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American University Periodic Review Report



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<http://www.american.edu/middlestates>

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SECTION ONE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABOUT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

American University (AU) is a private doctoral research university located in Washington, DC. Chartered by an Act of Congress in 1893, the university was originally a graduate institution established to train and support public servants. The first graduate class graduated in 1916 and by 1925 the first undergraduate students were admitted. The university was founded under the auspices of the United Methodist Church.

AU's current mission, known as the "Statement of Common Purpose" has remained true to the institution's roots. It states:

The place of American University among major universities with first-rate faculties and academic programs grounded in the arts and sciences is secured by its enduring commitment to uncompromising quality in the education of its students. But its distinctive feature, unique in higher education, is its capacity as a national and international university to turn ideas into action and action into service by emphasizing the arts and sciences, then connecting them to the issues of contemporary public affairs writ large, notably in the areas of government, communication, business, law, and international service (see http://www.american.edu/president/statements/common_purpose.html)

Interdisciplinary inquiry, international understanding, interactive teaching, research and creative endeavors, and practical application of knowledge are all at the heart of AU's mission. This mission is now advanced through a new Strategic Plan, enacted in Fall 2008 and available at <http://www.american.edu/strategicplan>.

AU's size makes it possible to offer an extensive array of programs and services, while still ensuring a personal, meaningful experience for its students. Total fall 2008 enrollment was 12,183, including 9,239 full-time students and 2,944 part-time students. Most of AU students were degree-seeking (11,238). In fall 2008, there were 6,287 undergraduate students, 3,703 graduate students, and 1,664 law students. AU also hosted 529 visiting students who took advantage of the Washington Semester and Abroad at AU programs. While most students studied on AU's campus, a few courses are off campus and there were 250 AU students who studied abroad. Students come from all 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, and 144 countries.

At American University, academic programs are rigorous and relevant. The university offers 56 bachelor's degrees, 50 non-law master's degrees, 8 doctoral degrees, and 4 law degrees. There are also 62 certificate programs. Degrees are offered through six major schools and colleges: The College of Arts and Sciences, the Kogod School of Business, the School of Communication, the School of International Service, the School of Public Affairs, and the Washington College of Law. Faculty are at the heart of the university. In addition to being effective teachers, they are accomplished scholars, and active participants in their fields. In 2008, full-time faculty totaled 674. There were 500 part-time faculty teaching in the fall. AU's mission was also carried out by 1,337 full-time staff.

The university by-laws entrust governance of the institution to the Board of Trustees. Currently AU has 32 trustees, including non-voting representatives from the faculty, staff and student body. The institution is led by President Neil Kerwin, an alumnus of American University who has been a member of the faculty since 1975. Dr. Kerwin has held a number of positions at the institution, including that of dean from 1989 to 1997, and provost from 1998 to 2005. He became acting President in 2005, and was appointed as the permanent chief executive officer in 2007 after a nationwide search.

Dr. Kerwin is assisted by a Cabinet that includes:

- Dr. Scott Bass, Provost;
- Dr. Teresa Flannery, Executive Director of Communications and Marketing;
- Dr. Gail Short Hanson, Vice President of Campus Life;
- Ms. Mary E. Kennard, Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary;
- Dr. Thomas J. Minar, Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations;
- Mr. Donald L. Myers, Vice President of Finance and Treasurer; and
- Mr. David Taylor, Chief of Staff.

AU is led by an impressive and qualified team. Dr. Hanson, Mr. Taylor and Ms. Kennard have over 10 years of experience at American University, and Mr. Myers and President Kerwin each have over 30 years of experience at American University. Their knowledge of the institution is complemented by the recent additions of Drs. Bass, Flannery and Minar, who are all experienced in their fields, and who bring new energy, ideas and insight to the community.

Over all, American University is well positioned as it begins to implement one of the most ambitious and meaningful Strategic Plans in the institution's history. As this report demonstrates, AU has made tremendous strides in the last five years to address issues mentioned in our last *Self-Study* and to advance the overall qualities expected in the Middle States *Characteristics of Excellence*. Examples of AU's major accomplishments discussed in this *Periodic Review Report* include:

Improvements in Administration and Governance

In August 2005 the Executive Committee of the American University Board of Trustees placed then-President Benjamin Ladner on administrative leave, pending an investigation into personal and travel expenses. Then-Provost Cornelius Kerwin became the acting president. Following the investigation, the Board met in October 2005 and determined that Dr. Ladner would not return as president of the University. In addition to concern about Dr. Ladner's actions, many desired greater organizational transparency, more participation in governance, and more oversight over the president's actions.

While the situation in fall 2005 was contentious and often played out in the media, American University learned from the experience. It transformed into an institution that has a strong and participatory governance system, with a Board of Trustees that includes representatives from all campus constituencies. Communication with the university community is frequent, open and interactive to facilitate transparency on matters of importance. This report highlights the

improvements in communication with the board and the president (Section Three) as well as the important ways that the board is now assessed (Section Five).

A New Strategic Plan

One of the most significant accomplishments in the past five years is the fact that American University recently completed a comprehensive strategic planning process. On February 27, 2009 the Board of Trustees reviewed the first phase of implementation of the plan, including the objectives AU plans to achieve over the next two years, accompanied by action steps and metrics to track progress. The report highlights the improvements in communication that AU had for itself (discussed in Section Two), the important ways we assess the plan (discussed in Section Five), and the integral role that the plan has in the budget process (discussed in Section Six.)

Financial Strength

While the world financial crisis has led to speculation about the possible impact on higher education, American University has continued to thrive. As Section Four makes clear, AU continues to attract high quality students and interest in the institution continues to grow. In the last fiscal year, AU exceeded budget expectations and there is every indication is that it will continue to do so in FY2010.

The *AnewAU* campaign currently stands at approximately \$180 million as of April 2009. (The goal is \$200 million.) The university is fortunate to have a new vice president of development and alumni relations who is working to strengthen relationships with alumni and increase awareness of the great results that are possible through gifts to AU.

Continued Academic Excellence

At the heart of American University is a commitment to academic excellence. AU has continued to excel in providing students with a high quality academic experience. The quality of incoming students, the quality of faculty and staff, results of assessments, and national rankings all demonstrate that American University provides an education that lives up to its mission. As important, the Strategic Plan's emphasis on academic excellence insures that this will be a top priority of the institution in the years ahead. The new partnerships, centers, and faculty discussed in Section Three are examples of how opportunities for improved academic excellence are already being realized.

A Culture of Assessment

American University has always had robust assessment processes. However, since the last *Self-Study*, improvements in the assessment of student learning are worthy of notice. Section Two of this report demonstrates that academic programs now have more meaningful assessment plans. Expected learning outcomes are communicated and shared across the institution and posted on a publically available website. Overall, programs have made important progress on implementation of their plans. An additional component is the inclusion of an academic program review process that integrates Middle State's *Characteristics of Excellence*.

Institutional assessment has also been improved. Since the last *Self-Study* the institution has created a written assessment plan, has developed ways to assess its new Strategic Plan, and has revolutionized the way that Board assessment is done. It has used assessment to improve important programs and processes. Section Five of the report highlights the many successes that the institution has had in advancing institutional effectiveness. A more complete information about AU assessment policies, processes, and resources is available at: <http://www.american.edu/assessment>.

New Marketing, Branding and Web Initiatives

Marketing and branding of AU is a priority. In fall 2008 AU began a process of assessing how important constituencies view the institution, and it explored ways in which the institution could more effectively convey its strengths. Section Three discusses in more detail the steps that have been taken thus far to help AU position itself in the years ahead.

American University launched a new website on March 30, 2009. The site is a significant improvement to AU's communications, offering opportunities for user-generated content. Web pages have been redesigned and content created or migrated through a comprehensive content management system. The entire system has been improved so that the look and feel of the site is more consistent. Dramatic increases in page views and time on the site point to a far more engaging and useful user experience. The site provides opportunities for more open and collaborative connections to the university. It offers consistent marketing across units and divisions. The importance of the development of this website is referred to Section Three of this report.

ABOUT THE PERIODIC REVIEW REPORT

Writing the Report

American University's *Periodic Review Report* was scheduled to be written just as a number of important activities were taking place. Most notably, the university was completing its Strategic Plan and the Budget Committee was completing the FY2010-FY2011 biennial budget. The university took advantage of the work already being done by existing committees in areas where their charge related to the sections of the report.

Because the university used the *Self-Study* as a planning document, it re-constituted the Self-Study Steering Committee to help prepare the *Periodic Review Report*. This committee, referred to in the report as the Coordinating Committee, also added a few new members to help fill in gaps where previous members had left the university. The group had primary responsibility for Section Two, "Response to Recommendations". It was also charged with reviewing and approving the entire report.

Section Three of the *Periodic Review Report*, "Major Challenges and Opportunities" is based, in part, on the work of the Strategic Planning Committee, which did an extensive analysis of AU's strengths and weaknesses as part of the planning process. Section Four "Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections" is based on the work of the 2008-2009 Budget Committee. This committee reviewed enrollment trends and finance trends as part of its budget-setting process. It also set two-year

enrollment and budget projections. Section Five is based on the work of the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team, which is responsible for setting policies related to learning outcomes, and working with departments to make progress on assessment. The Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team also reviewed the AU Assessment Plan (*American University Assessment Processes and Procedures*). Section Six “Institutional Planning and Budgeting Processes” is based on the work of both the Budget Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee.

Overall, the process was an inclusive one, with a draft of the report made available for the AU community for review and comment at the AU Middle States website:
<http://www.american.edu/middlestates>.

Organization of the Report

The Report includes the following:

Section Two-Response to Recommendations. This section provides an update on recommendations made by the visiting team related to academic program review and assessment of student learning. In this section, we focus on progress made on implementation of AU’s learning outcomes and assessment plans, including the ways in which AU has engaged faculty participation in the process, the quality of reports, and the evidence of plan implementation. (Note: Information on institutional assessment processes can be found in Section Five). In addition, the section updates progress on recommendations contained in the *Self-Study*.

Section Three-Major Challenges and Opportunities. Much of the 2008-2009 strategic planning process focused on identifying AU’s challenges and opportunities. This section of the report highlights examples of some of the major challenges and opportunities as they relate to the *Characteristics of Excellence*. Included in this section is information about opportunities presented by AU’s new academic leadership, the strategic plan and facilities, as well as the enhanced efforts to further strengthen faculty research, scholarship, creative, and professional activity.

Section Four-Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections. Section Four demonstrates that AU is financially sound. American University’s financial plan for the two years covered by phase one of the Strategic Plan is discussed in this section. Specifics of AU’s enrollment, enrollment projections, and financial status are available in this section of the report. Several important supporting documents are included in the “Supporting Documents” section. These include audited financial statements and management letters for the last three years, the financial information submitted to IPEDS for the last three years, and the *American University Budget: Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011*, as reported to the Board of Trustees in February 2009.

Section Five-Assessment Procedures and Processes. The section describes the procedures in place for organizing institutional assessment, demonstrating the many ways that assessment occurs at AU. It highlights information from AU’s assessment plan, *Assessment Processes and Procedures*, and it reports on the ways the institution tracks progress on the Strategic Plan. While most of the information on learning outcomes assessment is reported in Section Two, this section also reports on assessment of institutional goals related to programs such as General Education. It also provides specific examples of how institutional assessment has led to improvements at the university.

Section Six-Institutional Planning and Budgeting Processes. American University's Budget process is guided by its Strategic Plan. This section highlights the budget process and planning processes, demonstrating how the two work together to ensure that AU's mission is realized. The section relies heavily on supporting documents, many of which are available via the internet. This section also includes a brief conclusion about our overall progress, in light of the expectations for the Periodic Review Report.

For more information about the report, including access to an electronic version of the report and access to the supporting documentation, please see American University's Middle States website: <http://www.american.edu/middlestates>.

SECTION TWO: SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

American University underwent its last self-study in 2003-2004. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education had just adopted new standards for accreditation, and AU was one of the first institutions to review itself under the *Characteristics of Excellence*. While it was important to address the 14 Standards, it was not the institution's only focus. The university made every effort to use the self-study process as a way to examine the extent to which its mission was being realized. The process, thus, became an extension of the university's planning process. Approximately 100 individuals from across the institution participated in the work of the Steering Committee or one of its seven task forces. Many more participated by providing suggestions, feedback, and advice. AU's report was used as an exemplar at self-study institutes because it modeled a process in which self-study was integrated into the life of the institution.

The *Self-Study* was comprehensive, with the 14 Standards covered thematically, in a way that assisted the university in shaping goals and policies. In addition, the report had a special emphasis on "engagement", which the Steering Committee saw as central to the university's mission. For purposes of the study, 'engagement' was defined as "The systematic encouragement and implementation of active, deep connections between elements of the student experience that integrate academic programs, campus life and the larger local, national, and international communities."

This section of the *Periodic Review Report* responds to both the recommendations of the visiting team as well as the recommendations made in the *Self-Study Report*.

VISITING TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned above, AU's *Self-Study* was not organized strictly by the structure of the *Characteristics*. The *Self-Study* had separate chapters for undergraduate education and for graduate education. Both chapters covered such important issues as curriculum and assessment of student learning. Both had parallel recommendations related to program review and assessment of student learning. This report groups those recommendations together:

Visiting Team Recommendation One:

That a plan be developed and implemented for the internal and external evaluation of all undergraduate and graduate programs.

While Middle States' *Characteristics* does not require program review, American University recognizes the value of this recommendation. In the past, review of programs had often led to program cuts; thus, it was important that the program review process offer an opportunity for units to assess their strengths and weaknesses in a supportive environment. Provost Bass, in announcing the first call for program review for those departments or academic units that do not undergo an accreditation review said, "It is important to see the self study as an opportunity for self reflection and candor and it certainly ought not to be viewed as a threat. The objective of program review is improvement,

striving for excellence and improved practices. The objectives are not punitive.” The program review process is seen as an opportunity for academic improvement and a chance to benchmark AU with the best institutions in the country.

About the Process

Three departments undergo program review each year, with departments cycling into program review every seven years. In academic year 2008-2009, the first round of self-study reviews took place. Three units from the College of Arts and Sciences (Department of Economics; Department of Philosophy and Religion; and Department of Language and Foreign Studies) were reviewed under the new system. The program review self-study process requires the unit to review with care the strengths of its department, as well as opportunities for improvement. After submitting a report based on a very detailed outline (see description below, the Provost can comment on the report and appoints external reviewers. A report from external reviewers then helps to inform department plans and strategic priorities.

Program Review Requirements

The specific requirements of the program review are outlined in the supporting document “American University Academic Program Review Template” (*See the Middle States website: <http://www.american.edu/middlestates>*.) While details are available by reviewing the Template, a few of the ways in which AU’s process exemplifies ‘best practices’ are highlighted here:

Learning Outcomes as a Foundation – Learning outcomes are at the very heart of the program review. Departments must list all new courses offered in the past seven years and include a list of expected learning outcomes by course. They must also indicate “how these advance the mission of the unit or the learning outcomes by majors.” They are asked to indicate the degree to which linkages are “deliberate and recognizable.” They must also attach copies of their latest program assessment plans. The process, thus, helps units to tie learning outcomes at the course level to overall unit outcomes. It holds units accountable for advancing overall student learning.

Linking Unit Mission to the University Mission – The unit must indicate how its “mission, objectives, and goals strengthen those of the university and the school or college.”

Ties to Broader Educational Offerings – Section V of the template asks units to “List departmental goals in teaching and research relative to Middle States Commission on Higher Education standards 11, 12, 13 and 14.” The report thus enables departments to demonstrate how their goals tie to General Education, experiential education, math and writing requirements, and much more.

Retention –Units report their “efforts at student retention within the unit (Refer to MSCHE, Standard 8)”.

Data Driven Analysis – Units must examine a wealth of data related to faculty size and productivity, number of students, staffing, and facilities. It must report on its graduation and placement rates and examine other outcomes measures.

In sum, American University's program review process is outcomes driven and includes standards which are closely linked with specific aspects of Middle States' *Characteristics of Excellence*. Emphasizing Middle States expectations has enabled the university to re-energize faculty around issues of importance to the broader higher education community, while at the same time localizing the process so that the result is one that helps departments become stronger and more effective. The results of two of the first rounds of reviews have been received by the Provost and plans are currently underway for determining an action plan to address the recommendations included in the report. Next year, the Government Department, the School of International Service, and a department in the College of Arts and Sciences will be reviewed.

Visiting Team Recommendation Two:

That the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team intensify its efforts to oversee the completion and implementation of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan for all undergraduate programs – including General Education as well as those accredited by external agencies. (There was a parallel recommendation for graduate programs.)

AU is pleased to report that it has a robust, successful learning outcomes and assessment process that fully meets the team's recommendation.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment at the Time of the Self-Study

At the time of the last self-study, AU had already made significant progress in implementing a learning outcomes and assessment process. As early as 2001, the university began collecting assessment plans from departments. The university placed greater emphasis on outcomes and began to think even more systematically about the unique missions of programs.

While progress had been made, the *Self-Study* pointed out that more progress was needed. The *Report* noted that "programs are in different stages of implementation of their assessment plans." Structurally, AU had a new Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team and the Office of Institutional Research had been renamed the "Office of Institutional Research and Assessment." However, the structures were relatively new, and those involved in the process recognized the need for more work to be done in instilling a culture of assessment.

Progress

AU is now at a more advanced stage in its assessment process. While we respect the wording of the recommendation, we have learned that there is no such thing as a "complete" or "implemented" plan. Assessment is a continuous process. This means that plans will grow and change as programs change, and as results lead faculty to explore aspects of their curriculum that they hadn't anticipated. In the last five years, our intensified efforts have led to the following important outcomes (described in greater detail below):

- 1) Faculty have a better understanding of how to assess, and the process is valued.
- 2) Programs have better, more meaningful assessment plans. Existing plans have been re-written to be more effective and do-able, and programs that did not have plans now have ones.
- 3) Expected learning outcomes are communicated and shared across the institution.

