wesleyan University has participated in a study to determine whether one can initiate these practices without adding to one's workload. Four teams of two faculty submitted internal proposals that were peer reviewed and approved. Those projects included emphasizing the acquisition of information literacy in an environmental studies senior seminar, teaching students time series analysis to be applied to civic engagement projects, creating a learning community among Educational Studies students, and discussing diversity to a select group of students during a pre-orientation session, and during their subsequent first year. To be sure, the creation of such high impact learning practices poses ever-present challenges for faculty, who continue to attend to the demands of regular teaching, scholarly and service responsibilities. Coping strategies have been shared, yet they have not militated against the demands that these practices present. Nonetheless, these projects in themselves represent only some of the innovative efforts that the IWU faculty continually employ in support of student learning. The institutional challenge is one of rewarding such efforts on a regular basis (not simply through the receipt of grant funding) while creating the time and space to allow even more faculty participate in such ventures.

a. Close individual attention and research opportunities

As previously noted, the IWU faculty prize the opportunity to work closely with individual students; and indeed this sensibility is reciprocated by students:

2007 IWU Identity Survey: Highly Rated Attributes as Identified by <u>Students</u>

- Small class size allows for personalization and active student participation
- Students receive personal attention from the faculty
- Access to technology
- Intellectually challenging academic programs
- Success of graduates
- Friendliness of campus community

Overall satisfaction rate = 7.5 on a 10-point scale

2007 IWU Identity Survey: Highly Rated Attributes as Identified by <u>Alumni</u>

- Small class size allows for personalization and active student participation
- Students receive personal attention from the faculty
- Intellectually challenging academic programs
- The emphasis of the faculty is on teaching
- Friendliness of campus community
- Academic quality of the students

Overall satisfaction rate = 8.5 on a 10-point scale

The University intends that students should learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous life-long learning. NSSE survey data also indicates that the degree of faculty-student interaction on campus is comparatively high:

Table : Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark

Student-Faculty Interaction	2004	2005**	2006**	2007**	2010**
IWU	52.7	51.2	46.7	49.5	47.5
NSSE National	44	44.1	41.3	41.2	42.4

$* p < .01; ** p < .001$

Definition: *Students learn firsthand how experts think about and solve practical problems by interacting with faculty members inside and outside the classroom. As a result, their teachers become role models, mentors, and guides for continuous, life-long learning.*

Student-Faculty Interaction Items:
- Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor
- Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor
- Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class
- Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student-life activities, etc.)
- Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance

- Worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements

In 2010, 68% of seniors and 58% of first-year students reported faculty members as available, helpful, and sympathetic to their needs. In that same year, 30% of seniors reported participating in an independent study or self-designed major (NSSE).

For an institution that is dedicated to furthering critical inquiry through promotion of the liberal arts, support for undergraduate research is essential. This is of course time consuming, requiring patient mentoring on the part of faculty advisors, as well as a degree of maturity on the part of participating students that is attained only when one understands both disciplinary conventions and the nature of scholarly research more generally. It is therefore not surprising that the record at Illinois Wesleyan is one where undergraduate research is highly valued and occurs on a regular basis.

Table: Students Working with a Faculty Member on a Research Project Outside of Course Requirements (Plan to Do and Done) (NSSE)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010
First-Year Students	35%	42%	39%	44%	48%
Seniors	44%	39%	40%	42%	28%

As a result of such efforts, students and faculty mentors publish and present their research in peer reviewed journals and at national and regional professional meetings (Some university funds are made available allowing for student travel in these instances. See Faculty Development Handbook, p.9). As has been previously noted, since 2003, three groups of students and faculty have received Freeman Foundation grants to conduct collaborative research in Asia. One chemistry professor's laboratory produces numerous published papers and poster presentations at national professional meetings. While the professor is always the corresponding author, students are co-authors on papers and develop posters for presentation. In 2004, this professor and his students published an article that was among the 50 most cited works in the prestigious chemistry journal *Tetrahedron* for the years 2004-2007. One economics professor has maintained relationships with his students post-graduation, and frequently co-presents papers with students and alumni/ae at regional and national professional meetings.

But whether the type of collaboration occurs in the chemistry lab where a faculty member and his students pursue cutting edge research involving "Green Chemistry," or in the La Serena observatory in Chile, where a student and faculty member jointly chart the trajectory of obscure heavenly bodies, or in the social science computer lab, where a student and her faculty mentor analyze data involving perceptions of tolerance in the U.S., the belief in and commitment to directly involving students in research activity is strong. The following account gives testimony to this fact:

> *C_____ and I shared the work of data gathering and assembling of longitudinal trends (considerable). We collaborated on what to include from the mountain of available polling data. Having a partner in the work of finding data that make up longitudinal trends saved us both a lot of time. Having done a few of these trends pieces*

before, I was able to help C_____understand how they're are best done and how to spot problematic polling data. (From time to time poorly done polls appear in the collections we mined, and I was able to show her how to spot them.) I asked C_____to write the first draft, which she did. I then edited heavily behind her. I think she learned a thing or two about being economical with words and being clear. Of course, she also learned something about the previous scholarship on the matter of Americans' tolerance toward out-groups and how we most effectively gather information on the current contours of public opinion toward those groups. Lastly, C_____also learned something about working with a journal editor and an anonymous referee. By the way, C_____ is now ABD at the University of Pennsylvania, in political science, with full funding from the start. A pretty good program (email, personal correspondence with political science professor Greg Shaw)."

In addition to pursuing collaborative research projects with faculty members, IWU students are also encouraged to conduct honors research. About thirty students pursue research honors every year under the supervision of a faculty member. The student is responsible for assembling a committee of four or five faculty members who will judge her work. These projects typically involve at least one academic year of research and writing, resulting in a presentation to the committee at the end of the academic year. Upon successful completion of the project, and with the approval of the committee, successful students then graduate with Research Honors. Often these projects coincide with independent studies, allowing students to fine-tune their academic major to a field of particular interest. In 2010, thirty percent of seniors reported participating in an independent study in fulfillment of the requirements for their major.

The University expresses its commitment to the importance of student research most publicly through its sponsorship of the annual John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference. In April of each year, students present papers, posters, compositions and works of art at a gathering of faculty, students, parents, and alumni called the John Wesley Powell Research Conference. Not surprisingly, the Conference serves as one of the high points of the academic year as participation in the Conference is open to students from all disciplines and in a typical year, over 80 students present their work in poster or panel sessions, music performances, or displays of art in the Merwin and Wakeley art galleries. Sample projects from recent years have included:

- *"Excystments of over-wintering statoblasts of the freshwater bryozoan Pectinatella Magnifica" (Biology, 2008)*
- *"Sexual healing: Gender, sexuality, and the balance of the masculine and feminine creative principles in the healing cult of Asclepius. (Greek and Roman Studies, 2010)*
- *"Sumptuary legislation and the fabric construction of national identity in early modern England." (History, 2007)*

Original music compositions have included:

- *The Dreamkeeper's song (2010) ["over the past four years I have been working on writing a rock opera, with completely original libretto and music. It is called The Dreamkeeper's Song and is scored for voices, piano, two guitars, bass guitar, drum set, violins, violas, cellos, and flutes. I will be presenting one song…In the show it is played*

by two guitars, bass guitar, drum set, and a tenor, but here I will be presenting the piano vocal version."]

-
- *Accoustic Exploration for Prepared Piano* (2008) *["In this composition, I exploit various acoustic phenomena such as lowering frequency by adding mass to a resonating object, sounding harmonics by dampening a string at its node, and comparing the difference in frequency produced from the harmonic series of a string to the same pitch on the equal temperament of the piano keyboard. While this piece serves as a demonstration of these phenomena, it also uses them within a larger musical context to combine science and art."]*

One of the more distinctive features of faculty-student collaboration at Illinois Wesleyan involves the number of student journals and publications that are published for a campus of this size. Students manage, edit, and publish six professional journals sponsored by particular departments. These include *The Park Place Economist* (Economic Department)*, the Undergraduate Economic Review* (Economics Department)*, The Delta* (English Department), *Tributaries* (English Department), *Constructing the Past* (History Department), and *Res Publica* (Political Science Department). Through directly participating in the peer review process, students obtain a direct understanding of the way in which scholarship is produced, including the importance of writing for a professional audience as well as the necessity of revising one's work to meet acceptable standards of discourse within one's discipline. As detailed in the discussion of Criterion 4, many of the student journals are now submitted to the campus Digital Commons in electronic form, thereby significantly enhancing their readership through increased Internet access.

b.   Learning beyond the classroom

Participating in scholarly and research activities under the guidance of supportive faculty is only one of the set of learning opportunities that the University offers to its students. Recognizing the multiple venues in which learning occurs, the University strives to create and exploit such spaces beyond the classroom. For instance, as detailed further in the discussion of Criterion 4, an increasing number of students participate in internships and community-based programs. The Hart Career Center is especially effective in placing students in internships relevant to their interests and aspirations.

Table : Students Participating in a Practicum, Internship, Field Experience, CO-OP Experience, or Clinical Assignment (Plan to Do and Done) (NSSE)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010
First-Year Students	89%	90%	84%	90%	85%
Seniors	84%	86%	80%	81%	80%

Figure: Internship Experiences - Hart Career Center
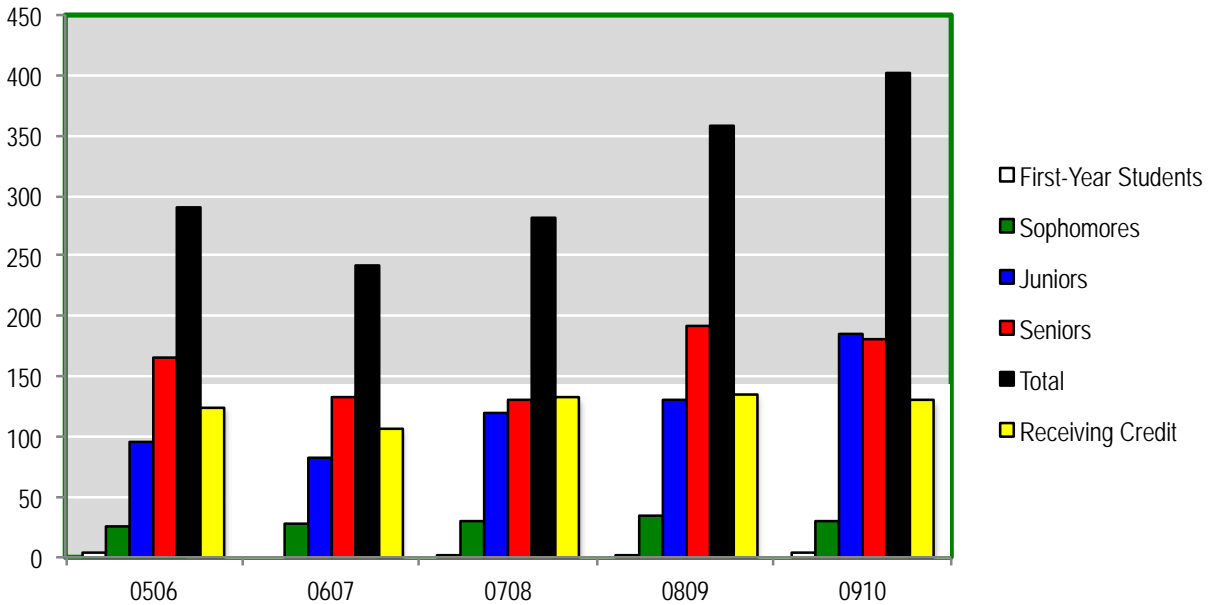
In addition, students have the opportunity to pursue civic engagement experiences coordinated through the Action Research Center, whose work has been previously noted in the discussion of Criterion 1. Suffice it to emphasize here that the Action Research Center is much more than a repository of internship opportunities available to students. Students complete a three semester action research sequence and in their initial Action Research Seminar, they learn to engage the local community as active citizens, develop skills important for community leadership, participate in team organized community partnerships, form working partnerships with faculty, students, and community members, draft pilot projects for long-term Bloomington-Normal community action projects, and present summaries of projects to interested audiences. They then complete an internship and during the final phase of the sequence, pursue an independent study focused on the student completing a community based research project. Students enrolled in the third semester also help organize the introductory class and mentor students new to action research.