**Examples of Workshops
Held for Faculty Since 2004:**

- *“Getting Started”:
Examples of What Works
from Three Departments*
- *Assessing the Internship
Experience*
- *Using Graduate
Comprehensives to Assess
Learning Outcomes*
- *Using Portfolios to Assess
Learning Outcomes*
- *Learning Outcomes in
Syllabi*
- *Using Rubrics*
- *Assessment Clear and
Simple*
- *Using NSSE to Better
Understand your Program*

4) The processes for reviewing plans, and the roles played by various stakeholders on campus, are more clearly defined.

5) Programs have made important progress on implementation of their plans. As a result, there is clear evidence of curriculum improvement and program effectiveness.

Faculty Understanding

Early in the process, the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team focused on educating itself on best practices in assessment of student learning. It created faculty-designed training materials, such as a document called “Getting Started,” that explained the value of articulating learning outcomes and how to develop goals and measures. It also provided a template for faculty to use, with examples of problematic, then improved, assessment plans. The team incorporated information sharing sessions into their meetings. These sessions included one on the senior survey administered by the School of Communication, a session on emerging issues in information literacy and assessment by a university librarian, and the use of electronic portfolios by the School of Communication and the School of Education, Teaching and Health.

One key to AU’s success in gaining faculty understanding and buy-in has been the commitment to provide faculty with the training and resources necessary to be successful. The Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team, often in conjunction with the Center for Teaching Excellence, provides workshops to faculty and offers sessions on assessment as part of the annual Ann Ferren Teaching Conference. Sessions on assessment are now a regular part of training for faculty who teach on-line learning courses. Resources are sometimes provided to enable faculty to attend assessment workshops delivered outside the university. For example, a team was sent to the Maryland Assessment Conference and a library representative attended a library assessment conference in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The commitment to training is exemplified by Provost Bass. As one of the first acts in his new position, Dr. Bass sponsored a two-day visit by Barbara Walvoord, Professor Emerita at the University of Notre Dame, and author of *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*. Dr. Walvoord met with over 100 faculty from almost every department on campus, including representatives from the General Education Program. Dr. Walvoord re-energized AU’s efforts and provided faculty with practical ideas for improving their assessment processes.

Other resources are available as well. The university’s assessment website (<http://www.american.edu/assessment>) has been improved to offer departments access to a wide

range of materials, including examples of assessment at other institutions, a bibliography of resources available in the library, and links to on-line materials. All interested faculty were provided free copies of Dr. Walvoord's book and other books (including the Middle States publication, *Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources*). A newsletter provides up-to-date information on the latest opportunities and resources available, as well as information on best practices within the institution.

High Quality Plans

Over the past five years, AU assessment plans have improved considerably. At the time of the *Self-Study Report*, the quality of the reports were uneven and most graduate programs still needed to articulate learning outcomes. Assessment plans tended to be overly ambitious and assessment methods were in need of improvement. Some plans included course grades and many relied too heavily on indirect methods of assessment.

Now, assessment plans have been developed. They include clear, concise learning outcomes and each learning outcome has a method of assessment. Most important, the plans now focus on using direct measures of student learning. Progress is particularly notable in units that are accredited by external agencies.

The biggest accomplishment may be in the sustainability of assessment plans. Like other institutions, AU's early assessment plans were overly complex, making it difficult for faculty members to complete a full cycle of assessment. Departments tended to get bogged down in the work involved in actually implementing plans. Faculty learned very quickly that an elaborate plan is less valuable than a workable plan. AU has spent a considerable amount of energy refining our assessment processes so that plans are now much more 'do-able' and the process is much more sustainable.

Communication of Expectations

AU now posts learning outcomes for programs on the university website so that students, faculty, and even those outside the institution can view the university's student learning expectations. (See <http://www.american.edu/provost/assessment>). This has helped to make the expected learning outcomes transparent to students and has assisted faculty, since they now have ready access to each other's assessment plans and can better network with departments using similar assessment methods. Prospective students with questions about the advantages of attending AU can be directed to the site in order to get a better understanding of the expected outcomes of AU programs. The progress on each plan's implementation is also available on line, in a password protected environment, so that deans have ready access to the status of assessment progress and so that the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team can more easily share assessment results when appropriate.

At the course level, the importance of understanding learning expectations is now reinforced by the adoption of a new course evaluation survey that specifically asks students if: 1) the learning outcomes of the course were clear; 2) the activities/assignments required for the class contributed to meeting the learning objectives; and 3) the materials required for the course contributed to meeting

General Education:

The General Education Program has funding to review one major area of its curriculum each year. Faculty within – and outside – of the area of study review samples of student work using a rubric that enables them to assess whether learning outcomes are being met. See AU's assessment website for details

the learning objectives. As the data below demonstrate, most students report that they do understand the learning outcomes associated with their courses.

UNDERSTANDING LEARNING OUTCOMES [Fall 2008]

Course Evaluation Question:	% answered 'always' or almost always *
The learning outcomes of the course were clear	86.5%
The activities/assignments required for the class contributed to meeting the learning objectives	86.9%
The materials required for the course contributed to meeting the learning objectives.	82.4%

**At least a 5 on a 7-point scale*

Improved Assessment Processes

American University has developed a written assessment plan that now spells out clear processes for advancing learning outcomes and assessment. A few important advances to our processes are worthy of note:

- 1) Senate Committee on Learning Assessment – For the past six years, AU has had a Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team. The work of the Team has played a critical role in advancing assessment and institutional improvement. It now includes a number of seasoned individuals who are leaders on campus on issues related to assessment. It is a far more effective body as a result of its advanced level of expertise. This May, with the support of the Provost, the team was converted into a Faculty Senate committee. This enables it to more fully integrate assessment into the governance of the institution. The fact that the Faculty Senate voted unanimously to create the committee speaks volumes for the commitment that the faculty have for the importance of learning assessment.

- 2) Administrative Support – The new provost has expressed unqualified support for assessment, and has given the deans responsibility for ensuring that learning outcomes and assessment are advanced in their units. In a message to faculty on the assessment website, Provost Bass states, “As provost, I appreciate faculty and students who strive to meet high academic standards. Assessment, and the invaluable feedback it provides, informs us of areas in need of improvement thereby strengthening our curricula. To that end, the Office of the Provost will make every effort to support faculty as they assess courses and programs and implement strategies toward curricular enhancement.”

- 3) Staff Support – An important factor in AU’s progress has been the establishment of more staff/faculty support. In 2005, the chair of the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team had a course release, which enabled her to devote time to faculty needing assistance with assessment. In 2008, support was changed so that the chair of the Team would be given a part-time graduate assistant. The assistant works directly with the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment to help with the collection and analysis of plan status, the assessment website, the logistics related to workshops and meetings, and much more. By having a graduate assistant, team members and the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment are better able to focus attention on faculty development and plan improvement.

Another significant addition to the staff was the creation of a temporary full-time faculty position devoted half-time to teaching in the School of Education and half-time on learning outcomes and assessment. The faculty member devotes time to working one-on-one with faculty on implementation of assessment plans. This individual, in conjunction with other members of the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Team, has met with close to 100 faculty over the course of the 2008-2009 academic year. This personal attention has, in many ways, been a key factor in the university's success. By being able to work closely with each unit, the momentum generated by Barbara Walvoord's visit has been sustained and significant progress has been made. The Faculty Assessment Coordinator will continue her work in 2009-2010.

- 4) Regular reporting – At the time of the last *Self-Study*, AU did not have a regular reporting method so that units could provide an update on their progress. In 2005, the Team created a template for reporting progress. Summaries were reported using this template in 2005 and 2006. While this template was useful in helping units shape their assessment updates, many of the assessment plans are now at an advanced stage and units prefer to simply submit an updated assessment plan. All departments must provide some form of update annually on October 1st and the new Senate Assessment Committee will be providing the Senate an overall status report each December.

Evidence of Meaningful Success: Using Results to Drive Changes in the Curriculum

There is substantial evidence that AU has a well-developed assessment program. The process of plan implementation is widespread and academic departments have used assessment results to improve their programs. A review of a sample of 50 plans found the following changes as a result of assessment:

- 22 programs added new courses to their curriculum;
- 3 changed course sequences;
- 27 changed course content;
- 15 changed faculty hiring practices or teaching assignments; and
- 15 listed miscellaneous other changes.

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment uses a rubric to track each program's progress in implementing an effective assessment strategy. It monitors 12 "best practices" in learning outcomes and assessment such as whether a program has effective learning outcomes, whether it uses direct measures of assessment, the degree to which the plan is sustainable, and evidence of the use of assessment to improve programs. With the possibility of a perfect score of 36, a recent review of submitted plans found that the median score was 27. By comparison, the median score was 21 just a year ago, when the rubric was first developed. 28% of this year's submitted plans scored at least 30 out of 36. In reviewing the results, it was clear that improvement happened across the board, with most units making significant progress. Approximately 89% of submitted plans demonstrated that the program had completed some form of assessment and more than half of all submitted plans indicated that the program had assessed more than one learning outcome. Almost 98% of those who had assessed learning outcomes had used the results to make changes to their program, or had specific plans in place to implement change.

EXAMPLES OF LEARNING OUTCOMES RESULTS

SIS: U.S. Foreign Policy, MA International Affairs: *Learning Outcome: Students will be able to exhibit knowledge of the historical evolution of U.S. Foreign Policy since 1789.* Based on a review of student research papers and capstone coursework, assessment revealed that students would benefit from more opportunities to learn about the historical foundations of U.S. policy. In AY 2008-09 a requirement was added in Diplomatic History. The program plans to re-evaluate student work in AY 2009-10.

SPA: Public Administration MPA: *Learning Outcome: Students will be able to manage public service organizations and/or organizations related to the public sector, e.g. nonprofit agencies.* Performance in the capstone course revealed that students needed to be better prepared in the knowledge and understanding of the public sector and related organizations. A new, required core course was added: ***The Individual and the Organization***, designed to convey knowledge of organizations and human capital management in organizations. This outcome will be reviewed again in AY 2009-10.

CAS: Psychology BA: *Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate competency of the basic foundations of the field, e.g., concepts, principles, theories and research findings.* Based on the results of the competency exam, the program has added a new course requirement to focus specifically on experimental research and design. It will be re-evaluated in the spring of 2010.

SOC: Public Communications BA: *Learning Outcome: Students will be able to write clearly, concisely and strategically in a range of formats and media.* A Writing Programs Survey conducted in 2006 indicated that Public Communication Students felt that they needed more specific instruction on public relations writing rather than on journalism. The writing course was changed to ensure greater exposure to public relations vehicles. This will be reviewed as part of the newly developed portfolio system.

KSB: BS in Business Administration: *Learning Outcome: Students will develop an understanding of how goods and services are produced and marketed.* Based on the results of the ETS subject exam given to graduating students in spring 2008, required course ITEC-355, Production and Operations Management, was revised to include greater emphasis on project management and forecasting. In order to fit this material into the course, less emphasis was placed on linear programming. The next assessment of this learning outcome will be done in AY2010-2011.

Development of an Assessment Culture

As this report demonstrates, assessment of student learning has become ingrained in AU's processes over the past five years. It is emphasized by the provost, a part of course evaluations, regularly discussed in Faculty Senate meetings, integrated into the Faculty Senate structure, highlighted as a necessary component of budget submissions, and integrated into Program Review. As a faculty member from the Art History Program said, "Our understanding of the assessment process has changed dramatically ... We have moved to a system that evaluates all of the major building blocks of the program."

Going forward, AU sees opportunities to integrate the culture of assessment even further into the life of the institution. Plans are underway to expand the process to more fully include academic counselors, admissions personnel, and Campus Life into the process. There may be opportunities to more fully integrate assessment into annual reports, budget requests, faculty workload, and the work of the Faculty Senate. AU has the momentum necessary to make further progress possible.

SELF-STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2003-2004, the self-study process provided the campus with an invaluable opportunity to look at our successes and challenges in a holistic manner. The Self-Study Steering Committee made 16 recommendations which were subsequently tracked by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. In looking back, the Committee agreed that the recommendations fell into specific themes. It agreed that it would be beneficial to review our progress based on the themes, rather than specific recommendations.

In addition to the recommendations related to assessment, which are addressed elsewhere, the Committee reviewed progress on the following themes: Communication, Resources (both space and financial resources), Academic Programs/Faculty, and Engagement. These themes are addressed throughout this *Periodic Review Report*, however a summary of accomplishments related to these themes deserve mention here:

Communication

Section Three of this report highlights the tremendous improvement in communication that has occurred in the past year. At the time of the *Self-Study*, one of the main concerns about communication had to do with the communication related to the Strategic Plan. Chapter Two of the *Self-Study* specifically recommended, for example, that AU “develop a more formal and regular process to communicate the status of the 15-point plan [AU’s former strategic plan]”. AU’s new Strategic Plan website, combined with the regular progress reports provided by the president, demonstrate the fulfillment of this recommendation. News about progress on the plan, and other important developments, are available at: <http://www.american.edu/president/Presidents-Announcements.cfm> and the Strategic Plan website includes information on the metrics and is located at: <http://www.american.edu/strategicplan>. Additional information about the improvements to communication as they relate to the budget are detailed in Section Six of this report.

Resources

In reviewing the 2003-2004 *Self-Study*, one issue that transcended any particular chapter was AU’s need to make effective use of its resources - both facilities and financial resources – in its effort to advance the mission of the institution. The original report focused on the need for better library space and programmatic space for students. It recognized the importance of investing resources into the library and into graduate financial aid so that the institution could more effectively meet the needs of its students.

At the time of the last self-study, space and facility issues were highlighted in a number of different places in the report. As the *Self-Study* noted, “American University’s facilities are not generous, having only two-thirds as many square feet per full-time equivalent student as peer institutions.” AU is located in an area where zoning issues are a challenge, and expansion to meet the growing needs of our students requires creative, thoughtful planning.

As Section Three highlights, AU has made significant improvements to its facilities by adding or renovating a number of major buildings on its campus. The *Self-Study* included two specific recommendations related to the library and Campus Life facilities.

Library Facilities

Much progress has been made on the *Self-Study* recommendation to “update and expand library facilities.” In 2008 the library received \$750,000 to perform needed facility upgrades. Among the improvements to be completed by summer 2009 are: New front entrance for library (completed summer 2008), modernization of library teaching space (completed summer 2008), replacement of all public computer workstation chairs (summer 2008), refurbishment of the lower level study lounge space (summer 2008) and complete renovation and modernization of first floor public use area, resulting in a 50% increase in public seating and computer workstations (planned summer 2009). To alleviate significant space problems for print collections the entire bound journal collections (100,000 volumes) was moved offsite. (The volumes are available electronically and can still be requested by patrons, if needed.) This provides space for growth in the print book collections for the next ten years. Significant refreshment of all computer technology was completed in 2008.

Student Space

The recommendation of the *Self-Study* was that, “[AU should] address the space and facilities issues that confine programmatic development and undermine a high quality experience for students.” In particular, there was a sense that improvements were needed to the Kay Spiritual Life Center, the University Center, and the Student Health Center. Since 2004, all three facilities mentioned in the recommendation have been renovated.

The Kay Spiritual Life Center underwent a partial renovation of its lower level over the 2008-2009 winter break. In addition to creating new office space for a student group, the project included new lighting, rugs and furnishings to the lower level of the building. The lounge area is now far more welcoming to the many students who come to pray, meditate, meet, study, eat and socialize.

The University Center’s first floor was renovated in summer 2007. It is designed to create more space in the main lounges for students to gather and study in small and large groups. A critical element of the renovation was the transformation of the “Tavern” from a food court into a multipurpose area. During the day, the large room has dozens of tables where students can dine or study. The tables are collapsible, enabling the University Center staff to clear the area at night so that it can host events such as music groups or other entertainment. A large projection TV was installed for community viewings (such as Election Night or AU’s recent NCAA Basketball tournament game, both of which filled the Tavern to capacity.) Other important improvements include the addition of a new, expanded information desk, flat screen televisions that provide opportunities to flash notices of upcoming events on campus, and a newly designed dining area that has helped facilitate the flow of traffic, making eateries more accessible.

In summer 2005, AU moved its Student Health Center from cramped quarters in Nebraska Hall to a more spacious and convenient setting in McCabe Hall. The new Center has 6,400 square feet of space, making it more than three times larger than its previous location. The waiting room is more

private and the new exam rooms offer modern features. As a result of the renovations, the Health Center is now able to accommodate more students.

Graduate Financial Aid

Since 2004, much progress has been made on a recommendation pertaining to graduate financial aid. The *Self-Study* recommended that “The university needs to re-examine the ways in which graduate financial aid is both budgeted and administered to determine whether current practices are effective in achieving the quality goals that have been set for graduate students...” In 2005-2006, the financial aid award process was reviewed. Changes were made to the work requirement, more emphasis was put on merit, and the deans were given more flexibility to manage their funds. As a result, deans are able to offer more attractive packages to graduate students.

Library Resources

The budget for library acquisitions has steadily increased since 2007, with \$400,000 added to the library’s base budget in 2008/2009 budget cycle and an additional \$700,000 added to base in the 2010/2011 budget cycle. This represents an additional \$1million dollars directed to library collection acquisitions in a four year period.