The design of this program is compelling because critical inquiry is directly embedded in the community experiences students pursue. Undergraduate students, for example, often need to learn how to listen to the community organizers and project directors, with whom they will later associate. They cannot enter into a collaborative situation with an attitude that their own expertise or understanding of certain political and social issues privileges their personal decision-making ability at the expense of the community members with whom they enter association. In more concrete terms, they need to learn how to run a meeting in an inclusive manner, how to listen to their community colleagues, and how to tailor their idealistic expectations for immediate results that demonstrate the success of their efforts. These skills are introduced during the Action Research seminar but are reinforced throughout the three-semester sequence. During their internships and independent studies, for example, students hold regular meetings with ARC faculty and staff, sharing experiences and engaging in collective problem solving. The model,

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although quite labor intensive, represents a concerted effort to combine experiential learning with critical inquiry, induced in a supportive group setting.

A specific association, worthy of note, involves the Action Research Center's partnership with State Farm Insurance Corporation. Under this program, ten students and ten community not-for-profit agencies are selected to participate in a Community Partnership program that is held during the summer. Students work full-time in a split work week with three days spent at State Farm and two days in the community with a local not-for-profit organization, completing major project assignments at both partners. In the summer of 2010, for instance, one student intern in the program, partnered with Habitat for Humanity, was the lead writer on a grant proposal that secured Habitat for Humanity a $30,000 grant from the Google Foundation (http://www.iwu.edu/CurrentNews/newsreleases10/fea_Kogelman_01010.shtml) . As Tom Laxton of State Farm has noted, "One of the things that has been clear is that students obviously build a resume that shows that they're able to manage and work within a business environment, but they also are able to show that they care and give back to the community. They're making significant differences in communities today." (http://www.iwu.edu/action/mission.shtml).

Table : Students Participating in a Community-Based Project as Part of a Course (Very Often and Often) (NSSE)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010
First-Year Students	6%	8%	4%	7%	10%
Seniors	16%	18%	10%	13%	10%

Table : Students Participating in Community Service or Volunteer Work (Plan to Do and Done) (NSSE)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010
First-Year Students	84%	85%	82%	84%	83%
Seniors	80%	80%	77%	82%	84%

As has been previously noted in the discussion of 3b, a number of students themselves are trained as University tutors where they offer assistance to fellow classmates outside of the classroom under the guidance of faculty and instructional staff. The University Writing Center has created the most elaborate and comprehensive of these programs and its operations are noteworthy on a number of accounts. First, Writing Center tutors are not simply English majors by design, but reflect a diversity of interests befitting the commitment to a "Writing Across the Curriculum" philosophy. Consequently, writing tutors are selected from applicants across the campus with divergent departmental and programmatic affiliations. In 2011-2012 for example, the 12 Writing Center tutors include students with majors such as Business, Biology, Spanish, Theatre, Chemistry and History. Second, Writing Center tutors also participate in non-credit instructional workshops where they norm student papers and learn how to act as sympathetic readers, ask relevant questions and help their clients "valuate their ideas, argument, content, and style, by teaching writers invention, argumentation, drafting, and copyediting strategies they can use on their own." Tutors assist their clients in all stages of the writing process and stress the importance of revision as a crucial component of good writing.

http://www.iwu.edu/writingcenter/. But whether it be through serving as Writing Center tutors or through participating in the tutoring programs offered by academic departments and programs, Illinois Wesleyan students are given opportunities to teach, mentor, and assist their peers in ways that demand that they master important skills that good teachers of all types exhibit: a sense of professionalism about the nature of one's work, conceptual planning, a clarity of explanation of concepts that may be difficult to master, patience and understanding, punctuality, etc.

Other types of programming that teach important leadership skills are offered throughout the campus as well. For example, professional staff in the Office of Residential Life (along with other members of the Division of Student Affairs, and faculty and staff) have been influential in establishing an Alternative Spring Break program that directs the efforts of 40 – 50 students in site-based service-learning during the spring break period. Students take part in service activities, and then process their experiences with one another and staff and faculty facilitators. Once back on campus, students share their efforts and learning with the campus community as a whole vis-à-vis a chapel service presentation.

In order to align residence hall educational opportunities better with the mission and the strategic plan of the university, the Office of Residential Life created two positions grounded in directed peer education: sustainability educators and multicultural educators who provide in-hall and campus-wide programming on issues of the environment and culture, respectively. The Sustainability Educator program was established in 2003, and the Multicultural Educator program was established in 2007 (ORL Teaching and Learning document). In addition, ORL student staff members are encouraged to focus, during a semester or academic year, on the development of basic or advanced competency in staff leadership, multiculturalism or sustainability. By engaging in boundary-stretching activities, each participant creates a unique path to achieving outcomes-based competency. Student staff members create a portfolio describing their learning and articulate how their experiences address to pre-determined competency outcomes. A committee of reviewers determines whether they have met the criteria and awards the competency accordingly. About 15 student staff members have gone through this process to date.

 Students don't always naturally find their callings or become intellectually, politically, and socially engaged without the support of thoughtful faculty, staff, and other mentors. At Illinois Wesleyan University, such support emanates from a number of sources. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, incoming students participate in the Summer Reading Program, which brings together disparate members of the campus community to introduce new students to the life of the mind and the expectations in support of the pursuit of intellectual inquiry that arise from that predisposition. In addition, once enrolled at the University, students are assigned a first year advisor, a faculty member who will guide them in learning about varied curricular and instructional opportunities available to them. Because student needs and interests develop over time, assigning students a first year advisor has the advantage of " [facilitating] students' transition from high school to college and integration into the broader Illinois Wesleyan community in the following ways: by advising broadly and developmentally while encouraging students to develop a cohesive academic plan with an eventual transition to a major advisor; by helping students to learn how to think strategically about their own academic progress and to select and register for appropriate courses; and by fostering a respectful, supportive and trusting advisor-advisee relationship." (http://www.iwu.edu/advising/firstyear/). Students' first year

advisors either are their Gateway seminar instructors or work closely with those instructors; funding is made available for advisors and their students to get together on an informal basis to help address concerns as they develop during one's first year. And first year advisors are assisted in their efforts through the development of an extensive handbook that is available in print and online. In the spring of their first year, students are able to select a major and their advising materials are transferred to the relevant department chair, who assigns students' their major advisor. For students who are uncertain as to their choice of major, they can elect to continue their relationship with their first year advisor or the Registrar will select a new advisor for the student.

The advising challenges that arise at the University occur because students change academic and career goals. On many occasions, their initial academic interests change when they become more conversant with the demands of their prospective major. On other occasions, they simply need the time to explore their options before deciding upon the major with which they feel most comfortable. A number of students enter the University with the intention of double majoring, but without being fully aware of the requirements that this might entail. In addition, the requirements of the General Education program are extensive, and students often need assistance in negotiating the parameters of the options that are open to then in making course choices and pursuing lengthy plans of study. Finally, the requirements for the completion of certain majors are substantial and require careful planning; at times they involve hidden pre-requisites, on other occasions required courses may only be offered on a yearly or bi-annual basis. In addition, as previously noted, some programs require their majors to study abroad or off-campus for at least a semester.

All of these factors present challenges for students and their faculty advisors. An additional issue involves unbalanced advising loads, as faculty in large departments with many majors are expected to advise a disproportionately large number of students in comparison with their peers. For these reasons, and because of student dissatisfaction expressed with regard to the quality of advising offered at the University (NSSE, 2006; *IWU Students View of Advising: It's a Puzzlement*), a University Task Force recommended the creation of an Academic Advising Center, and with initial funding from the Arthur V. Davis Foundation, such a Center was established in 2008. As noted on the Center webpage (http://www.iwu.edu/advising/) , Advising Center activities include offering walk-in support for students who need assistance in addressing course scheduling concerns, helping undecided students commit to and declare a major or assisting students in their desire to change majors, offering advising workshops and strategy sessions for advisors, and serving as a referral agency to other campus resources, or acting as a general campus resource for students and faculty. The Center, along with a committee of interested faculty, also assists students in preparing to apply to prestigious graduate scholarship and fellowship programs. Although the challenges to improve University advising are always present, the creation of the Advising Center has addressed a number of previously articulated concerns. As was true of the creation of the University Writing Program, an identified weakness, apparent in the analysis of data collected over time, resulted in the successful acquisition of an institutional grant that created the foundation for a Center, subsequently funded from the regular University budget, to be established. A survey conducted in 2010 of alumni from the classes of 2003 forward suggests a substantial improvement in satisfaction with advising:

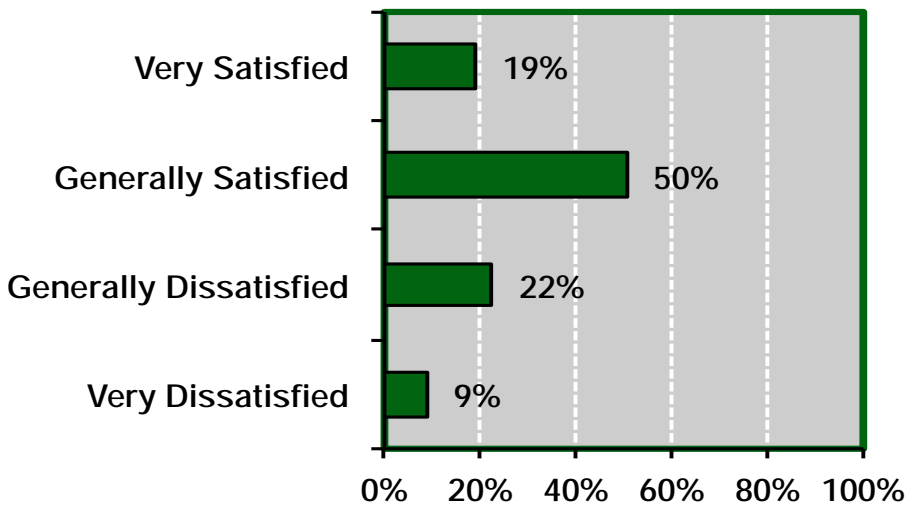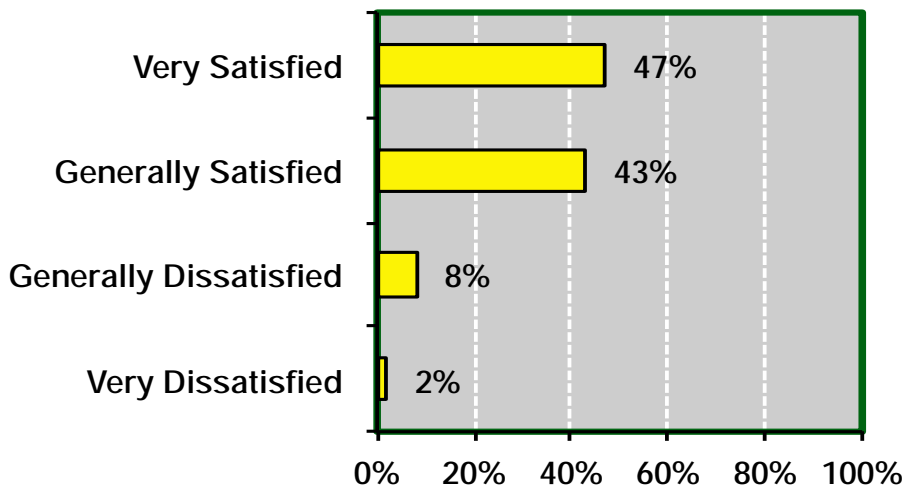Figure : Satisfaction with First-Year Academic Advising

Figure : Satisfaction with Academic Advising in Your Major Years

Advising occurs in many shapes, however, and is not simply formal academic advising, and in this realm, the Office of Student Affairs has played an important campus role. For example, within first year residence halls, staff members designate a space for study-group sign-up and facilitate the interconnection of students with shared coursework. Study skills programming has in the past been provided within the first three weeks as part of the First Year Experience programming, with nightly sessions focusing upon time management, note-taking, best communication strategies when speaking with one's professors along with general study strategies. Residence directors meet with students in their living units that receive D/F slips to provide support and campus resource referral, while students who fall below a 2.25 GPA

cumulative or term are placed on probation, and academic progress is monitored with a supervisor.