Academic Programs/Faculty

American University has strong academic programs and a dedicated faculty. The visiting team stated that “The undergraduate curriculum is... relevant and serves the mission and goals of the University, particularly from the perspective of excellence, global focus, and a commitment to service.” It noted that the curriculum’s concern for ethics was a strength, as well as the fact that it had been evaluated internally for overall effectiveness. The *Self-Study* recognized the strength of undergraduate academics, but was interested in what would happen with General Education and a new program that was slated to begin, the University College. In particular, it made recommendations to “affirm and enhance the centrality of the General Education Program,” taking care not to grow university-wide requirements in a way that would affect student’s abilities to double major. It also recommended that AU “Implement an innovative University College that draws together the disparate elements of living and learning without compromising the fundamental quality or features of the existing undergraduate curriculum.”

General Education Program

The General Education Program continues to play a vital role in the life of the university. Requirements that were being considered at the time of the *Self-Study*, such as a language requirement, were evaluated and determined to be inappropriate for the university at this time. The General Education program has been enhanced with expanded opportunities. It has contributed to the recruitment and conversion of students and has facilitated the success of the University College. In the past year alone, General Education has:

- Developed and launched a new program of first-year Learning Communities;

- Re-invigorated the General Education “wild card” course submission process, making it easier for new, one-time courses to be included as options for students as a way to fulfill requirements;
- Updated and revised the learning outcomes and goals for the program; and
- Coordinated and overseen the successful launch of an undergraduate research grant competition.

Although the program has had significant success, it has been 10 years since it has undergone significant review. The program is slated for a thorough examination, with a complete review expected in 2009-2010. The review, which will be directed by the new vice provost for undergraduate affairs, offers the university a significant opportunity to find ways to further instill the values of the institution, as well as the specific learning objectives of the program.

University College

American University’s University College (UC) program was just being implemented at the time of the *Self-Study*. The program, now in its fifth year, offers first-year students a unique opportunity to combine challenging class work in a residential setting. It also includes learning activities that make use of all that Washington, DC has to offer. This year, there were 12 UC seminars, taught by some of the finest faculty at the University. AU received grants to assess the program’s impact on students academic and social life and found that students are more satisfied with their academic program, more likely to be successful academically, and more likely to be retained. In addition, the program has a positive impact on student’s mental health and appears to play a role in helping students make responsible choices related to their social behavior. Approximately 8 in 10 students say that the program was successful in integrating academic, social and residential experiences.

Doctoral Programs

At the time of the *Self-Study*, American University had just completed an extensive review of all graduate programs that resulted in the elimination of some master’s and doctoral programs. The *Self-Study* recommended that the institution conduct a “serious and open discussion of what it means to be a ‘truly prestigious national program’ in each doctoral field...” As a result, there is a specific clause in the Strategic Plan inviting units to propose new PhD programming for the first time since the graduate review of 1999-2000. As part of that proposal process, specific measures of excellence will be articulated.

Faculty

American University’s *Self-Study* recommended that AU reduce its teaching load for tenure and tenure-track faculty and, in fact, instructional workload has decreased. While the *Faculty Manual* identifies 18 hours per year for instruction, now approximately 72% of tenure and tenure-track faculty teach four courses or fewer. The issue of faculty workload, more broadly, is an important area that the provost and Faculty Senate plan to review in the upcoming year. In spring 2009, as part of the provost’s first Faculty Summit, faculty from across the university met to discuss issues such as the elements and individual variability of assignments in articulating full-time workload. The provost is hosting an off-campus two-day retreat for faculty in October that will explore many of the faculty issues and concerns mentioned in the *Self-Study*, including ways that the university can better support faculty as they engage in the life of the institution.

Engagement

American University's mission emphasizes "Ideas into Action, Action into Service." As the *Self-Study* states, "At American University, engagement is not merely a catchphrase; it is a spirit that permeates the total campus environment." The emphasis on engagement was an important component of assessing AU's strength, even if 'engagement' is not explicitly a part of the *Characteristics of Excellence*. The *Self-Study* recommended that AU "plan for assessing engagement initiatives and related outcomes in assessment plans and regular planning processes and incorporate such regularized findings in all decision making and planning processes." It also suggested that AU "recognize and include engagement success indicators explicitly in performance management evaluations and faculty merit processes."

The recommendations of the *Self-Study* have been integrated into AU's Strategic Plan. Several of the plan's 10 Transformational Goals deal specifically with engagement. Goal Seven states: "Act on Our Values through Social Responsibility and Service." It calls for annually benchmarking and measuring service activities by faculty, staff, students and alumni. It also calls for tracking alternative break programs and student participation in government service organizations.

The plan also has a heavy emphasis on academic engagement. In the coming years, AU intends to: 1) ensure engagement in extracurricular activities and access to Washington culture and social resources; 2) increase high-quality internship placements; 3) increase the number of courses offering service learning options; and 4) support action research, community-based studies, and innovative offerings in undergraduate courses.

International engagement was also identified in the *Self-Study* recommendations. It was believed that AU should, "Strengthen even more the university campus connections to the global through increased international research, study and internship opportunities and increased, innovative concomitant language study opportunities."

While international engagement is an important part of the new Strategic Plan, much progress has been made on this recommendation. More than 55% of undergraduates study abroad and AU is in the top ten ranking in the *Open Doors* report for experiences abroad. At least 60 faculty members did work abroad in 2008-2009. There are now 10 significant dual degree partnerships with international institutions. In the coming years, the goal will be to increase international enrollments, encourage faculty exchanges, and increase program offerings for alternative spring breaks.

As Section Three of the *Periodic Review Report* points out, finding ways to measure progress on engagement remains difficult. So, while the Plan calls for tracking the service activities of faculty, students, staff and alumni, the process for gathering the information is still being developed.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the progress that AU has made in addressing the recommendations made by the visiting team and within the *Self-Study* has been satisfying. The *Self-Study* enabled the university to focus its attention on areas in need of improvement. In addition, it served as an important resource for those who developed the new Strategic Plan. As this section demonstrates, the *Self-Study* is now integrated into the formal goals and objectives of the institution.

SECTION THREE: MAJOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

American University is an institution that has made tremendous progress in addressing challenges and identifying opportunities. This section of the report has as its foundation the work of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC), which began its planning efforts with an extensive SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis in summer 2008. At that time, some challenges (such as governance) had already been addressed and other issues, such as the opportunities and challenges related to becoming a more research-intensive institution, had yet to be fully explored. The Periodic Review Coordinating Committee reviewed the work of the Strategic Planning Committee as well as more recent developments. It found that American University is at an important juncture, and that it is a strong institution poised to be even stronger. This section of the report highlights examples of some of the major challenges and opportunities as they relate to the *Characteristics of Excellence*. The examples below are meant to be illustrative, rather than exhaustive. They link AU's vision for the next five years to the ways this vision will effect its realization of Middle States expectations.

BACKGROUND

The list of “opportunities and challenges” provided here was created as part of a much wider process conducted by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Periodic Review Coordinating Committee. Both committees had a wide range of information available for review. This included data and information about the institution itself, as well as information about its competitors and the wider higher education environment. Internally generated information included demographics (student majors, diversity, international student status, and gender), retention and graduation rates, quality indicators, faculty composition, finances and more. In addition, a wide range of survey information was used. External benchmark data were also available, such as comparison results for the National Survey of Student Engagement, enrollment from the federal reporting system (IPEDS), the Open Doors report on internationalism, the National Science Foundation, *US News* ranking information, reports known as the Common Data Set, and much more. On July 8, 2008, the SPSC posted *Environmental Analysis*, which highlighted a list of their overall findings. (See https://www.american.edu/strategicplan/pdf/docs/July_2008_Env_Scan.pdf) The examples below follow directly from all of these processes.

FINDINGS: AMERICAN UNIVERSITY TODAY

In the area of challenges, AU continues to be a tuition dependent institution that would benefit from diversifying its revenue base. It must develop a new Master Facilities Plan that meets the growing needs of the institution, and it must make progress on advancing research and scholarship.

The institution is also poised to take advantage of opportunities. It is positioned to make progress on advancing its commitment to social responsibility and engagement, it has a new strategic plan that guides the institution, it has new academic leadership that can help implement the plan, it has tools in place to help it advance its identity and image, and it has a solid record of providing an excellent student experience.

CHALLENGES

Diversifying Revenue (Standard 3: Institutional Resources)

At the time of the *Self-Study*, AU expressed concern about being a tuition dependent institution. This continues to be a concern. However, in this current economic climate, being tuition dependent has proven fortuitous as AU's enrollment enabled it to be in a growth mode while numerous peers have frozen positions, instituted furloughs, limited construction, or reduced faculty or staff positions. As Section Four of the report points out, over 94% of the university's budget has traditionally come from student fees. Throughout the Strategic Plan are goals related to the generation of new revenue sources. The first Enabling Goal of the Strategic Plan states:

It is clear that the next decade will bring profound changes to the financial markets, which have driven our growth in the past. Recognizing and responding to these changes proactively, we will rely less on tuition and more on entrepreneurial ventures to develop new models for revenue generation and maintain our financial stability for the future.

To that end, the university is focused on increasing the endowment, philanthropy for current use and sponsored activity. The university's *AnewAU* comprehensive campaign has raised \$183 million of its \$200 million goal (as of 5/29/2009). The new vice president for development and alumni relations, Dr. Thomas J. Minar, has helped to focus the institution on reconnecting with alumni and assuring the presence of alumni activity and engagement throughout the strategic plan. AU's goal is to increase the number of US alumni chapters from 12 to 20 and to increase the number of international chapters from seven to 10. The number of alumni participating in events and connecting with the institution is also targeted for increase. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of alumni donors, and that measure increased in the 2009 fiscal year by 3% -- the first increase in that number since 2005.

The university also focused on increasing sponsored activity. In the last year, AU had 220 proposals submitted by faculty, 110 faculty held active awards, and the dollar volume of awards received was \$20.7 million. Increasing the level of sponsored activity is one of the top priorities of the provost and he is reorganizing Academic Affairs (see p. 28) in order to focus the institution on this important goal.

Facilities (Standard 3: Institutional Resources)

As AU moves forward in the next few years, the challenge will be to develop a new Master Facilities Plan (due in 2011) that will help AU meet its goals, while at the same time earning the understanding of the surrounding community and the approval of the DC government. While Section Two discusses some of the many improvements that have happened on campus, there are still facilities in need of improvement and AU lags behind its competitors in providing students with the social and recreational space that they would like. The Strategic Plan has a specific goal that calls for the new master plan to link with the Strategic Plan's goals. A committee has already been established to begin work on the plan.

Despite the challenge of creating the new master plan, much progress has been made on improving and adding to AU's facilities. In October 2005 American University opened the Katzen Arts Center. The center brings all the visual and performing arts programs at AU into one building. It provides both instructional and performance space, and fosters opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration. In addition, the center features an art museum that has already hosted a number of exciting exhibitions, including work from the collection of Cyrus and Myrtle Katzen.

More recently, AU opened a 20,000 square foot addition to the Kogod School of Business. It also made renovations to Nebraska Hall, Centennial Hall, upgraded the entrance to the Mary Graydon Center, installed new turf on Jacobs Field, upgraded the Sports Center Annex, renovated the Welcome Center, and remodeled the Washington College of Law. The new and improved spaces foster engagement and improve the overall student experience.

The biggest project under construction is the new School of International Service building, scheduled to open in spring 2010. The new 70,000 square foot building will be LEED certified. It will provide space that reflects the school's commitment to teaching, research and service, by creating instructional and public meeting areas that enhance opportunities for dialogue and scholarship.

Overall, the new space is in keeping with AU's strategic goals. The changes enhance the student experience, facilitate cross-collaboration and engagement, and provide an opportunity for AU to demonstrate its commitment to the environment.

Research and Scholarship (Standard 10: Faculty and Standard 11: Educational Offerings)

American University is currently listed as a "Doctoral-Research" institution in Carnegie's classification of universities. This designation is below AU's own expectation of itself. The new Strategic Plan strives to change this, with specific objectives designed to:

- strengthen faculty scholarship, professional and creative activity;
- improve the ability of faculty to balance elements of the scholar-teacher model effectively;
- enhance professional and experiential education; and
- elevate the research, professional, and artistic profile of the university.

AU has the capacity to meet these objectives, but it will be challenging. In the coming years the university must more clearly define expectations for scholarship, it must re-examine the expectations for faculty work load, and it must explore opportunities to create doctoral programs that can help advance high quality scholarship and research. In addition, it must find ways to more fully engage with external research and partner with professional organizations that may be able to help support the work of the institution.

AU is poised to meet this challenge through the work on the Strategic Plan, the establishment of a new vice provost for graduate studies and research, the expansion of the role of the Center for Teaching Excellence (with a new director), a plan by the Faculty Senate to revise the *Faculty Manual*, the establishment of new Centers and Institutes, strategic partnerships with pinnacle organizations, seed funding available from college units, clarity of research expectations for newly hired faculty, and

selected new hirings at the full professor rank. The new faculty administrative hires are seasoned individuals of exceptional quality and AU faculty are already leaders in their field.

OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic Vision (Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation and Institutional Renewal)

The university is proud of the success it has had in crafting a Strategic Plan that sets such ambitious, and appropriate, goals for the institution. The Plan is described in great detail in Section Six of this report, and the participatory nature of the development of the report is discussed elsewhere in this section. The Plan, in fact, is mentioned throughout this report precisely because it is so central to the life of the university. The standards that the university has set for itself, and the improvements that are likely to result as the plan is implemented, may be the ultimate definition of “opportunities and challenges” for AU in the years ahead.

Transformational Academic Opportunities

American University has a tradition of academic excellence. It offers high quality academic programs taught by faculty who are leaders in their field and it is an institution that is continually improving. American University is in the process of transforming its educational programs by making significant changes that are likely to improve the stature of the institution, offering faculty and students opportunities that were not possible in the past. While a complete discussion of all changes would not be possible here, examples of the transformation include:

New Partnerships

The new Strategic Plan has an Enabling Goal that states: “Our location in the nation’s capital places the university in a powerful position to pursue and strengthen partnerships that elevate our profile and foster collaborations. We will leverage this location by engaging government, business, community, and cultural organizations in partnerships that draw resources to the university and bring the university to the nation and the world.” Already, this goal is being realized and it is clear that the partnerships that AU has established will significantly improve the academic experience. To date, partnerships with the National Archives and Records Administration, the Smithsonian Institute Museum of African-American History and Culture, the National Museum for Women in the Arts, the Newseum, and Frontline have been established or are in the process of being finalized. Partnerships with other Smithsonian Institute museums and NASA Goddard are being cultivated.

An example of the type of impact partnerships can have on the university is the work that AU is doing with the National Archives. In January the National Archives and Records Administration signed a five-year agreement to cooperate on teaching and research projects, internships, field studies, exhibitions, and much more. The agreement will enable AU to develop meaningful internships, and faculty will be able to collaborate with archives staff on teaching and research projects. Incentives will be created to encourage use of the archive research holdings and public programs will be sponsored together.

New Centers

In order to enhance the interdisciplinary nature of the university, the Strategic Plan calls for the development of new centers that will enable AU to engage in the “great ideas and issues of our time.” Already, the university has put out a call for proposals and it has decided to establish a center for Latin American and Latino Studies. The new center will reach across the colleges and schools; it focuses on topics in which AU currently has research capability, with nearly 70 faculty with expertise in Latin America, Latino Studies or both. A new tenure-track line to serve as the inaugural director of a new *Center on Latin American and Latino Studies* has been established and a search for this position will begin immediately. Within five years, it is also expected that it will be well funded in terms of external support and it will be among the most prominent centers on this topic in the United States. Other possible areas that were proposed by faculty that will be considered for future support include the Center for Diplomatic Oral History, the Election Fellowship Institute, the Institute for the Study of International Security, the Center for Political Communication and Leadership, the Center for Community Voice, and a Center for Equity & Access Through Education.

New Faculty

Over the last five years, AU has increased the number of faculty lines significantly. This new 2-year budget cycle alone, the budget adds 23 tenure and tenure-track lines, with the option of converting up to 12 temporary positions to permanent tenure-track lines. Included in the hiring are senior level faculty, including a new chair of the Department of Physics and a new chair of the Department of Sociology. Three of the 23 new lines are endowed lines that will necessitate fundraising by the Office of the President and Office of Development.

Unsurpassed Undergraduate and Graduate Experience (Standard 11: Educational Offerings)

Student Quality

At the undergraduate level, the quality of the incoming student class continues to be high. The first year students who deposited for fall 2009 have a GPA/SAT profile of 3.77/1268, which represents a seven-point increase in the SAT average from last year. There is a 43 percent increase in the number of high-achieving, low-income students eligible for Pell grants. The gain for Pell-eligible African Americans is 145 percent (27 students compared with 11 in 2008) and for Pell-eligible Latinos is 30 percent (17, compared with 13 in 2008). Overall, AU realized an 11.3 percent increase in the total number of deposits from minority students. The number and percentage of first generation college students also went up. These outcomes offer all students at AU the opportunity to be enriched by a diverse and academically rigorous student body.

Success did not happen accidentally. The size, quality and diversity of the incoming class are based on goals articulated within an enrollment plan, and carried out through an Undergraduate Marketing and Enrollment Task Force.

Student Outcomes

Evidence continues to suggest that AU's students combine the best in academic success, campus involvement, and service to the community. Just this spring, AU senior Carrie Johnson was one of 20 college students named to the *USA Today's* Academic All Star Team. Since coming to American University, she has been named a 2008 Morris K. Udall Scholar, a 2009 South Dakota Senate Fellow, and a Truman Scholarship Finalist, among other honors. Ms. Johnson's accomplishments are impressive, but honors are not atypical for AU students. In 2008, more than 60 AU undergraduate and graduate students won recognition as national scholarship finalists or recipients. The Office of Merit Awards' Early Identification Program prepares eligible students to compete for the most prestigious awards in the country.