Clearly, student learning occurs in a variety of consequential ways within diverse settings across the University campus. But it would be a serious omission to ignore the role of technology in enhancing learning possibilities and in expediting learning outcomes on the campus. In the discussion of Criterion 2, the use of technology as an important institutional resource was commented upon at length. But the ways in which technology is used to directly support curricular and pedagogical efforts is deserving of comment here. There are over 400 computers that are operational throughout the campus, some of which include a computer classroom, an information commons, media center and computer clusters on all floors of the library building, a language resource center, 72 computer labs in three lab settings associated with mathematics and computer science, a social science computer lab with 12 machines loaded with relevant statistical packages, a psychology lab with 16 computers, a biology lab with 12 machines and an additional 16 machines available to students in the School of Music. As has been noted, digital editing and imaging facilities are available in the library's Thorpe Center. Both Macs and PCs are available to students and faculty. A few faculty have begun to recommend or require students to purchase e-books; Educational Studies students have access to a smart board in their curriculum laboratory; political science students use the social science lab to conduct polling before local elections; theatre students edit their films and graphic arts students complete their class projects by using Thorpe Center equipment in the library.

Information technology thus plays a key role in facilitating the close student-faculty relationships and engaged learning experiences that IWU strives to offer its students. All students as well as all faculty and staff have email accounts, and a great deal of instructor-student interaction is now conducted through email. Such accessibility is indeed expected on the part of both parties. In addition, all course registration is conducted online, after students receive a requisite pin number, distributed by their advisors after their mandatory advising session. They can thus register anywhere on campus at designated times during the registration period.

The picture that has been painted has been one where a plethora of colors representing varied and substantive teaching and learning experiences fills up the canvas labeled Illinois Wesleyan University. Not surprisingly, students agree with that picture, at least when one analyzes survey data compiled from NSSE benchmark reports, 2007, IWU Identity Survey Reports and survey data compiled by the Self-Study Steering Committee in support of this accreditation review process. An overwhelmingly high percentage of students agreed that IWU placed substantial emphasis on studying and academic work, and they also agreed that the University was substantially committed to their academic success. High levels of satisfaction were reported with regard to faculty contact, and there also was a high percentage of students who participated in an internship, field experience, cooperative experience or clinical assignment. (Munro, Global Evidence is generally encouraging). 2010 NSSE data further confirms that IWU had significantly higher scores than its NSSE peers for both first-year students and seniors in the Level of Academic Challenge Benchmark. Although there were no significant differences between IWU and NSSE peers with regard to Active and Collaborative Learning, IWU did demonstrate significantly higher scores than its NSSE peers in the Enriching Educational Experiences and Supportive Campus Environment benchmarks.

It has been further argued that such success is not accidental, and represents the results of planning and informed decision-making, based upon sincere efforts to honestly assess institutional strengths and weaknesses with regard to teaching and learning and adapt accordingly. However, a number of challenges are present that need to be addressed in order to build upon past successes and further strengthen University teaching and learning activities. Efforts involving strategic curricular planning, noted in the discussion of Criterion 2, need to be implemented with a greater degree of consistency. Too often, curricular and pedagogical innovation is occurring because of the dedicated work of individuals, who don't have occasion to share their insights with colleagues in other departments, programs, or divisions. To be sure, there are a number of systems in place to evaluate and review the efficacy of these efforts, such as those operating through the Curriculum Council, the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the departmental external review program, and the Associate Dean of the Curriculum position. However, initiating stronger and more coordinated efforts would make these structures even more effective. In addition, there needs to be an even greater shared understanding of the importance of high impact learning practices to students' academic success. As the course credit unit remains the major analytical unit for determining faculty work load, the material incentives to explore other meaningful forms of faculty-student interaction, through independent study, internship mentoring, honors research, etc., are less visible. Too often, to participate in such activities is viewed as an additional set of faculty responsibilities, rather than those that are of crucial importance to the success of one's teaching and one's students' learning. Many faculty want to participate in these activities, yet they have too little time to do so. Therefore, it would be useful to examine more flexible work-load models that allow for the banking of independent study work and/or other activities involving high impact learning practices for future course releases. Offering viable incentives for participation in alternative curricular and pedagogical approaches, such as the creation of learning communities or co-teaching opportunities, would be additionally beneficial.

3d. The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Student satisfaction with their learning experiences at Illinois Wesleyan is apparent in their assessment of the resources made available to them in support of their learning. For example, in surveys of students and alumni conducted for this self-study report, both constituencies showed that they were satisfied or greatly satisfied with the resources the University provides in support of teaching and learning, with four hundred eleven alumni out of 511 respondents indicating satisfaction with the facilities the University provides. In 2008 and 2011, Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) surveys were administered to IWU seniors where seniors indicated "satisfaction" or "great satisfaction" with facilities provided by the University, at substantially higher levels than at HERI peer institutions. While the Ames Library received more enthusiastic support than did other learning spaces, other facilities and resources, including tutoring, psychological counseling, student health services, and the laboratory facilities were also quite highly valued.

Figure : Student Satisfaction with Facilities and Support Services (Very Satisfied and Satisfied)
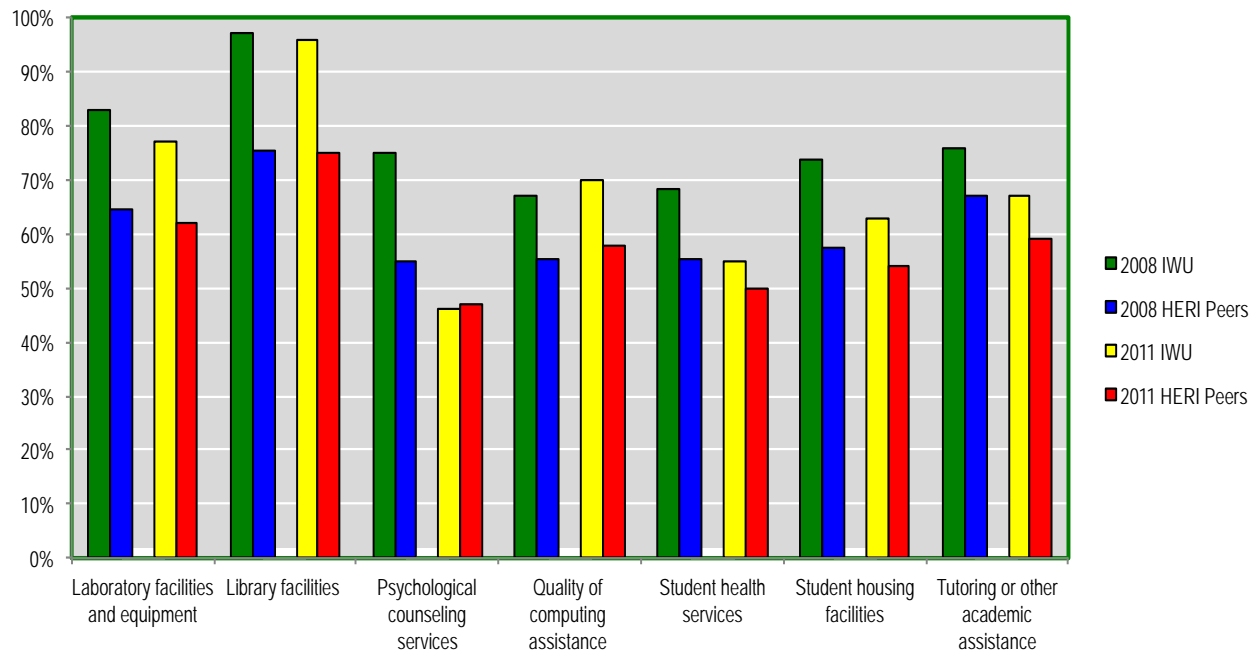
 As gratifying as these results are, they did not arise by accident. As noted in the discussion of Criterion 2, many of the physical facilities used by and available to the University are of a high quality. But more importantly, concerted efforts have been made to utilize resources in support of the campus teaching and learning mission, with the work of the Ames library faculty and staff serving as an exemplar. For example, Library faculty have readily understood the advantages offered by digital resources and have increased electronically journal subscriptions by 44% annually since 2004. Circulation of non-digital items (print, video, etc.) has also steadily increased from 37,042 to 40,010 in 2009. But simply serving as a repository of information does not help students learn or faculty teach, if the information remains dormant. So, in order to assess how students were using the library, an Ethnographic Research in Illinois Academic Libraries (ERIAL) project was initiated on the IWU campus from 2008-2010. Working with a professional anthropologist, Library faculty and staff collected information regarding students' traffic and usage patterns within the library, through ethnographic observation, interviewing, spatial mapping, and other methods. Their findings not only summarized the challenges students confront in mastering information literacy skills, but also indicated that it was extremely important for students to know library faculty and staff outside of the formal library environment, if they were to feel comfortable in asking for reference desk help or with assistance in their independent research projects. As a result, the library faculty are now making a concerted effort to visit classrooms to meet students before they seriously engage in their research. They have always made it a point to learn about course assignments and instructor expectations, but sharing the familiar space of the classroom with the formal course instructor is a new approach that is being used. The effort further extends to the more general aim to promote information literacy on campus, and as the discussion of Criterion 4 attests, library and department faculty have been working more closely together to assist students in not only accessing information, but also evaluating sources and the contexts in which the information appears.

Among the disciplines, the sciences often require the most significant commitment to resource acquisition, particularly when the need to pursue research activity with students is such an important part of the University mission. Simply put, in order to learn science, students must do science, necessitating access to laboratory space and first-rate equipment. A list of the equipment available to science majors in physics, chemistry, and biology appears on the Physics department website (http://www.iwu.edu/physics/equipment_list.shtml#general) and is noteworthy for its inclusion of equipment including a sixteen inch telescope that is situated in the Mark Evans Observatory, as well as more traditional apparatuses including electromagnets, cyrogenics and a vacuum, various spectrometers, lasers, research level data acquisition computers, an electron and other microscopes, a refrigerated centrifuge, a spectrophotometer, gas chromatographs and an electron capture detector. Department of psychology facilities include observation, control and psychophysiology rooms, and behavioral, cognitive, developmental, and experimental labs. Theatre Arts students perform in either the McPherson Theatre or the E. Melba Kirpatrick Laboratory Theatre while students in the School of Music often perform in the Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall.

It is clear that the University provides students with the physical and material resources necessary to support their learning. However, as has been noted in the discussion of Criterion 2, there are a number of challenges that must be addressed if the quality of education that is currently provided is to be maintained. Because department supply and expenses budgets were cut in 2009-10 and have remained flat in subsequent years, it has become more difficult to secure the funds necessary for the purchase of needed supplies such as chemicals, small scale purchase items, and materials for theatrical productions involving costumes, set construction, etc. The Associate Provost reviews proposals for larger scale items; department chairs are responsible for small purchases. But even with a system that attempts to allocate existing resources according to demonstrated departmental needs, the necessity of expanding these budgets in coming years to further support curriculum delivery is clear.

It has been previously noted that technology is used regularly to support teaching. As a result, faculty and students have come to rely upon the Information Technology staff for support, not only with regard to the instructional workshops that they offer, but for personal assistance with equipment as well. A daily help desk with a 3900 extension number is operational throughout the academic year, with calls answered by student workers, who will direct the call to the appropriate IT support person if necessary. When faculty have difficulty operating classroom equipment, the campus Instructional Technologist will automatically come to the classroom and help address the problem. Although classroom space utilization is at a premium, the Instructional Technologist keeps a record as to who is using which classrooms during the semester. And, whenever classrooms are requested for future scheduling, the technology needs of instructors are surveyed, with accommodations made accordingly. With an R-25 software scheduling system in place, the classroom assignment process has become largely standardized, and a complete record of classroom usage over time is available, if needed. Not surprisingly, as construction on the University's new sixteen million dollar classroom building proceeds, faculty and staff are meeting regularly to assess their instructional needs, as the building will be equipped with advanced technological capability. It should further be noted that the Chief Technology Officer, the Instructional Technologist, the Media Services Coordinator, and the University Technology Trainer meet together and evaluate the suitability of learning resources within classrooms on an annual basis. All classroom computers are replaced according to a four-year cycle, and

projection systems are updated on an as needed basis. Classroom computer laboratories are also updated according to the four-year cycle.