AU offers students tremendous opportunities to succeed. Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement demonstrate that AU offers an academically challenging environment, enriching educational experiences, and opportunities for meaningful faculty-student interaction. AU undergraduates are much more likely than their peers to ask questions in class, write papers of 20 pages or more and meet with faculty outside of class. In spring 2008, nine out of 10 graduating masters' students said that AU prepared them well with substantive knowledge in their field.

Program Rankings

American University's programs are recognized as among the best in the country by external rankings. The *Princeton Review* rated AU a great school for journalism majors, *Business Week* placed the Kogod School of Business at #28 for undergraduate business schools, and the College of Arts and Sciences has earned national rankings in fields such as creative writing, history, and theatre. The School of International Service is ranked #8 for policy careers, Washington College of Law is in the top 50 laws schools in the country, and the School of Public Affairs' Public Management/ Administration Program is ranked #8. In May, the School of Communication's undergraduate and graduate programs were found to be in compliance with all nine of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's standards. In 2009, AU was ranked #1 for most politically active students.

While rankings are not indicators of quality in themselves, the widespread recognition that AU receives demonstrates that the university consistently places among the top universities in the country. Such standings make it possible to compete for high quality students, faculty, and staff. A complete list of rankings is available at <http://www.american.edu/discoverau/rankings.cfm>.

Athletics

American University's athletic accomplishments are also worthy of note. This March, AU's Men's Basketball team returned to the NCAA Basketball tournament for the second year in a row. The opportunity to compete in the tournament was a source of pride for the AU community, and enabled the university to tout the incredible scholastic achievements of its athletes, and students in general. While the basketball team may have received the most press, they are not the only success. This fall, the field hockey team hosted and won the Patriot League tournament. The volleyball team, soccer teams, and cross country teams were also very successful this past fall. This spring two students became AU's seventh and eighth wrestling All Americans.

Communication and Process (Standard 4: Leadership and Governance, and Standard 6: Integrity)

One of the most significant developments in the past five years may be the improvements that have been made to American University's communication processes, and the participatory nature in which decisions are made at the university. Communication across units and between divisions has improved dramatically since 2005, and has led to tremendous opportunities for improvements to the institution.

As mentioned in the Executive Summary, the university underwent a transition in 2005, when President Benjamin Ladner was removed from office. At that time, the Board of Trustees began a thorough review of its own performance and fiduciary responsibilities, and reviewed procedures in place to communicate with the university community. In the months that followed, the Board re-committed itself to opening the channels of communication and the new president, Dr. Kerwin, implemented processes that ensure greater faculty, staff and student participation in decision making.

Nowhere is this level of participation more evident than in the Strategic Planning process. The Strategic Planning Committee included representatives from across the institution, including student representation. The committee conducted six town hall forums and recordings of the sessions, as well as summary notes, were available on the university website for those who were not able to attend. The committee encouraged feedback in other formats such as emails or anonymous postings on the Strategic Plan website. Communication has continued after the finalization of the plan. Members of the university community have had opportunities to comment on the tracking mechanisms used to note progress on the plan, and the university receives regular updates on the plan's status.

Communication between the administration and others has improved in other ways. The president provides the university community with regular updates and these updates are emailed to all AU community members and posted on the president's website. Twice a year, the president and board chair hold an open forum that provides community members with an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback and suggestions. The board includes members of the AU community as trustees (including two faculty and one student); participation in meetings by the student government representatives of the undergraduate students, graduate students, and law students; participation in meetings by representatives from the faculty senate, alumni association, and staff council; and board members are regular participants in the life of the institution.

Communication has also improved in the Division of Academic Affairs. The provost held a Faculty Summit this spring that enabled faculty to contribute ideas for advancing the institution. In October 2009, a two-day off site retreat is scheduled for all faculty. In less than a year, Dr. Bass has met with 159 faculty individually and visited with over 46 departments/academic units. He has facilitated greater dialogue between the faculty and deans, and been supportive of greater faculty input into decision making.

New Academic Leadership (Standard 5: Administration)

In summer 2008, Dr. Scott Bass became the provost of American University. Dr. Bass brings with him a wealth of experience, having recently served as vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), where he held the academic appointment as distinguished professor of sociology and public policy. In his first year, Dr. Bass has reached out to faculty, opening up opportunities for dialogue about academic excellence and the ways in which AU can be an even stronger institution. He has decentralized decision making so that deans now have more authority.

Dr. Bass has begun to transform the organization of Academic Affairs by creating a number of new positions, including a vice provost for graduate studies and research and a vice provost for undergraduate studies. He also expanded the role of the dean of academic affairs, making it a vice provost position that is in charge of faculty development and will oversee the transition of the current Center for Teaching Excellence into a center that focuses on all aspects of faculty development. There are other changes as well, including the establishment of a new director to oversee the development of a “One Stop Center” to coordinate the services of the Registrar’s Office, Financial Aid, Admissions, and Student Accounts. In June 2009, the current dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will become the interim senior vice provost and dean of academic affairs. The new dean for the College of Arts and Sciences will be Dr. Peter Starr, currently a professor of French and comparative literature in the College of Arts and Letters, Arts, and Sciences at the University of Southern California.

The new academic leadership and re-organization offers tremendous opportunities. The creation of the two new vice provost positions enables the institution to focus even more intently on advancing the goals of the institution. It is expected that the vice provost for undergraduate affairs will help lead a review of the General Education Program (Standard 12) and the Honors Program. The new vice provost for graduate studies and research is expected to focus on helping the institution increase its external funding and will work with the deans to revise graduate student policies.

Of course, these changes are not without challenges. New leadership brings new expectations of excellence; the roles and responsibilities of each new vice provost are likely to be refined over time. Still, the sense is that these changes offer exciting opportunities to improve academic excellence.

Brand Identity and Web Improvements (Standard Six: Integrity and Standard 8: Admissions and Retention)

One of the key areas identified by the Strategic Planning Committee’s SWOT analysis as an area in need of improvement related to AU’s identity and image. Many in the AU community felt that AU lacked a powerful brand identity and that more could be done to communicate AU’s positive image to prospective students, community members and others. The new Strategic Plan has a number of goals that address this issue and the university has already taken important steps to communicate and advance AU’s image:

Stakeholder Research and Development of a Brand Position

A University Marketing Advisory Council was created and a research firm was hired to explore AU's image among faculty, staff, prospective students, guidance counselors, and community leaders. Possible elements of a brand position are already being tested and a marketing plan is being developed. The branding campaign, when implemented, will offer the university opportunities to more effectively communicate its mission, as well as its value as a world class institution of higher learning.

Realignment of Resources

AU completed an assessment of resources and staff in fall 2008. The review resulted in a realignment and increase in resources to reflect greater commitment to digital communications and strategic integrated marketing. The university is building its digital media and asset management capacity, and using an internal agency model to link institutional communications with strategic priorities.

Launch of University Website

As mentioned in the Executive Summary, AU launched its redesigned website in March 2009. A brand new virtual tour, featuring 65 video clips and an interactive map received 10,000 visitors on the first day. A notable review was from edustyle.com, which provided a live, rave review of the site. The AU website was named the top choice among readers for the best redesign in higher education. Early performance feedback has exceeded all expectations, with the number of pages viewed, visitors per day, and average page views per visitor increasing tremendously over this time last year.

More than just a site with a fresh design, the new website represents a significant transformation in how the university communicates internally and externally – with user generated content, interactivity, and campus-wide participation in writing the stories and creating the messages about AU. The process of first creating and now maintaining the site has involved every corner of the campus.

Overall, the greater emphasis on marketing and mass communication should open up opportunities to win recognition and distinction, which is one the ten transformational goals that AU has set for itself.

Social Responsibility and Engagement (Standard One: Mission)

American University's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education. As part of the SWOT analysis, the Strategic Planning Committee identified core values, including social responsibility, as an important strength. AU was founded as an institution that prepared public servants for government service and its commitment to social responsibility is at the heart of the institution. The University's motto, "Ideas into Action, Action into Service," is a part of the university mission statement, known as the "Statement of Common Purpose." When the Middle States Self-Study Committee prepared its report five years ago, it expressed that AU's commitment to engagement, and its willingness to work towards improving its community, nation and world, was

worthy of further growth and emphasis. In the five years since the *Self-Study*, AU's commitment to service has become even more ingrained in its culture. As part of its new Strategic Plan, one transformation goal is to: "Act on our values through social responsibility and service." The commitment to more fully realizing this goal offers AU a number of opportunities:

Climate Commitment

In April 2008 AU signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, which calls on the university to move toward carbon neutrality. The Commitment challenges AU to reach very ambitious goals related to our relationship with the environment, and calls on the institution to make important changes in our energy usage, curriculum, and travel. The institution has already made great strides in identifying our level of carbon output, and is in the process of identifying actions that need to be taken to meet our commitment. At the time of the development of the Strategic Plan, only 5% of units on campus had been eco-certified, but the two-year goal is to have 75% of units certified. It is very likely that all members of AU's community – faculty, staff and students – will need to make lifestyle changes. The challenges of achieving this goal are very real, but success is important since it would advance significantly the mission of the institution.

Community Service

As the Strategic Plan states, "American University is known for its politically and socially engaged faculty, staff, graduates, and students, who are recognized as the most politically active in the nation." More than 60% of students say that they have participated in service work and almost 57% of faculty say that they spend at least one hour on community service in a typical week. AU places over 100 tutors in the DC Public Schools each year through DC Reads. The university ranks third on the Peace Corps' list of medium-sized colleges and universities with the most Peace Corps volunteers. For the last three years, AU has been named to the President's Service Honor Roll.

The goal to strengthen the culture of service and social responsibility, if fully realized, would provide the university with the opportunity to further its commitment to improving the city, the nation, and the world. However, to do so will require work. While service has always been important to AU's identity, the institution still doesn't have effective mechanisms for tracking progress on this ideal. In the years ahead, the university plans to develop such mechanisms, and more will be done to find ways of recognizing, encouraging, and rewarding service. The opportunities for partnerships in the local community are almost endless, and coordinating efforts between divisions, and within schools, is a challenge that is welcomed. The institution expects to make significant progress on advancing this aspect of its mission in the coming years.

SECTION FOUR: ENROLLMENT AND FINANCE TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

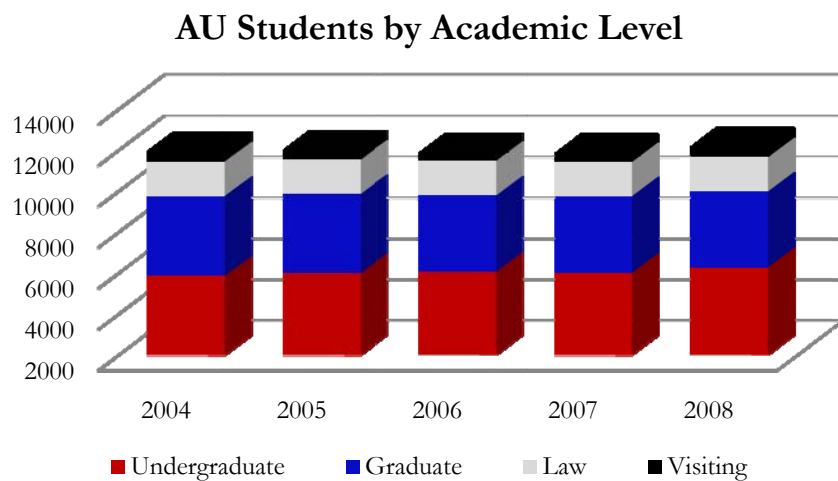
This section of the report provides an analysis of the enrollment and finance projections for the next two years, as well as the assumptions on which the projections are based. The university is on a two-year budget cycle, with the latest budget (for FY2010 and FY2011) approved by the Board of Trustees in February 2009. As this section demonstrates, American University is in very sound condition financially. It has a solid record of enrollment, and trends that are consistent with its Strategic Plan and mission.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

The years preceding the 2003-2004 *Self-Study* were marked by rapid increases in undergraduate student quality, and by steady enrollment on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. While the 2001 Strategic Plan focused on making the undergraduate class smaller, the years since 2003 have focused on maintaining student quality while also maintaining the size of the student body.

Enrollment is critical to American University. Over 94% of its budget has traditionally come from student fees, and its financial health requires that it be able to predict and manage its enrollments. Fee dependency is nothing new - 25 years ago the student fee dependency was 95% – so the institution has developed a number of processes (discussed in the finance section below) that have enabled it to ensure stability in its enrollments and in its overall financial health. In recent history, AU enrollment can best be characterized as steady, and of high quality.

In fall 2008, American University enrolled a total of 12,183 students, including 6,287 undergraduates, 3,703 graduates, 1,664 law students, and 529 visiting students. As the table below indicates, enrollment has remained steady, varying by only 314 students overall over the course of the last of the five years.



AU Students by Academic Level

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Law	Visiting	Total
2004	5,865	3,905	1,674	518	11,962
2005	5,987	3,878	1,665	508	12,038
2006	6,065	3,725	1,688	405	11,883
2007	6,016	3,740	1,666	447	11,869
2008	6,287	3,703	1,664	529	12,183

While overall enrollment is relatively constant, there has been variation in certain sub-categories. For example, while enrollment in the traditional Washington Semester Program has declined, enrollment in the Washington Semester Mentorship program is well above budget. There has also been variation in the size of the entering freshmen class, which has ranged from 1388 in 2006 to 1577 in 2008.

CURRENT ENROLLMENT

While the current national economic situation is one of concern, the impact on American University has been limited. At the time of this *Report*, spring 2009, enrollment was very solid, and overall budget projections had been met. In spring, there were 216 new full-time freshmen registered, more than double the budget projection of 100. In addition to the new freshmen, there were 95 new full-time transfer students (5 over budget). Undergraduate enrollment of returning students was also strong. There were 5073 full-time returning students registered for courses on campus (66 students over budget) and an additional 383 that studied abroad, making it one of the largest groups going abroad for spring in recent memory.

The successful semester is also a product of robust retention. While it is too early to know the final fall-to-fall retention rates, fall-to-spring retention rates are solid. The freshmen fall-to-spring semester retention was over 97%, the highest it has been in the years in which data is available. Sophomore retention was also excellent; fall 2007 to spring 2009 retention was 86.1%, above last year's result of 83.3%. As of the end of May 2009, the fall-to-fall freshmen retention rate for the fall 2008 class is almost 92%. If year-to-date trends hold, the retention rate may end up being the highest in AU's history.

Graduate enrollment also made budget in spring. In spring 2009 there were 207 new master's students, compared to 171 in 2008. Total degree-seeking credit hours taught was 19,464, or 1.4% above budget. The Washington College of Law continued to be well above budget, with full-time enrollment 10% over budget, and part-time credit hours 6% above budget.

One area that continues to be a challenge is the Washington Semester Program, where traditional enrollment was at 208 students compared to a budget of 330. The international program attracted 79 students, which was relatively close to its budget of 98. In fall 2008, an analysis of the program was conducted and marketing and other improvement opportunities were identified. Unfortunately, some students are not allowed to transfer their financial aid from their home institutions. The program faces intense competition, but every effort is being made to ensure that it meets future enrollment goals.

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

The two year budget enrollment projections are listed on the next two pages of this report. Early indications are that fall enrollment will meet its targets in most categories, with the possible exception of the traditional Washington Semester Program. As of early May 2009, the year-to-date undergraduate returning student enrollment for fall is on track to make budget. More than 1600 new freshmen deposited for fall 2009. Given the typical deposit to enrolled ratio, it is expected that AU will meet or exceed its enrollment target. The quality of the new student class is excellent, as previously mentioned in Section Three of this report.

Fall graduate enrollment and law enrollment are ahead of year-to-date and also expected to make or exceed budget.

FALL AND SPRING BUDGET	Fall 2008 Census	Fall 2009 Budget	Fall 2010 Budget	Spring 2009 Census	Spring 2010 Budget	Spring 2011 Budget
FULLTIME UNDERGRADUATES						
New Fulltime Undergraduates:						
Freshmen	1,573	1,500	1,500	216	150	150
Transfers	258	261	261	95	90	90
Total New Fulltime Undergraduates	1,831	1,761	1,761	311	240	240
Total Returning Fulltime Undergraduates	4,028	4,110	4,119	5,456	5,460	5,468
TOTAL FULLTIME UNDERGRADUATES	5,859	5,871	5,880	5,767	5,700	5,708
PARTTIME UNDERGRADUATE HOURS	1,136	1,780	1,787	1,441	1,655	1,662
WASHINGTON SEMESTER HEADS	462	432	432	208	307	322
WASHINGTON SEMESTER NONCREDIT	149	115	125	79	90	100
	611	557	557	287	397	422
GRADUATE HOURS (less KSB)	17,609	17,337	17,337	16,364	16,061	16,061
Kogod School of Business						
MBA and MS Hours	3,489	3,840	4,032	3,110	3,425	3,600
Nondegree Graduate	165	180	200	146	215	220
Nondegree Undergraduate Hours	126	246	246	93	251	251
WCL FULLTIME HEADS	1,271	1,185	1,170	1,211	1,150	1,135
WCL PARTTIME HOURS	3,470	3,037	3,117	3,444	2,946	3,023
NON-DEGREE HOURS UNDERGRAD (less KSB)	860	997	997	717	1,015	1,015
NON-DEGREE GRADUATE (less KSB)	925	917	877	793	819	799
CREDIT IRC HOURS	2,443	2,250	2,250	2,615	2,250	2,250
ABROAD AT AU - Visiting Int'l Students (Heads)	89	80	80	78	85	85

Note: KSB refers to the Kogod School of Business.

The returning full-time undergraduate category includes AU Study Abroad.

Washington Semester Heads includes the WINS and Washington Mentorship Program.

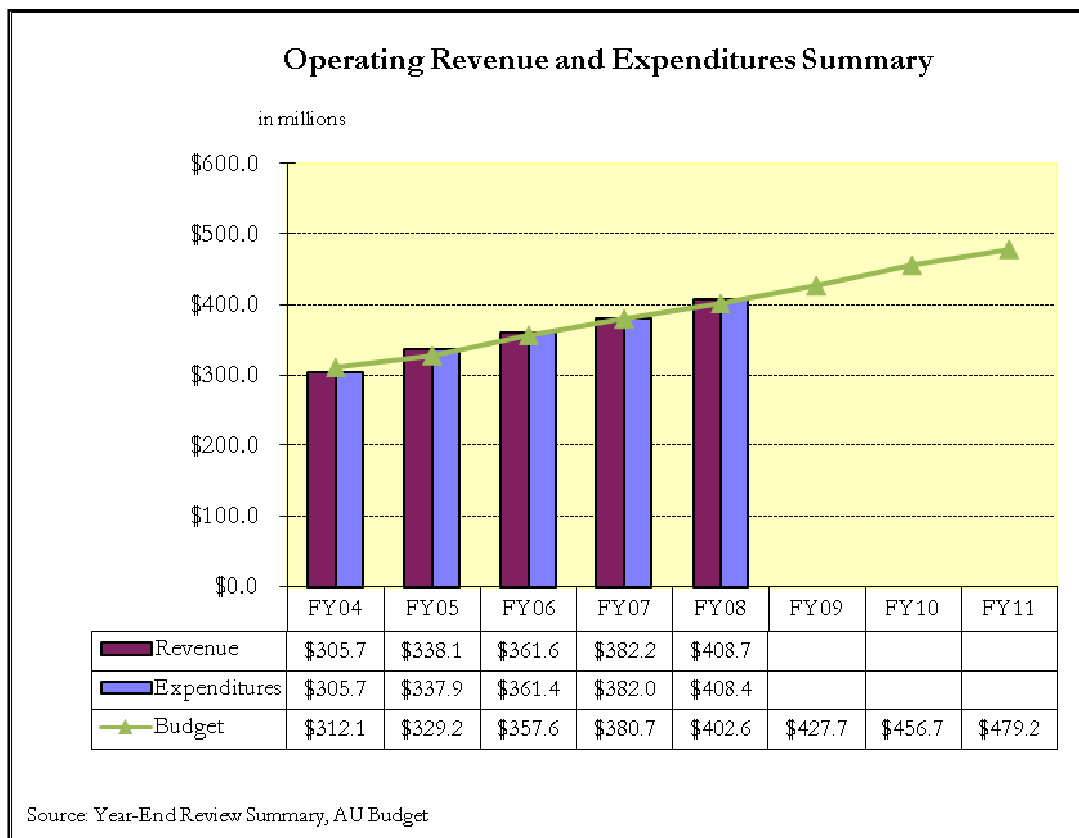
SUMMER BUDGET	Summer 2008 Census	Summer 2009 Budget	Summer 2010 Budget
UNDERGRADUATE HOURS (less KSB and Distance Learning)	3,897	4,347	4,347
WASHINGTON SEMESTER (incl. WINS and SIS/Pre-College)	739	1,080	1,155
STUDY ABROAD HOURS - AU	299	300	315
GRADUATE HOURS (less KSB and Distance Learning)	3,246	3,284	3,299
Kogod School of Business HOURS			
Undergraduate	797	725	750
MBA and MS	891	860	890
Nondegree Undergraduate	28	30	30
Nondegree Graduate	52	50	55
DISTANCE LEARNING	1,503	1,450	1,450
WCL HOURS	2,878	2,810	2,920
NON-DEGREE HOURS (less KSB)	1,644	1,482	1,482
CREDIT INSTITUTE HOURS	2,884	2,670	2,670
TOTAL SUMMER HOURS	18,858	19,088	19,363

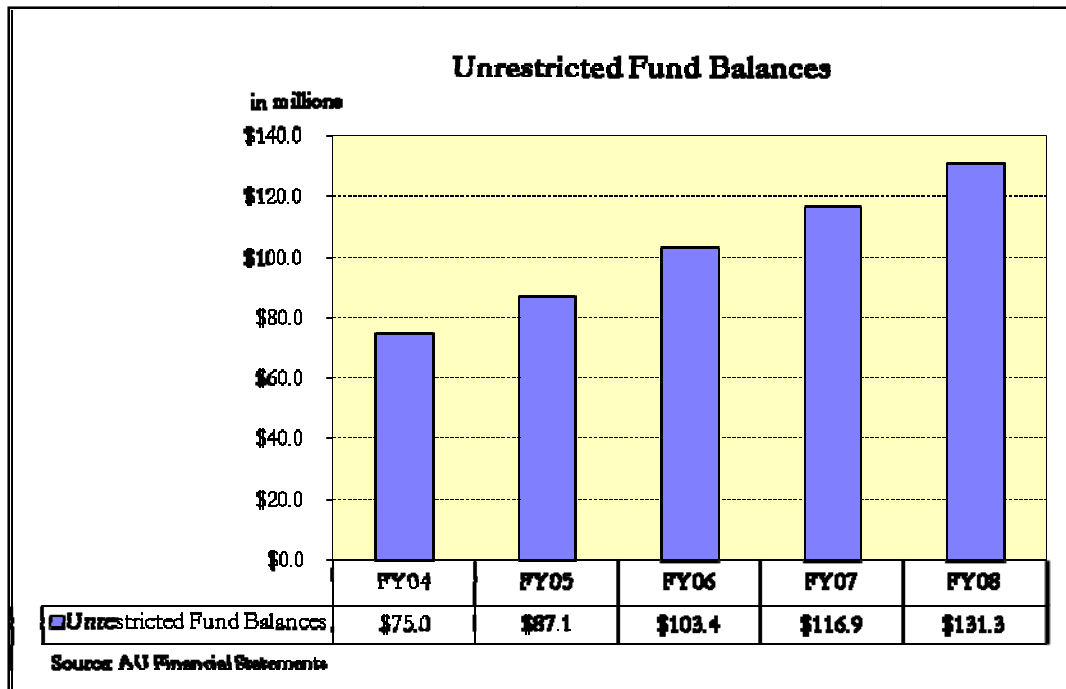
Note: KSB refers to Kogod School of Business

FINANCE TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

1. Operating Revenue and Expenditures Summary

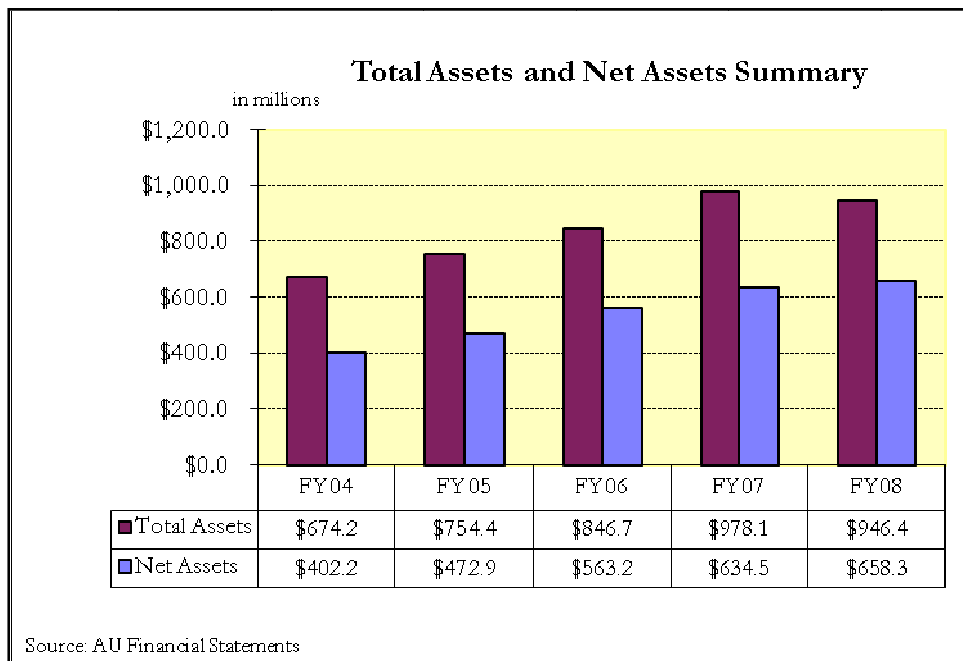
American University’s operating budget for FY2009 exceeded \$427 million in annual revenue and expenditures, which reflects a steady growth in the size, complexity, and quality of our institution. The operating budget increased 37 percent from FY2004 to FY2009, growing from \$312.1 million to \$427.7 million. In addition to maintaining a balanced budget for each of the aforementioned years, year-end actual revenue and expenditures resulted in a positive net income. As a result, unrestricted fund balances grew from \$75 million in FY2004 to \$131.3 million in FY2008. A revenue surplus is also projected for FY2009 due primarily to freshmen enrollments exceeding budget.



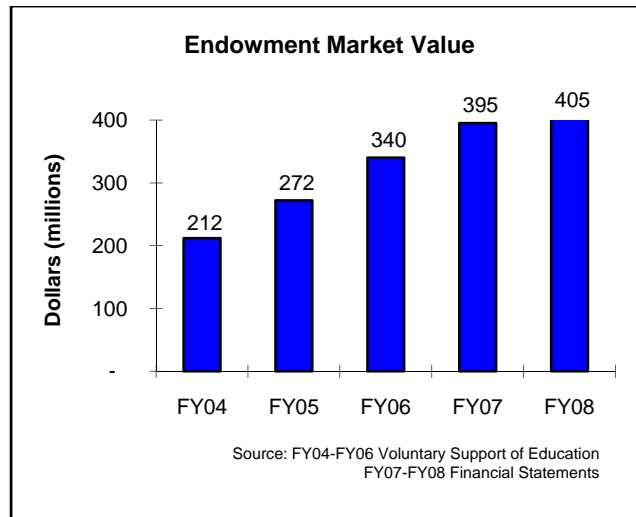


2. Balance Sheet, Endowment and Financial Indicators

For the same period, the university's total assets grew 40 percent from \$674.2 million in FY2004 to \$946.4 million in FY2008. This positive growth was also reflected in total net assets, which increased from \$402.2 million in FY2004 to \$658.3 million in FY2008, or 64 percent.



Though the university's endowment has diminished this year due to the economic downturn, endowment growth for the preceding years was significant. From FY2004 to FY2008, the endowment grew 91 percent from \$212 million to \$405 million.



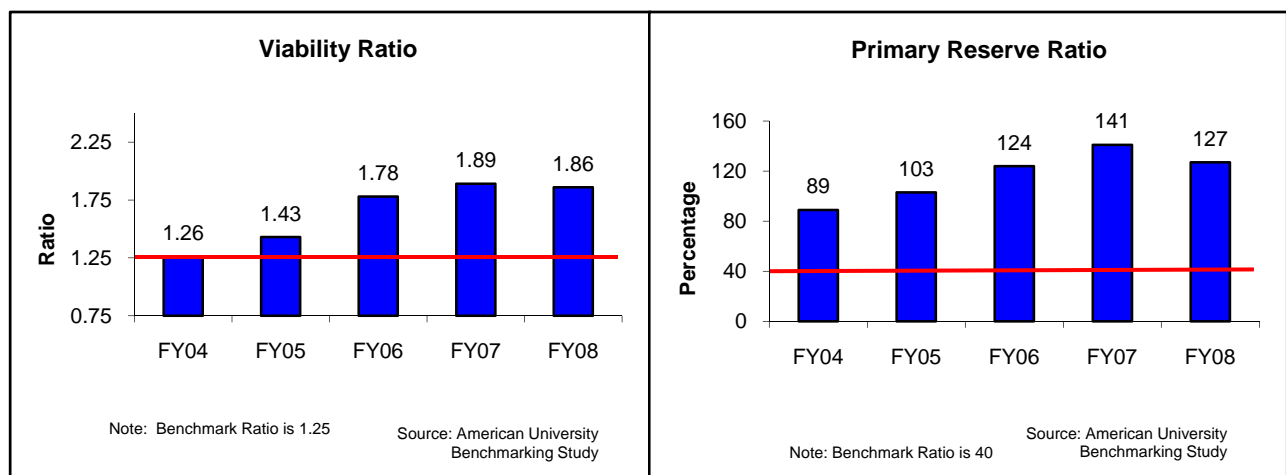
Fortunately, American University took a prudent approach to incorporating endowment income in its operating budget. Despite the growth in our endowment over several years, AU limited its dependence on endowment income to less than one percent of our operating budget, thereby limiting the impact of the economic downturn to date. Though the reduction in the endowment market value will affect our balance sheet and net assets, it will not have a serious impact on the operating budget.

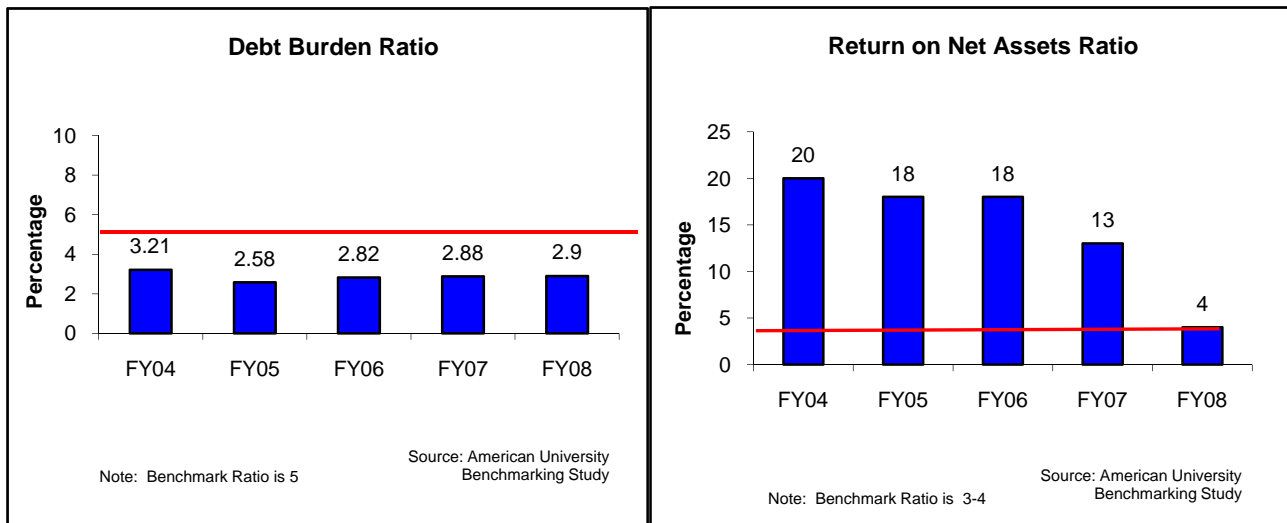
The National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) conducts annual surveys of endowment performance for higher education institutions. As illustrated in the table below, our performance for fiscal year ending June 30, 2008 was -3.9 percent vs. the NACUBO average of -3.0 percent. However, our three-, five-, and ten-year average annual returns were higher than the average for endowments in AU's peer group, and equal or higher than those endowments in the \$500 million to \$1 billion group.

ENDOWMENT PERFORMANCE				
Average Investment Pool Compounded Nominal Rates of Return for Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2008 and for Selected Three-, Five-, and Ten-Year Periods				
Investment Pool Assets	1-year	3-year	5-year	10-year
	%	%	%	%
	n=728	n=699	n=652	n=494
Greater than \$1.0 Billion	0.6	12.0	13.3	9.5
> \$500 Million to \$1.0 Billion	-1.9	9.6	11.4	7.6
<i>American University</i>	-3.9	9.6	13.0	8.0
> \$100 Million to \$ 500 Million	-2.9	8.5	10.1	6.4
>\$50 Million to \$100 Million	-3.2	7.4	9.3	5.8
Public	-3.3	7.5	9.4	6.2
Independent	-2.8	8.2	9.9	6.8
Median	-3.3	7.7	9.7	6.3
<i>Comparative Indexes</i>				
S&P 500	-13.1	4.4	7.6	2.9
Russell 3000	-12.7	4.7	8.4	3.5
MSCI World ex US	-6.6	15.7	18.9	7.3
LB Aggregate	7.1	4.1	3.9	5.6
CPI-U	5.0	4.2	4.4	3.4

2008 NACUBO Endowment Study
© 2009 National Association of College and University Business Officers

Monitoring financial indicators is one element of the university's sound fiscal management practice. As indicated by the financial indicators below, AU's financial position has been above the benchmark ratios.





The university's credit ratings also remain strong. Moody's Investors Service continues to rate AU an A2. In January 2008, Standard and Poor's (S&P) upgraded the university's credit rating from A with a Stable outlook to A with a Positive outlook. This revised outlook was particularly significant in an economic environment where many institutions' ratings remained constant or were even downgraded. In their report, S&P cited the university's "consistently strong operating performance and improved liquidity." S&P also commented that "The positive outlook reflects our expectation of the university's continued strong operating performance and steady enrollment. Manageable additional debt issuance coupled with maintenance of liquidity would be viewed positively and may lead to an upgrade."

The university's operating activities for the past three fiscal years (FY2006 – FY2008), the current fiscal year (FY2009), as well as the next two fiscal years (FY2010 and FY2011) are illustrated in the appendix. AU's audited financial statements from FY2005 through FY2008 are also included in the appendix section.

4. Restructuring of Debt

Despite the unprecedented developments in the financial credit markets in 2008 and 2009, the overall condition of the university was not negatively impacted. AU worked proactively on a number of financial management strategies to mitigate the impact of external factors on any aspect of the university's business operations.