Small liberal arts institutions such as Illinois Wesleyan continually need to supplement their faculty resources, in order to successfully address increasing demands for curricular diversity, made more compelling by the explosion of knowledge production and the increased access to information that has characterized the past decade. To that end, the University has hosted two Scholars at Risk (in 2004-5, and 2007-2009), and has sponsored two Fulbright Scholars (2006, and 2009) since the last re-accreditation visit. In the first instance, students were able to take classes with two political scientists who had been subject to torture and imprisonment for expressing ideas deemed too dangerous for political authorities in their own countries (Cameroon and Ethiopia). The scholars taught courses as a part of the regular department curriculum and gave public lectures during their stay. In the second instance, Fulbright Scholars from Russia and Morocco also taught courses and gave lectures for the Russian Studies program and the Political Science Department. In 2011, the University signed an agreement with the Hanban Foundation in China to establish a Confucius Institute, bringing a native Chinese language instructor to the campus for a two-year period, thus guaranteeing that students will have the opportunity to pursue Chinese language study at the elementary and beginning intermediate levels. In all of these cases, the planning, coordination and implementation of the visitations occurred at the highest administrative levels, insuring that faculty visitors' needs with regard to housing and other accommodations would be successfully addressed. The desire to create even more international exchanges with faculty from sister institutions is being actively pursued at this time.

It is incumbent upon an institution, particularly one such as Illinois Wesleyan University, to use resources beyond the campus facility, when appropriate, to support student learning. This occurs in a number of different ways and in different contexts at the University. For example, students and faculty are not only privileged by being able to utilize an extremely efficient interlibrary loan system, drawing from most of the university collections in Illinois and if necessary beyond the immediate region, but they have direct borrowing privileges at Illinois State University (less than a mile away), and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (within an hour's driving time of the IWU campus. Music students regularly give concerts at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, while Environmental Studies students are able to use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) equipment at Illinois State University. Students interested in pursuing a medical career are eligible to participate in a medical externship, whereby in cooperation with local physicians of different specializations, they engage in a full-time observation of the physician's daily routines including office/clinic hours, hospital rounds, surgery, staff meetings, etc. (University course catalog, p. 121). Pre-professional programs leading to certification in Education and Nursing could not exist without the cooperation and collaboration with community schools and hospitals, and the nature of this collaboration is discussed in more detail in the response to Criterion 5. Suffice it to note here that as these cooperative arrangements are long lasting, they require frequent evaluation of the effectiveness of the external student mentoring that occurs as a result of the collaboration. For example, cooperating teachers who work with student teachers are regularly assessed by University supervisors who work with both the cooperating teacher and the student teacher during the sixteen week student teaching experience. Cooperating teachers are further evaluated by the student teachers themselves upon the completion of their student teaching. Placements in schools, hospitals, or other clinical settings are thus based upon a combination of assessments including supervisor

recommendations, a previous history of working with the University program, and participant evaluations.

Of course, the opportunities for collaboration with community organizations allow students to engage in significant off-campus and internship experiences, regardless as to whether such experiences are directly tied to academic coursework or programs in a formal sense. From 2009-2010 for example, 401 students reported having had an internship experience at 201 different sites, 164 of which were in the state of Illinois. 55% of the internships involved some form of monetary compensation, ranging from $7.75 - $24.00 an hour. 14 different departments gave academic credit for the internship experience, the largest number affiliated with Business Administration (61), followed by Psychology (14), Political Science, and Educational Studies (13 each) (Syr_InternReport_Hart Career Center.pdf).

One of the more innovative programs that has allowed students to integrate their curricular and co-curricular interests is the John and Erma Stutzman Peace Fellows program. Students selected to participate in the program complete a series of courses related to peace, social justice and conflict resolution themes, pursue a local, regional, national, or international internship, and complete a faculty mentored independent research project, based upon a theme relevant to the focus of the program. Participation in the program is competitive and students receive some financial assistance in support of their internship activities, made possible by the Stutzman's gift to the University. Initiated in 2007, ten students have participated in the program, examining themes as diverse as environmental justice and access to farmers' markets, the sociology of disability, citizenship and immigration policies toward undocumented children, and reconciliation efforts in the Balkans. Suffice it to conclude that, as the Peace Fellows program in one specific way indicates, the University makes a concerted effort to use multiple resources beyond its physical boundaries to further multiple possibilities for student learning.

Another initiative that facilitates student interest in community engagement activity is the Weir Fellowship program. In this case, students who have previously worked closely with community partners, propose future collaborative projects with them, and are awarded a $1250.00 fellowship to pursue their projects. http://www.iwu.edu/CurrentNews/newsreleases09/news_WeirFellowship_00209.shtml. As is true of the Stutzman Peace Fellows program, the fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis. One example that attests to the efficacy of this program involves a student who recommended that a Community Housing Development Organization be established to address the findings of her senior thesis honors research: that landlord decisions drive property quality; that lower quality houses were less likely to have substantial investments put into them to fix its problems; and that local, single property landlords were more likely to fix issues because of a heightened awareness to them. With her Weir Fellowship funding she organized a West Bloomington Housing Summit in May 2010 on the IWU campus. The summit was attended by bankers, city planners, west side residents, executive directors from several non-profits such as the Fuller Center and Habitat for Humanity, WBRP board members, IWU professors and students, and many others—over 80 attendees in all. The summit produced an action plan focusing on an "adopt a block" initiative and after consultation with residents, a specific neighborhood block was targeted.