Since December 2007, the finance team developed a strategy and moved quickly to restructure its \$220 million tax-exempt bond portfolio before the crisis in the subprime events unfolded. The following steps were taken with Board of Trustees approval:

- Completed conversion of the Series 2003 and 2006 Bonds from auction rate securities to variable rate demand bonds to avoid high interest rate costs;
- Used operating capital reserves and short-term investment funds to purchase its own bonds, thus saving over \$1.2 million in interest costs;

- Refunded the Series 1985 and Series A Bonds and issued new Series 2008 bonds, resulting in a 30-year swap rate of 4.31 percent; and
- As of May 2009, the university is in the process of replacing the last 10 percent or \$21 million bond with a new credit/liquidity provider.

5. Capital Projects

The table below shows the major capital projects that have been implemented to date, as well as the projects in production. Additional renovation and capital projects may be added as the university is in the process of developing a master facilities plan for the next decade.

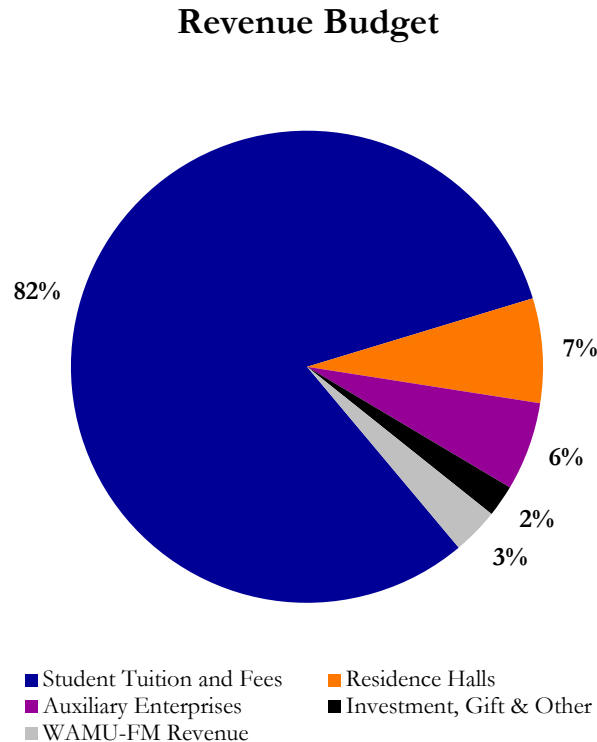
Capital Projects		
	Completion Year	Total Cost (\$000's omitted)
Completed Projects (FY2004 - FY2009)		
Gray, Roper, Clark Renovation	2005	\$3,000
Athletic Field Renovation	2006	2,200
Katzen Arts Center	2006	48,500
Watkins renovation - classrooms	2007	1,500
Watkins renovation - offices	2008	750
Mary Graydon Center - 1st floor renovation	2008	2,400
Nebraska Hall residence hall	2008	12,500
University Center Quad entrance and stairs	2008	700
University Center covered bridge to Butler	2009	1,400
Kogod School of Business expansion	2009	13,000
Welcome Center upgrade	2009	350
		\$86,300
In Production		
New School of International Service Building	2010	\$45,400
Redesign Welcome Center at Katzen	2010	300
One Stop Center - phase I	2010	300
Kreeger Building to relocate Roper residents	2010	4,300
Roper Hall - renovate for student housing	2010	1,500
		\$51,800

6. Two-Year FY2010-FY2011 Operating Budget

The university has adopted a two-year budget cycle as of FY2004. The two-year budget cycle has proven efficient in enhancing multi-year initiatives outlined in the Strategic Plan, as well as achieving operating efficiency. The budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 was approved by the Board of Trustees in February 2009.

a) Revenue Budget

The revenue budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 is composed of student tuition and fees (82 percent); residence halls (7 percent); auxiliary enterprises (6 percent); WAMU-FM revenue (3 percent); and investment, gift, and other income (2 percent).



Student Tuition and Fees: Over the past decade, AU has made conscious decisions to hold its tuition increases at the most modest level feasible. Undergraduate, law school, and graduate tuition rates will increase by five percent annually for both FY2010 and FY2011 with the exception of Kogod School of Business graduate degrees (MBA and MS). The university will increase the current MBA and MS degree tuition rates by 3 percent in both FY2010 and FY2011 to maintain their competitiveness.

These rate increases are necessary to fund critical institutional and strategic plan priorities and to improve the quality of AU's services and programs. Based on current benchmark data for peer and competitor schools, the tuition rate increases are within a reasonable range in the current economy. Below is a market comparison of AU's undergraduate tuition and mandatory fee increases versus our competitors and private universities.

American University
Market Comparison
Average Undergraduate Tuition and Mandatory Fee Increases

	American University	Competitors Average*	Private Institutions**
AY95-96 to AY96-97	3.7%	4.9%	5.0%
AY96-97 to AY97-98	4.6%	4.7%	5.0%
AY97-98 to AY98-99	4.7%	5.6%	5.0%
AY98-99 to AY99-00	4.8%	4.8%	4.7%
AY99-00 to AY00-01	5.0%	4.5%	5.2%
AY00-01 to AY01-02	5.1%	5.2%	5.5%
AY01-02 to AY02-03	4.3%	6.3%	5.8%
AY02-03 to AY03-04	5.9%	7.3%	6.0%
AY03-04 to AY04-05	5.9%	6.4%	6.0%
AY04-05 to AY05-06	6.5%	6.3%	5.9%
AY05-06 to AY06-07	5.9%	6.0%	5.9%
AY06-07 to AY07-08	5.9%	5.6%	6.3%
AY07-08 to AY08-09	5.9%	5.5%	5.9%
AVERAGE	5.2%	5.6%	5.5%

* 67 Institutions (private and public) identified by Enrollment Services for AY08-09

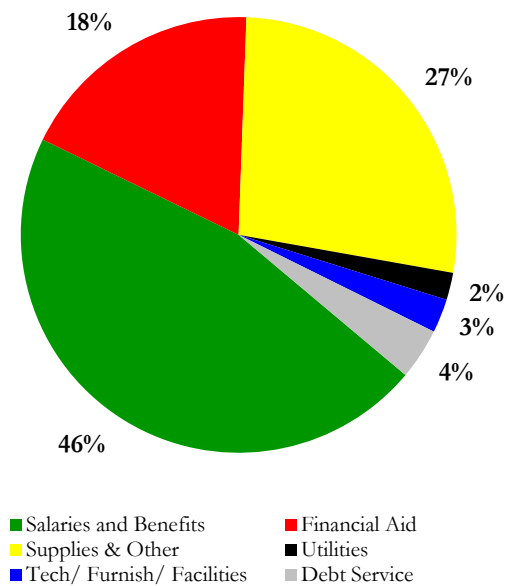
** Annually reported by the College Board

Residence Halls: Residence halls rates will increase 4.5 percent for both FY2010 and FY2011. The rate increase will help AU to maintain the high quality of the residence halls, while allowing it to remain competitive with the market.

Auxiliary Enterprises: A four percent increase in student meal plans and eateries will result in projected revenue of \$13 million for FY2010 and \$14 million for FY2011.

b) Expense Budget

The expense budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 is composed of salaries and benefits (46 percent); supplies and other expenses (27 percent); financial aid (18 percent); debt service (four percent); technology capital funding, furnishings and equipment, and facilities modernization (three percent); and utilities (two percent).



Salaries and Benefits: The expense budget for salaries and benefits will increase four percent in FY2010 and 4.5 percent in FY2011. These increases support the university’s goals of bringing tenure and tenure-track faculty salaries closer to AAUP Level 1 standards and paying above the market median for staff members. The budget for this category for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 includes: a three percent performance-based salary pool and benefits for faculty and staff for both fiscal years; 23 new tenure and tenure-track faculty positions over two years; and 58 new full-time staff position salaries and benefits over two years.

Supplies and Other Expenses: Budget increases of seven percent and two percent for FY2010 and FY2011, respectively, for this category reflect additional expenses related to a wide range of initiatives to improve the quality of programs and to respond to external environmental factors.

Financial Aid: Financial aid will increase 6.9 percent in FY2010 and 4.7 percent in FY2011, respectively. In addition to matching enrollment increases and indexing to increased tuition rates, the aforementioned increases in the financial aid budget will support four new athletics scholarships over two years, new and current Ph.D. programs, and the expansion of Washington Semester affiliated programs. Significant efforts will be made within the financial aid budget to make need-based financial aid awards available for Pell Grant-eligible students and to support diversity initiatives.

c) Budget Management in a Time of Economic Uncertainty

The budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 demonstrates AU’s emphasis on effective enrollment management, rigorous internal controls, and the continuation of financial safeguard policies that have proven to be critical to the university’s positive financial standing in recent years, particularly within the current economic context. Though major indicators for fall 2009 enrollment remain strong, we are mindful that given the uncertainty and volatility in the economy, dramatic changes

could occur rapidly. Therefore, as we developed the budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, we also performed a stress test to ensure that financial safeguards were adequate, and that actions could be taken to mitigate sudden enrollment shortfalls in fiscal years 2010 or 2011.

Financial Safeguards

Over the past decade, the budget methodology has included developing financial safeguards, or budget line items that could be pulled back if needed to absorb some extraordinary enrollment loss. This prudent practice has received high marks from the rating agencies in prior years and even more so in our recent conversations with them this past November. The practice will be continued in the next budget cycle. The budget for fiscal years FY2010 and FY2011 includes contingency financial safeguards of \$29 million and \$31 million, respectively, which are described below.

	<u>FY2010</u>	<u>FY2011</u>
Enrollment Contingency (1.5% of tuition)	\$5.6 M	\$0.9 M
Transfer to Quasi-Endowment (2% of budget)	\$4.6 M (1%)	\$9.6 M
Pre-fund Salary Increases	\$3.8 M	\$3.9 M
Deferred Maintenance (including Residence Halls)	\$9.4 M	\$10.9 M
PC Replacement Fund	\$1.0 M	\$1.0 M
Furnishings and Equipment Fund	\$2.2 M	\$2.4 M
Facilities Modernization Fund	\$2.3 M	\$2.6 M
Total	\$28.9 M	\$31.3 M
Percent of Operating Budget	6.3%	6.5%

- Enrollment Contingency:** An enrollment contingency was established in 1994 to serve as a tuition management reserve in the event of an enrollment shortfall. The university has budgeted 1.5 percent of tuition revenue each year with the goal of reaching and maintaining a reserve that equals five percent of tuition revenue. The enrollment contingency fund currently has a balance of \$8.3 million. We anticipate that we may be able to transfer an additional \$4 million to the fund when we close the books for FY2009. That will provide a reserve of over \$12 million to deal with unexpected enrollment shortfalls.

An enrollment contingency reserve of 1.5 percent of projected tuition revenue, or \$5.6 million, is budgeted for FY2010. If we are able to also make this transfer as budgeted, we will reach the 5 percent level, and the budgeted transfer can be reduced and used for other initiatives. In FY2011, \$5 million will be available to fund strategic priorities and the remaining \$900 thousand will be budgeted in the enrollment contingency account.

- Transfer to Quasi-Endowment:** In 1998 the university began to strategically enhance its endowment balance by transferring funds from the operating budget. This practice played an essential role in the university receiving upgraded credit ratings from Standard & Poor's and Moody's. A transfer of two percent of gross revenue, or \$8.6 million, is budgeted for this purpose in FY2009.

The FY2010 budget for transfer to quasi-endowment funds represents \$4.6 million or one percent of the total budget. The other one percent will be utilized to fund strategic plan priorities, which will be discussed in section six. The university will reinstate the goal of transferring two percent of gross revenue, or \$9.6 million, in FY2011.

- **Pre-funding of Faculty and Staff Salary Increases:** Pre-funding faculty and staff salary increases ensures sufficient resources to keep the university's compensation structure consistent with market rates. The university's operating budget for FY2009 includes \$3.9 million to pre-fund faculty and staff merit increases for the next fiscal year. The budgets for FY2010 and FY2011 also include \$3.8 million and \$3.9 million, respectively, for this purpose.
- **Deferred Maintenance:** The FY2009 operating budget includes \$9.1 million for deferred maintenance, including residence halls.

The budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 includes \$9.4 million in FY2010 and \$10.1 million in FY11 for the deferred maintenance fund, including a new building for the School of International Service, which will be fully operational in fall 2010. The funding will support the planned renovation of a residence hall in summer 2009 and summer 2010, and the continuation of the preventive maintenance program.

- **PC Replacement Fund:** The university initiated a comprehensive replacement program for desktop computers and printers as part of its two-year budget process in FY2004. This practice has proven efficient in making multi-year investments to keep the university's technology assets up-to-date, and for providing instructional and administrative technology support to faculty, students, and staff. The FY2009 budget includes \$1 million for this initiative, as does the budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011.
- **Furnishings and Equipment Fund:** The university sets aside funding each year, calculated as a percentage of total replacement values, to supplement individual unit budgets for the completion of furnishings and equipment projects. The FY2009 budget includes \$2.1 million to fund units' requested projects. The budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 includes \$2.2 million and \$2.4 million, respectively, for this purpose.
- **Facilities Modernization Fund:** Projects to adapt university facilities to contemporary use and standards are supported by the Facilities Modernization Fund. In FY2009, \$2.1 million was budgeted for the Facilities Modernization Fund. The budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 includes an additional \$250 thousand in FY2010 and another \$250 thousand in FY2011 to increase the fund, bringing the budget figures for those two years to \$2.3 million and \$2.6 million, respectively.

Despite the current economic crisis, American University is in a relatively strong position compared with many of its competitors, and well-positioned to take advantage of opportunities that will arise during this volatile time. Funding is carefully tied to the Strategic Plan (see pp.64-65). We are, however, ever mindful of the challenges we face. Even in more stable years, AU has built its operating budgets with contingencies and safeguards to provide a cushion should unexpected events surprise us. This has served the university well, and that discipline continues to be fundamental in the budgets for fiscal years 2010 and 2011. American University is confident that unexpected

enrollment shortfalls or other unforeseen funding needs can be accommodated through operations, budget contingencies, and designated reserves.

SECTION FIVE: ORGANIZED AND SUSTAINED PROCESSES TO ASSESS INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING

BACKGROUND

American University has a long history of using assessment to inform planning and improve institutional effectiveness. The university has a culture that values and encourages self-reflection and improvement. From the Board of Trustees to the individuals working in their respective units, goals are set, methods to assess are determined, and progress towards goals are tracked.

Much of American University's assessment practices are delineated in a written assessment plan, known as *Assessment Processes and Procedures*. This is a living document that is updated and revised as improvements are made to assessment processes. While some of the information provided in this section of the report is taken from this plan, the plan itself is more comprehensive and should be considered an important supporting document for this section of the *Periodic Review Report*.

AU PHILOSOPHY OF ASSESSMENT

AU's assessment is characterized by:

- a solid foundation in its overall mission, goals and objectives
- centralized support with decentralized ownership of assessment
- a commitment to assessing all aspects of the university, including student learning, student experiences, and overall institutional effectiveness
- a recognition of the importance of using a combination of formative and summative approaches to assessment
- incorporation of assessment at different levels of the university (such as individual courses, programs, and institution-wide)

This philosophy helps inform all assessment at the institution, and has important implications for the ways in which assessment is conducted. Efforts at assessment are concentrated on issues most important to the institution, and care is taken to ensure that units have ownership over determining the best means of assessing their own goals. By incorporating assessment at all levels, including individual performance management reviews, the institution ensures that goals align both across and within divisions.

ASSESSMENT-DRIVEN PLANNING

While assessment is used to inform all planning, the best example may be the recent creation of the Strategic Plan. American University's Strategic Plan (which is discussed in more detail in Section Six of this report) was adopted by the Board of Trustees in fall 2008 and implementation strategies were approved by the board in spring 2009. The plan is a data-driven document that was developed based on a wealth of campus forums. It was informed by data analysis and external benchmarks. The university community as well as the Strategic Planning Committee accessed the information by means of the Strategic Plan website. (See <http://www.american.edu/strategicplan> and go to 'Areas

of Focus' and 'Important Documents' for examples of the data used.) See Section Six of this report for more details.

ASSESSING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

In order to assess the Strategic Plan, each of the 10 transformational goals and six enabling goals have accompanying objectives, action steps and measures. For each measure, the current status of the metric has been established, as well as a two year goal. The details of all the measures were made available to the AU community in a "Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Plan" announced by President Kerwin on March 6, 2009. The plan contains over 100 metrics representing a wide range of data – both qualitative and quantitative – from every division on campus. A process for tracking the metrics has been developed, and a sample of the process (See Sample of Metrics: Transformational Goal One) is available in the supporting documentation section of the AU Middle States website.

Although the report contains very specific measures, President Kerwin emphasizes that "the plan and its implementation will not be static; we will make necessary adjustments as conditions and opportunities change." In order to facilitate assessment of the plan, a Strategic Plan Measurements Project Team has been created. The Project Team:

- collects and updates the strategic planning metrics
- advises and helps with implementation of data collection listed as in need of development
- develops a strategy for coordinating the gathering of data, and develops a reporting strategy
- advises the University Council on mechanisms that might be used to help communicate the status of the plan to the broader AU community
- shares across divisions the latest assessment results and strategies so that units across campus can learn from one another
- develops strategies for how information and data can be better utilized to advance the overall mission of the institution

Progress on the plan is tracked very closely by the President's Cabinet, the Board of Trustees, and others. In addition, planning continues at the level of schools, colleges, and departments. Unit plans were completed in May 2009. These plans have established similar assessment and tracking methods.

ASSESSING UNIT-LEVEL AND INDIVIDUAL GOALS

Unit-Level Planning and Assessment

Each summer, divisions hold meetings or retreats to discuss progress made toward the Strategic Plan and to set goals based on the overall university goals. Departments then set goals that are in line with division goals. As part of the planning process departments define metrics that can be used to track their progress. Assessment processes are decentralized, with each department tailoring the methods that best meet their needs. Assessment processes and results are recorded in different ways, with many units writing annual reports.

Summaries of assessment processes are collected periodically by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment using the template, “Understanding Assessment and Institutional Improvement at AU”. This template, available on the university’s assessment website, gathers the following information:

- 1) department or unit;
- 2) learning outcomes for students (if applicable);
- 3) data or information collected on a regular basis (including how it is used);
- 4) information on one-time assessments done in the past 3-4 years;
- 5) examples of how assessment is used to change policies practices, or to inform improvements; and
- 6) contact information for assessment “point person”

Examples of some of the assessments used are listed in the side bar on this page.

Integrating Institutional Assessment Using the Performance Management System

The staff Performance Management Program (PMP) is designed to stimulate more dynamic goal setting at the university, ensure alignment of goals, reinforce activities and behaviors that support the university’s strategic direction, and create better communication between administrators and staff. The program provides a framework under which all university administrators and staff are reviewed for effectiveness.

The program consists of three distinct phases – planning performance expectations, managing performance, and appraising results at the end of the performance cycle. Each summer, after a unit sets its goals, staff members and managers are asked to identify ways for each staff member to best contribute to the attainment of department goals, which in turn support university goals. Assessment measures are agreed upon and standards for evaluating assessment results are set. The process ties together institutional assessment, with unit assessment and individual assessment.

TOOLS/RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR ASSESSMENT

American University has a wealth of information available to help it achieve its goals. The Examples of Assessment Resources

Examples of Regularized Unit Level Assessments

- *The Office of Multicultural Affairs conducts exit interviews with seniors and has used the information to revise the STEP program and the advising system.*
- *The Academic Support Center sends surveys to those who use tutoring services and has used the results to provide feedback to tutors and to change their scheduling procedures.*
- *The Dean of Students has incorporated the results of the Core Alcohol Survey into training for faculty teaching in the University College and has incorporated it into new student orientation.*
- *The Information Technology Help Desk, the Counseling Center, and many more units use ‘point of service’ surveys and metrics on service usage to help improve service.*
- *The Career Center sends evaluations to employers after job fairs and uses the information to inform advising, program and resource development.*

Table (p. 52) lists only a sample of the types of assessment activities that occur at the institution on a regular basis. While the list focuses primarily on Office of Institutional Research and Assessment activities, assessment occurs throughout the institution.

An example of a useful assessment tool is a data management and reporting website known as “Eagledata.” Eagledata is a password protected source for university statistics and reports that is available to managers and other authorized users inside the AU community. The information presented in Eagledata is extracted nightly from the university's operational data in the Colleague and Benefactor systems. Data are then placed in an Oracle-based data warehouse for storage and reporting. Eagledata also includes assessment data from other sources, such as student evaluations of teaching and reports on faculty load.

Eagledata was created to assist decision-makers as they manage their units and assess progress towards goals. It includes information on faculty workload, courses, student enrollment, student characteristics, housing, status of budget, budget projections, graduation rates, retention, and much more.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

American University values an open process where people have access to much of the evaluative assessment results. Information about American University is available to the public through a number of venues, including:

Academic Data Reference Book – AU produces a ‘fact book’ that provides information on many aspects of the university such as enrollment, admissions, retention, graduation, and faculty. This book is available in hardcopy at Bender Library. An electronic version is available at: <http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/oir/adrb/index.html>

College Navigator – Information about AU is available through “College Navigator” a web-based database containing specific information about 7,000 universities nation-wide. <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>

Common Data Set – The “Common Data Set” includes information about admissions, enrollment, financial aid, clubs, and other aspects of undergraduate life. While all institutions submit this information to the College Board, not every institution makes its report publically available. AU’s information is posted on the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment Website. The current link is: <http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/oir/CommonDataSet.pdf>

Voluntary Sarbanes-Oxley Review and Assessment

Although the Sarbanes-Oxley regulations do not apply to not-for-profit institutions, in the Fall of 2004, the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees accepted the recommendation from management that American University should be proactive in applying rigorous standards of internal control across the enterprise. Protiviti, the internal audit team, has been reviewing, documenting, and performing detailed testing of the University’s internal controls. To date no material weaknesses have been identified, and Protiviti has provided the Audit Committee with regular updates on their review. It is important to note that Protiviti, a leader in this field, has noted that they are aware of only a few not-for-profit organizations that have proactively undertaken such a review.

EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

American University has a comprehensive assessment plan that enables it to evaluate its overall effectiveness in all Middle States Standards. The following list relates to the 14 Middle States Standards: 1. achieving its mission, goals and objectives; 2. implementing planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal processes; 3. using institutional resources efficiently; 4. providing leadership and governance; 5. providing administrative structures and services; 6. demonstrating institutional integrity; 7. assuring that institutional processes and recourses support appropriate learning and other outcomes, 8. admitting students with compatible interests, goals, and abilities; 9. providing adequate and appropriate student support services; 10. facilitating engagement of high quality faculty; 11. providing and assessment rigorous educational offerings; 12. ensuring students acquire proficiency in general education; 13. providing related educational experiences; 14. assessing student learning, in which AU demonstrate collecting related information.

Assessment Resources	Primary Middle States Standard(s)	Other Middle States Standard(s)
Academic Program Review	1,2,11	8,12,13
Admit to Deposit, and Deposit to Enrolled Analysis	1	5
ASQ Admitted Student Questionnaire	8	1,7
Assessment of Student Learning	14	7, 11, 12
Benchmark data on costs, student quality, student success, etc.	7	2,3
Campus Climate Survey	7,9	8,12
CORE Alcohol Survey	9	-
Enrollment Budget Projections and Forecasting	2,3	5,7
Faculty Load Analysis	10	2,3,5
Faculty Scholarship and Service Analysis	10	2,3,5
Financial Aid Yield Analysis	1	2
Freshmen Survey	7	8
Graduate Program Retention/Completion Analysis	1,2,7	9,13
Graduating Student Survey (job/grad school outcomes)	14	7
Grants and Contracts Analysis	10	3
Identification of Students 'At Risk' of Attrition	1,2,7	9,13
Internal Audit/Budget Control	3	2,4,5
Law Student Survey of Student Engagement	7,9	10,14
LibQual Library Survey	3	2,4,5, 9
National Survey of Student Engagement	1,7,9	10,14
Professional Accreditation	1	7
Space Utilization Studies	3	2,4,5
Student Evaluations of Teaching	7,10	-
Study Abroad Program Pre and Post Departure Surveys	13	1
UCAN Participation	6	-
Undergraduate Graduation/Completion Analysis	1,2,7	9,13
Undergraduate Retention Analysis	1,2,7	9,13
Your First College Year Survey	7,14	11,13

INTEGRATING STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT INTO INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Section Two of this report highlights much of the progress that has been made in student learning assessment since the last *Self-Study*. This section of the report will not repeat the information on AU's significant progress on assessment of student learning. Rather, it points out a few of the ways that student learning and assessment is integrated into AU's overall institutional mission and goals. AU sees assessment of student learning as a shared responsibility with many units, not just traditional academic units. Many units in Campus Life, for example, have set explicit learning outcomes. Strategic Plan Transformational Goal Four, "Demonstrate Distinction in Graduate, Professional, and Legal Studies" and Transformational Goal Two, "Provide an Unsurpassed Undergraduate Experience" make explicit use of student learning and assessment reports, as well as data on learning outcomes metrics.

The link between assessment and institutional outcomes is, perhaps, most clearly visible in the assessment processes that have been put in place for institutional goals related to General Education and other university-wide programs. Examples include:

The General Education Program

The General Education Program is divided into five curricular areas; each area has three learning outcome goals associated with it, and there are also six goals for the program as a whole. These goals are posted on the program's website and published in ways that make the expectations of the program readily accessible to students.

Each year, one curricular area and two of the overall program goals are selected for review. Coordination of the review is overseen by the director of the program in conjunction with the general educational assessment coordinator (who is a member of the faculty). Each year, they appoint a team of faculty members to review student work and provide the director with a report that assesses student progress and provides recommendations. The assessment coordinator facilitates the use of assessment results. Recommendations are reviewed by the director with the assistance of the standing General Education Committee of the Faculty Senate. The General Education Committee is responsible for implementing recommendations. In order to integrate the assessment of general education with broader university goals, the director is a member of the Learning Assessment Committee. The findings will go to the vice provost for undergraduate studies and then to the provost for overall academic and budget planning.

College Writing

In 2008, the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences appointed a College Writing Task Force to review the College Writing Program. As part of the review, the group is reviewing appropriateness of the learning outcomes for the program, the role of the program in the overall mission of the institution, and the overall effectiveness of the program. The group may issue a report in summer 2009.

Math

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics conducted a complete review of the non-major courses in 2006, which resulted in the “Report of the Math Requirement Working Group.” The report suggested that it would be advisable to create an additional course which would teach broader mathematical goals. In that spirit, the Department has focused its assessment efforts on specific math courses, such as Finite Math. It piloted the use of a new textbook and conducted a survey comparing the traditional math class with the class using the new, broader textbook. The department continues to refine its courses by piloting changes and assessing results.

University College, Learning Communities, Washington Mentorship, Honors, and Other Programs

The university is dedicated to providing special programs with resources it needs to understand overall program effectiveness and success. While each program conducts its assessment in slightly different ways there are some commonalities:

- Focus groups. Focus groups are used early in the semester, so that programmatic issues are addressed early. Focus groups of others involved in the program, such as faculty, are also conducted.
- Surveys. Students are surveyed about the experience in the program, and the degree to which expected learning outcomes are met.
- Retention, student success, and other institutional data. Student retention rates are tracked and compared to students outside the program. Other institutional data is also used.
- Use of institutional survey information. Institutional surveys, such as NSSE, the Campus Climate Survey, and the Graduation Survey are broken out so that comparisons by program are available.
- Longitudinal analysis. For all programs, long term effects of the program are tracked. This includes tracking graduation rates, success in getting into graduate school, and other important indicators.

USING ASSESSMENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT: EXAMPLES SINCE THE LAST SELF-STUDY

American University uses assessment to ‘drill down’ on issues of concern and improve institutional effectiveness. Since the last *Self-Study*, AU has implemented numerous assessment strategies that have advanced its mission. From major challenges, such as reforming Board Assessment, to issues that affect the everyday life of students, AU has made significant improvements based on assessment. The following examples are meant to illustrate the ways in which assessment leads to analysis and analysis leads to improvement.

Board Assessment (self & external)

One of the most significant improvements in institutional assessment at American University in the past five years may be the measures that have been taken to assess Board of Trustee performance. In

2005-2006 following the presidential transition, American University's Board of Trustees undertook a thorough examination of its fiduciary responsibilities and practices that was precise, public, and done with considerable campus community involvement. The board created a "special committee on governance" on October 10, 2005, and charged it with conducting a self-critical review and identifying fiduciary best practices for AU trustees individually and for the board as a whole. The committee met formally 18 times from December 2005 through May 2006, in person and by means of conference call; dozens of meetings were also held with, and communications received from, an array of university constituencies.

The committee conducted a comprehensive review of pertinent literature and comparative data on university governance at institutions across the nation, reviewing board policies, bylaws, board practices, committee structures, campus involvement, trustee qualifications, trustee selection process, and other facets of responsible governance.

Assisting the university in its self-assessment and in compiling corrective measures was external consulting expertise – including Richard "Tom" Ingram, former president of the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), and Martin Michaelson, a nonprofit governance expert from the law firm Hogan & Hartson.

The full "Report and Recommendations of the Special Committee on Governance" was presented, discussed and unanimously accepted by the Board of Trustees on May 19, 2006; a special meeting was held on June 9, 2006 to formally enact bylaws policy revisions. Among a number of things, the result included bylaws revisions, adoption of a university-wide whistleblower policy, and the adoption of a policy on trustee conflicts of interest. The full report and changes are publicly posted on the AU Board of Trustees Web site. The adopted recommendations included matters such as:

- **Trustees** – expectations for performance, mechanisms for assessment, orientation of new members, conflict of interest policy;
- **Board** – composition, leadership, size, staffing, diversity, committee functions and charters, interaction with the president, interaction with constituencies, meeting frequency;
- **President** – employment contract and compensation, interaction with and role on board, expenditure review, performance review; and
- **Faculty and Students** – membership on and interaction with the board.

The result was the most comprehensive review of governance in the history of American University with a goal of greater transparency, stronger communication with faculty, students, alumni and all AU constituencies. A key aspect was the addition of three new (non-voting) trustees – two faculty members and a student member. An additional non-affiliated or "independent" representative was added who is a recent graduate of American University and whose selection would be based on consultation with student government and alumni representatives. While 85% of independent colleges and universities do not have faculty and student trustees, the board endorsed and adopted this concept as appropriate for American University.

AGB President Emeritus Tom Ingram predicted that the governance committees report and recommendations (adopted):

“ . . . will be studied intensely by the trustees and governing boards everywhere for many years to come. These governance reforms go beyond what was probably necessary to begin the healing process at the university and to restore trust and genuine communication among all who care deeply about its future. Although not all of the reforms will fit all universities, most of them will serve as solid benchmark policies and practices.”

In addition to the adoption of the formal report and recommendations in 2006, actual practices by the board in the three years that have followed have indicated vigorous follow through. The board and its members have embarked on a program of dedicated openness and accessibility, greater campus representation in board and committee discussions, and improved communications and stronger trustee presence on campus. The board authorized the creation of a governance web-site so that AU constituencies and the public were able to track the progress on governance reforms; and the board's own web-site was re-invigorated. The board chairman now issues a meeting summary to campus after each board meeting; and at least twice yearly, the board chair and university president host a campus forum to provide public access in a “town hall” meeting format.

Integrated Student Services Center (“One Stop” Center)

Through student surveys, focus groups, exit interviews and other feedback AU recognized that more needed to be done to help students understand registration procedures, financial aid requirements, student accounts expectations, and academic program requirements. The goal was to streamline processes in order to help students focus on their academics, instead of the business side of AU. Individuals representing relevant offices formed a Customer Experience Initiative Team (CEIT) in order to review metrics and strategize about ways to make the student experience better. In 2008, it recommended that the university develop a “One Stop” Center. The provost and vice president of finance, together, created a One Stop Shop Advisory Group. The group examined best practices from across the country and designed a plan that is now in the process of being implemented. The new one stop student service center is expected to open in late 2009. While the effect of the new center will not be known for some time, the work that the CEIT group did to address areas in need of improvement has already paid off in the form of higher student satisfaction as measured on the university's Campus Climate Survey.

Retention

American University has high expectations for student retention and believes that its retention rates could be higher for an institution of its caliber. In 2005, the provost created a Retention Working Group to explore ways to improve AU's retention. The group was asked to: 1) analyze and understand the major factors affecting undergraduate retention at AU; 2) document current retention efforts across AU; 3) develop strategies, informed by both expertise and research that can improve retention; 4) recommend an organizational structure that clearly places and coordinates responsibilities for retention; and 5) formulate a sustainable plan for tracking and assessing retention efforts. Working for almost a year, the group analyzed significant amounts of data, collected qualitative information from units across campus, and reviewed best practices from other institutions. It also brought in representatives from an institution that was similar to AU, but with better retention rates. As a result, the group issued a report that pointed out the need for better tracking of at-risk students, and better coordination between Campus Life and Academic Affairs. The work of the group led to the development of the University Experience Council, co-chaired by the dean of academic affairs and the dean of students that has created paired teams (one person

from each division). The teams track students 'at risk', develop strategies to improve the student experience, and offer opportunities for highly successful students to thrive. While improving the retention rate is a slow process, last year's retention rate was the second highest in AU's history and the current retention rate for the fall 2008 class appears to have met or exceeded last year's results.

CONCLUSION

American University continues to develop a culture that encourages assessment for continuous improvement. The new processes put in place to assess progress on the Strategic Plan, combined with the longtime structures of goal setting and assessment that have been in place for many years, should serve the institution well in the years to come.

SECTION SIX: LINKED INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND BUDGETING PROCESSES

The link between American University's institutional planning and budgeting processes has recently been reinforced through the development of the Strategic Plan and two-year budget. This section of the report presents American University's institutional planning and budgeting processes, with an emphasis on the strategic planning process that culminated in Board of Trustees approval of the university's new strategic plan – *American University and the Next Decade: Leadership for a Changing World* (Strategic Plan) – in November 2008.

The *Handbook for Periodic Review Reports* states, "...institutions that have developed effective strategic or long-range master plans may satisfy this requirement of the PRR by making reference to such documents in the PRR and by including the planning documents as attachments." In that spirit, it is appropriate to visit AU's Strategic Plan website: <http://www.american.edu/strategicplan>. Approval of the Strategic Plan coincided with planning for the university's budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, which provided the opportunity to effectively integrate the university's institutional planning and budgeting processes. Following a narrative on the university's strategic plan and budgeting processes, this section concludes with highlights of FY2010-FY2011 funding for Strategic Plan goals.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

American University and the Next Decade: Leadership for a Changing World

In November 2007, shortly after his inauguration as American University's 14th president, Neil Kerwin announced the start of a strategic planning effort. This charge outlined a broad scope and called for intensive involvement from all campus constituencies. A steering committee was convened shortly thereafter, consisting of representatives from across campus. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC) was charged with developing a plan for the next 10 years for every functional aspect of the university grounded in the institution's current strengths and future opportunities. (See <https://www.american.edu/strategicplan/scope.html>) From February to July 2008, the committee members analyzed trends in the higher education environment and other external factors, compiled and distributed information on the status of the university, conducted town hall meetings, collected and reviewed materials from constituent groups, reviewed institutional data, and met with faculty, students, staff, and alumni.