Another Weir fellow received funding to work as a tutor for the Heartland Head Start Program in Bloomington, and ended up writing the bulk of their No Child Left Behind assessment report,

which featured cross tabulations of the correlations between selected assessment variables (e.g., am and pm class times with student learning outcome scores). This was the first direct assessment this organization conducted and they have completed several afterwards, each following this students' model. (Simeone report on Weir Fellows Projects).

The Stutzman Peace Fellows program and the Weir Fellowship Program are only two examples of the ways in which the University uses available resources within and external to the campus site in innovate ways to facilitate student learning. As access to information continues to increase in a rapid fashion, and as the nature of liberal inquiry is expanding to include new contexts and areas ripe for intellectual and experiential engagement, it is incumbent upon the University to use its existing resources efficiently, to secure new resources with foresight and prudence, and to evaluate student learning needs in a flexible yet responsible fashion. Be it through increasing interaction among librarians and teaching faculty to enhance students' information literacy skills, securing laboratory equipment necessary for the promotion of undergraduate and faculty research, locating supportive organizational environments where students can fine-tune their clinical skills in pre-professional programs such as nursing and education, or creating blended curricular and co-curricular programs dedicated to engaging students with social justice and conflict resolution themes, the University has succeeded in identifying, acquiring, and disseminating the resources necessary to enhance undergraduate student learning. It has also made a concerted effort to bring scholars with international expertise to the campus to supplement its curricular offerings. Budgetary pressures noted in the discussion of Criterion 2 have created challenges with regard to maintaining and enhancing the resources allocated to students' learning needs; however those needs are currently being successfully addressed.

Conclusion

It is clear that the Illinois Wesleyan University community clearly values teaching and learning, as an embodiment of its very ethos. The learning opportunities available to its students are numerous and varied, and students appreciate the commitment to teaching and learning that their faculty express. National survey data documents their general satisfaction with the quality of education that they have received at the University. Faculty exhibit a strong sense of professionalism with regard to the importance of their work. They are equally appreciative of the opportunity to teach a talented undergraduate student body that arrives at the institution with considerable academic prowess (as demonstrated by the results of the SSSC faculty survey commissioned as a part of the Self-Study process). Indeed, when a June 2011 workshop was held whereby the positive benefits of assessment policies in support of teaching and learning were discussed, 67 faculty (or over 37% of the total) representing 28 departments or programs and seven all university programs, participated in the two day event. Such a level of participation is not surprising, for there is a longstanding record of curricular revision and reform that has occurred since the 2003 self-study, in response to documented needs, constructed according to rational planning strategies.

Although the importance of fostering a culture of assessment as a way of exemplifying a shared commitment to effective teaching that results in consequential learning is widely understood and appreciated, there are challenges that need to be addressed to insure that continued progress occurs. Many of these are challenges that all institutions of higher education confront; some are more specific to the Illinois Wesleyan University environment. One of the most difficult aspects involving assessment involves goal setting. In an era when human knowledge has expanded in

astronomic terms and where access to such knowledge is more easily attainable in a more rapid fashion than has previously occurred, considerations as to what constitutes appropriate learning for one's undergraduate students must always be tempered with an appreciation of their transient nature. The imperative becomes one of setting, assessing, and revising programmatic goals and determining learning outcomes with speed and regularity, to keep up with external pressures that are continually redefining what is relevant and worth knowing. At the small, liberal arts institution, where curricular depth must be balanced with breadth, and where the need to insure that students acquire not only the skills and information, but also the predispositions that are essential to engaging in liberal inquiry, the task can be daunting. It is for this reason that a culture of assessment has to be nourished through shared, reflective discourse based upon peer interaction. At Illinois Wesleyan, we recognize the problem but in the past have found it difficult to address, more frequently tackling issues of curricular reform and the assessment of student learning within departmental rather than broadly institutional contexts. Although this is situation is somewhat changing, the University needs to establish the structure that will encourage a greater sharing of ideas with regard to student learning and assessment issues to occur. To that end, an assessment committee has been established in 2011-2012 whereby department and program assessment plans, and the progress made toward their implementation, will be regularly shared and discussed.

A second challenge involves examining new ways of valuing high impact learning practices, so that they are not viewed as supplemental to the traditional course, but are recognized as being essential components of a liberal education, holding intrinsic value, to be rewarded accordingly. Allowing faculty to bank independent study work or receive some credit for co-teaching, internship supervision, research mentoring, learning community development, etc., is important not only because in doing so, the University demonstrates its support for the importance of engaging in high impact learning practices, but it further illustrates the need to reassess what faculty work load and the very nature of faculty work should entail. A final institutional challenge involves resource support for teaching and learning. In spite of significant financial pressures emanating from the 2008 recession, the resource support for teaching and learning at Illinois Wesleyan has never been significantly compromised. However, supply and expense budgets cannot remain static in perpetuity, and as the costs of larger resources in support of teaching and learning escalate, a stronger effort for securing the funding for such resources will have to occur.

Strengths

In spite of a variety of curricular offerings, programmatic and student learning goals are readily available in disseminated literature and on the University website.

Assessment policies and procedures are inclusive of all constituencies and assessment occurs regularly throughout the University.

Teaching effectiveness is systematically evaluated with regard to hiring, tenure, and promotion policies, and in the nomination of endowed chairs and professorships.

Teaching effectiveness is supported through robust and numerous faculty development opportunities.

Innovative teaching and high impact learning practices occur throughout the University.

Teaching effectiveness is widely acknowledged on the part of students and alumni.

The University has made progress in systematically addressing advising concerns through its creation of an Academic Advising Center.

Necessary resources on and off campus are regularly secured to insure that meaningful student learning occurs.

Challenges

The structuring of institutional space permitting the systematic sharing of information with regard to teaching, learning and assessment, perhaps through the creation of a University wide assessment committee, needs to be developed.

Assessment of learning goals on a department and programmatic basis is somewhat inconsistent and varies according to department or program.

Revisions to University-wide programs including General Education, the Writing Program, May Term, and Study Abroad need to continue to be pursued.

Alternative ways of valuing faculty work that involve the use of high impact learning practices need to be explored.

Alternative strategies for determining work-load that extend beyond credit hour production should be evaluated.

Opportunities that allow for enhanced teaching and learning resource support, arising from external as well as internal sources, need to be investigated.