Participatory Process

In addition to the town hall events that attracted hundreds of participants representing a cross-section of the campus community, the Strategic Plan was discussed in each school and college and across administrative and academic units.

Opportunities to participate in the strategic planning process included:

- Full-day retreat involving the Strategic Planning Committee and the President's Council (June 13): The event was facilitated by Dr. Brent Ruben, executive director of the Center for Organizational Development and Leadership at Rutgers University. Attendees discussed AU's vision for the next ten years, fashioned exemplar goals to realize that vision, and completed an environmental analysis.
- Town hall forum (July 28): Approximately 100 staff, students, faculty, and alumni attended this forum. Each table was assigned two different themes (from the July 25 document) to evaluate.
- Half-day retreat with the President's Council (August 28): Senior administrators provided feedback on the draft strategic plan's themes, goals, and vision and engaged in a preliminary discussion of budget implications and implementation.
- Alumni chat (September 3).
- Faculty Senate meeting (September 3).
- Town hall forum (September 4): Approximately 70 staff and students attended this forum. Each table examined the draft strategic plan's meaning for a particular persona (tenured faculty, young staff member, undergraduate student, trustee, etc.).
- Student forum (September 6), in addition to late-August instant message chat opportunities.
- School/college, unit, and office meetings in late August/early September to discuss the draft strategic plan and provide feedback to the SPSC.

The committee also placed two full-page ads in the summer edition of *American* magazine inviting the submission of "big ideas" and encouraging alumni feedback on the plan. A common theme in feedback from all areas of the community centered upon the need for appropriate resources, coupled with the need for accountability, to bring the goals to fruition. Many in the community indicated an interest in specific action steps.

In all, more than 30 meetings were devoted to the Strategic Plan engaging more than 1,000 alumni, faculty, staff, students and administrators. Twenty-five alumni from across the country participated in the first of three online chats to discuss the draft strategic plan. Summary records for each meeting have been prepared and posted on the SPSC collaboration website, resulting in more than 130 pages of comments and ideas. The SPSC continually compiled and synthesized this voluminous input in order to uncover emerging themes and visions.

UNIVERSITY BUDGET PROCESS

Budget Year

The university's annual and long-term budget process provides a direct link between resource allocations and the university's mission, goals, and Strategic Plan. In November 2002, American University adopted a two-year budget process, which was approved by the Board of Trustees. The purposes of implementing a two-year budget process were: a) to provide a direct link between the university's Strategic Plan and the budget formulation process; b) to address multi-year financial implications; and c) to achieve operating efficiency.

The first two-year budget cycle was successfully implemented for FY2004-05, and has been followed by the successful planning and execution of FY2006-07 and FY2008-09 budget cycles. The proposed budget for the FY2010-2011 cycle, which is closely aligned with the university's new Strategic Plan, was approved by the Board of Trustees in February 2009. It was also unanimously approved by the Faculty Senate.

Though the two-year budget cycle was considered a success with a major paradigm shift for the organization, there was room for improvement to make the budget process more open and collaborative. Consequently, a University Budget Committee (UBC) was re-constituted in 2006 to seek broader participation from various campus constituencies and to increase communication and budget transparency. The UBC, co-chaired by the provost and the vice president of finance and treasurer, consists of leadership from the Faculty Senate, student representatives, staff representatives, and resource persons. The UBC is charged with making two sets of recommendations to the president: 1) budget formulation guidelines for inclusion in materials for the board's annual November meeting; and 2) specific revenue and expenditure recommendations that meet the university's annual and multi-year strategic goals and also produce balanced budgets for each of the fiscal years.

Upon the board's endorsement of the budget formulation guidelines, the president issues a budget call to his Cabinet, composed of the provost and vice presidents. The call initiates enrollment, tuition revenue, and other revenue categories. Simultaneously, expense budgets are reviewed and prioritized by each division head.

The provost and the vice president of finance and treasurer hold university-wide meetings to communicate the budget formulation and priorities, and to receive input from faculty, students and staff. The Faculty Senate reviews the proposed budget model and recommends academic priorities to the provost. Town meetings are sponsored by the vice president of campus life to hear student concerns.

The president presents a two-year budget proposal to the Board for approval at its annual February meeting. Upon approval, the president issues a special report to the university community, makes budget summaries and highlights available to the public, and sends budget allocation letters for two years to the provost and vice presidents. The Budget Office executes the approved budget on May 1.

Alternate Budget Year

During summer months, the provost and vice presidents compare original budget targets and actual performance in consultation with the deans and unit directors, and make necessary adjustments to the following year's goals. If significant changes to the second year budget, e.g., a change in tuition and residence hall increases in light of market conditions, expenditure priorities, etc., need to be made requiring the Board's approval, an amended budget for the second year is presented to the Board Finance and Investment Committee and the full Board at their annual February meetings. The president sends budget allocation letters to the provost and vice presidents for the second budget year. The Budget Office executes the approved budget on May 1. In the fall semester, the budget formulation process for the next two years is initiated.

Budget Process Recommendations from the *Self-Study*

While the responses to recommendations are covered in Section Two of this *Periodic Review Report*, it is helpful to summarize the recommendations that relate directly to the *Self-Study* here:

Recommendations	Actions Taken by the University
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the multi-year budgeting and financial planning strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ways to better educate the university community on the budget process and improve budget transparency. Reinforce efforts to ensure that general budget and performance information is widely shared within the division or department to ensure the budget performance assessment takes place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A series of town meetings and open forums were conducted to educate the university community and to increase communication about decision making. A University Budget Committee was formed to encourage collaborative input from the campus constituencies, including faculty, students, staff, and the university leadership. The budget committee collaborated with the strategic planning committee to produce a university operating budget that reflected alignment with the university's new Strategic Plan. The president met regularly with the University Council to keep the group up-to-date on the university's major projects and to solicit input from the group. Budget performance reports and reviews are conducted on a regular basis, including budget status reports to the Board of Trustees. The FY2010-2011 budget report to the community included a divisional budget for the provost and each vice president to further increase budget transparency. The FY2010-2011 budget report to the community also included a funding summary for strategic objectives and action steps.

LINKING PLANNING AND BUDGETING

The link between the university's new Strategic Plan and the budget development process was clear, and frequently reiterated in budget-related communications, throughout the planning process for the FY2010-2011 budget. The Strategic Plan goals guided the work of the University Budget Committee, which worked in concert with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, president's cabinet, and deans. Input and suggestions were solicited from the university community in a variety of ways, including town hall meetings.

The Budget Development Guidelines for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, approved by the board in November 2008, states that the new Strategic Plan will serve as the "guiding principle in formulating budget priorities," and the first budget formulation guideline listed states that "initial action plans for the next two years will be developed to implement the first phase of the new Strategic Plan." President Kerwin's budget call memorandum to his cabinet dated December 1, 2008 marked the formal start of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. In the memorandum, President Kerwin called on each member of the cabinet to develop action steps for his or her respective division or unit to meet the interim targets for each goal in the Strategic Plan. In compliance with President Kerwin's request, all budget proposals were structured in accordance with the plan. For each proposed action item and any pertinent funding allocation request, the Strategic Plan goal(s) it would advance was specified.

The link between proposed action items and funding allocation requests was maintained throughout the budget decision making process, which was finalized with the board's approval of the proposed FY2010-2011 budget in February 2009. The following list of Highlights of FY2010-2011 Funding for Strategic Plan Goals is included in President Kerwin's report on the budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, the president's official communication of the budget to the university community.

Highlights of FY2010-2011 Funding for Strategic Plan Goals

Some important objectives are funded within the current operating budget or through reallocations; some objectives require new resources as presented below.

(\$000's omitted)	Budget Allocations	
	FY2010	FY2011
STRATEGIC GOALS		
SP1 Epitomize the Scholar-Teacher Ideal		
Increase full-time faculty; make recruiting packages more competitive; increase faculty support	\$2,450	\$3,086
Close gap with AAUP 1 for Assistant Professor rank	100	200
Hire temporary faculty to meet enrollment increases	1,000	1,000
Adjust compensation rates for adjunct faculty to market	378	756
	<u>\$3,928</u>	<u>\$5,042</u>
SP2 Provide an Unsurpassed Undergraduate Experience		
Increase funding for athletics scholarships, staffing, marketing, intramurals and club sports	\$436	\$525
Implement integrated student services (One-Stop Center)	618	612
Increase student support including a new Women's Center	57	124
Provide resources to strengthen liberal arts/sciences, academic program development, and student research support	597	611
Enhance undergraduate marketing and recruitment including a new AU Welcome Center	1,505	1,505
	<u>\$3,213</u>	<u>\$3,377</u>
SP3 Demonstrate Distinction in Graduate, Professional, and Legal Studies		
Increase funding level and duration of Ph.D. awards for existing and expanded programs	\$375	\$875
Support dissertation program, online curriculum design for faculty, and graduate marketing	213	363
Create dedicated graduate study lounge in a bridge space between SIS and Library	325	325
	<u>\$913</u>	<u>\$1,563</u>
SP4 Engage in Great Ideas and Issues through Research, Centers, and Institutes		
Establish new research centers and improve research infrastructure	\$470	\$640
SP5 Reflect and Value Diversity		
Increase funding for STEP and alternative break trips	\$62	\$62
Increase support for Frederick Douglass Scholarship program, WINS, and faculty diversity initiatives	220	600
(Reallocation of financial aid to meet higher percentage of need - \$3.9M)	0	0
	<u>\$282</u>	<u>\$662</u>
SP6 Bring the World to AU and AU to the World	existing budget	
SP7 Act on Values through Social Responsibility and Service		
Provide support for the D.C. Reads Program	\$15	
Make progress toward the President's Climate Commitment Plan	520	\$15
	<u>\$535</u>	<u>520</u>

(\$000's omitted)	Budget Allocations	
	FY2010	FY2011
SP8 Engage Alumni in the Life of the University, On- and Off-Campus		
Increase funding for Development to support alumni relations and regional advancement	\$545	\$1,060
SP9 Encourage Innovation and High Performance		
Enhance staff training and career development program	\$250	\$250
Enhance General Counsel operations for compliance and to support external legal fees	215	340
Provide increased support for student activities, housing/dining programs, and web	59	100
Make a safer campus by increasing Public Safety officers	272	272
Increase base budgets for academic schools/colleges	1,000	1,000
	<u>\$1,796</u>	<u>\$1,962</u>
SP10 Win Recognition and Distinction		
Enhance branding campaign; marketing; digital media; website phase II	\$1,328	\$908
Cultivate partnerships to increase institutional visibility	150	180
	<u>\$1,478</u>	<u>\$1,088</u>

(\$000's omitted)	Budget Allocations	
	FY2010	FY2011
ENABLING GOALS		
EG1 Diversify Revenue Sources		
Enhance university asset management	\$192	\$192
Increase support for fundraising efforts in Development	205	440
Provide seed money for expansion of Washington Semester affiliated programs	290	290
	<u>\$687</u>	<u>\$922</u>
EG2 Employ Technology to Empower Excellence		
Implement IT Enterprise system enhancements	\$1,212	\$1,003
Implement business continuity plan	0	270
Renew technology life cycle capital programs	553	945
	<u>\$1,765</u>	<u>\$2,218</u>
EG3 Improve the University Library and Research Infrastructure		
Increase post-award faculty research and grant management	\$80	\$327
Increase funding for library collection and electronic databases	350	700
	<u>\$430</u>	<u>\$1,027</u>
EG4 Forge Partnerships by Leveraging our Capital Location		
	\$20	\$20
EG5 Continue as a Model for Civil Discourse		
	\$10	\$0
EG6 Align Facilities Planning with Strategic Goals		
Address facilities modernization, furnishings, and CRDM	\$275	\$2,275
Operations and maintenance for the new SIS building	0	1,300
Consulting for Master Plan	500	500
	<u>\$775</u>	<u>\$4,075</u>
TOTAL FUNDING	\$16,847	\$24,191

NEXT STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

As mentioned in Section Five, the president authorized the creation of a Strategic Plan Measurement Project Team to assist with monitoring the Strategic Plan. The team will play an important role in tracking and measuring the Strategic Plan's success over the next two years, and integrating Strategic Plan progress evaluation with institutional assessment. The team will track Strategic Plan goals in collaboration with representatives across divisions, and will report on progress to the president's cabinet.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

In the introduction to the Middle State *Characteristics of Excellence* it states that, “An institution of higher education is a community dedicated to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, to the study and clarification of values, and to the advancement of the society it serves.” A review of American University five years after its *Self-Study* reveals that AU continues to exemplify this ideal. In President Kerwin’s Inaugural Address, he described American University as a place where “knowledge is created, where knowledge changes lives and those lives go on to change the world.” As AU begins to implement its new Strategic Plan, it is clear that it is living up to the expectations it has set for itself. It is a financially strong institution with excellent administrators, faculty, staff and students. It is poised to build on its strengths and address areas in need of improvement. We appreciate the opportunity this *Review* has provided to reflect on our progress to date, and we look forward to sharing with Middle States the many successes that we anticipate in the years to come.

APPENDIX:

The following information is referred to in the report and available on American University's Middle States website (<http://www.american.edu/middlestates>)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- American University Mission, *Statement of Common Purpose*
<http://www.american.edu/president/statement-of-common-purpose.cfm>
- American University Strategic Plan, *Leadership for a Changing World*
<http://www.american.edu/president/reports/upload/AU-Strategic-Plan-adopted-Nov-2008.pdf>
- Strategic Plan Website
<https://www1.american.edu/strategicplan/>
- Information about AU Organization, Board of Trustees, Quick Facts
<http://www.american.edu/president/> including the section "Related Links"
- American University *Academic Data Reference Book*
<http://www1.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/oir/PDF/ADRB%202008-09.pdf>
- Periodic Review Coordinating Committee
<http://www.american.edu/middlestates/Coordinating-Committee.cfm>
- Middle States Website
<http://www.american.edu/middlestates>

SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2003-2004 Middle States Self-Study, including the report by the visiting team
<http://www.american.edu/middlestates/Self-Study-Report.cfm>
 - Program Review Requirements
Academic Program Review Template
(available only from the Middle States website - password protected.)
https://www1.american.edu/middlestates/report/docs/academic_program_review_template.pdf
 - Assessment of Student Learning
<http://www.american.edu/provost/assessment>
American University Assessment Plan- *American University Assessment and Processes*
Academic department assessment plans and progress on implementation
<http://www.american.edu/provost/assessment/>
 - Links related to Self-Study Recommendations
Presidents Announcements: <http://www.american.edu/president/Presidents-Announcements.cfm>
Updates on Strategic Plan: <http://www.american.edu/strategicplan>
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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental “SWOT” Analysis Completed by Strategic Planning Committee in July 2008
https://www.american.edu/strategicplan/pdf/docs/July_2008_Env_Scan.pdf
 - Information on *AnewAU*: <http://www.american.edu/anewau/>
 - Facilities Projects: <http://www1.finance.american.edu/fpd/projects.html>
 - Strategic Plan Website: <http://www.american.edu/strategicplan>
 - Communication: See President’s website, including links to Board of Trustees
 - Academic Leadership: <http://www.american.edu/provost>
 - Student Experience: See <http://www.american.edu/discoverau/rankings.cfm>
 - Brand Identity: <http://www.american.edu/>
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ENROLLMENT AND FINANCE TRENDS

- Historical Enrollment – 2004-2008
http://www1.american.edu/middlestates/Table_1_headcount_enrollment_historical.pdf
 - Historical Admissions- Table 31 *Academic Data Reference Book*
http://www1.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/oir/PDF/08_table31.pdf
 - Annual Reports (includes audited financial statements and accompanying management letters.)
<http://www.american.edu/finance/Annual-Reports.cfm>
 - Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 Budget
<http://www.american.edu/finance/upload/BudgetFY10-FY11.pdf>
 - The Financial Section Submitted to IPEDS
(available only from the Middle States website - password protected.)
IPEDS FY 2005-2006
https://www1.american.edu/middlestates/report/docs/IPEDS_FINANCE_FY05-06.pdf
IPEDS FY 2006-2007
https://www1.american.edu/middlestates/report/docs/IPEDS_FINANCE_FY06-07.pdf
IPEDS FY 2007-2008
https://www1.american.edu/middlestates/report/docs/IPEDS_FINANCE_FY07-08.pdf
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ORGANIZED AND SUSTAINED PROCESSES TO ASSESS INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING

- American University Assessment Plan, *American University Assessment Processes and Procedures*
 - Academic Assessment Plans
<http://www.american.edu/provost/assessment/>
 - Assessment of Strategic Plan
(available only from the Middle States website - password protected.)
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- Plan metrics
https://www1.american.edu/middlestates/report/docs/Presidents_Message_on_Strategic_Plan_Implementation.pdf
Example of tracking plan metrics
https://www1.american.edu/middlestates/report/docs/Examples_of_Tracking_Plan_Metrics.pdf
 - Public Accountability
Academic Data Reference Book
<http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/oir/adrb/index.html>
College Navigator
<http://www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>
Common Data Set
<http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/oir/CommonDataSet.pdf>
 - Board assessment procedures
<http://www.american.edu/trustees/policies.cfm>
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LINKED INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND BUDGET PROCESSES

- See Strategic Plan Website
<http://www.american.edu/strategicplan>
 - Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 Budget
<http://www.american.edu/finance/upload/BudgetFY10-FY11.pdf>
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Certification Statement
http://american.edu/middlestates/upload/Certification_Statement.pdf
 - On-line portions of Current Catalog
<http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/catalog.cfm>
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