Report to the
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Students

of
The College of the Holy Cross

by
An Evaluation Team representing the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
of the
New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Prepared after study of the institution’s
self-evaluation report and a visit to
the campus March 28-31, 2010

The members of the team:

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This report represents the views of the evaluation committee as interpreted by the chairperson. Its content is based on the committee’s evaluation of the institution with respect to the Commission’s criteria for accreditation. It is a confidential document in which all comments are made in good faith. The report is prepared both as an educational service to the institution and to assist the Commission in making a decision about the institution’s accreditation status.
COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
New England Association of Schools and College
Preface Page

Date form completed: 4/5/2010

Name of Institution: College of the Holy Cross

1. History
   Year chartered or authorized: __1843__
   Year first degrees awarded: __1849__

2. Type of control:
   - State
   - City
   - Other; specify: _____________________________
   - Private, not-for-profit
   - Religious Group; specify: __Roman Catholic,__
   - Proprietary
   - Other; specify: _____________________________

3. Degree level:
   - Associate
   - Baccalaureate
   - Masters
   - Professional
   - Doctorate

4. Enrollment in Degree Programs (Use figures from fall semester of most recent year):

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<th>Degree Level</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>Retention a</th>
<th>Graduation b</th>
<th># Degrees c</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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(a) full-time 1st to 2nd year  (b) 3 or 6 year graduation rate  (c) no. of degrees awarded most recent year

5. Number of current faculty:
   - Full time __244__
   - Part-time __62__
   - FTE: __284.8__

6. Current fund data for most recently completed fiscal year: (Specify year: FY 2009)
   (Double click in any cell to enter spreadsheet. Enter dollars in millions; e.g., $1,456,200 = $1.456)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenues</th>
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<td>Gov't Appropriations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gifts/Grants/Endowment</td>
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<td>Auxiliary Enterprises</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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7. Number of off-campus locations:
   - In-state __0__
   - Other U.S. __0__
   - International __0__
   - Total __0__

8. Number of degrees and certificates offered electronically:
   - Programs offered entirely on-line __0__
   - Programs offered 50-99% on-line __0__

9. Is instruction offered through a contractual relationship?
   - No
   - Yes; specify program(s): _____________________________

10. Accreditation history:
    - Candidacy: None
    - Initial accreditation: December 1930
    - Last comprehensive evaluation: Spring 2000
    - Last Commission action: Accepted the fifth-year interim report
    - Date: April 21, 2005

11. Other characteristics:
Introduction

The Holy Cross visiting team conducted its evaluation based on prior study of extensive written materials as well as intensive on-campus interviews, meetings, and further review of relevant documents between March 28 and March 31, 2010. The team is immensely grateful to the Holy Cross faculty, staff members, students, and trustees for providing each of us with a remarkable learning experience. We were met by individuals and groups with attentiveness, openness, helpfulness and enthusiasm.

The mission-driven, thoughtful, loyal and engaged culture of Holy Cross was evident in every aspect of the team’s visit. This is an educational community that is justly proud of its special character and accomplishment, and one that has stayed deeply and pervasively true to its mission. The faculty is devoted to meeting the highest standards in both teaching and scholarly work. The students are enthusiastic about the dual purposes of learning and service to others and warmly appreciative of how much they have gained and grown because of their close working relationships with faculty and staff members. The college is blessed with strong leaders, teachers, and staff members at every level who strive to sustain and enhance this special place, and the team was impressed by the talent, achievement and vision of this academic community.

The accreditation self-study served us well as a comprehensive document reflecting on the ways in which the College addresses all 11 NEASC standards and providing evidence that Holy Cross has worked hard, since its last NEASC review, to make progress in the areas of planning, governance, assessment, and student diversity that were identified as meriting attention.

Standard 1: Mission and Purposes

The distinctive mission and purposes of Holy Cross are articulated in a mission statement recommended by vote of the Faculty Assembly after wide consultation and accepted by the Board almost two decades ago, in 1992. As a document written in four substantial paragraphs, the Holy Cross mission statement is at once longer than statements of mission and purpose found at several comparable institutions and yet, it seemed to us, more widely read, actively understood, and deeply valued than many. Setting out to elucidate the meaning of the key phrase, “Jesuit liberal arts college,” and emphasizing the dual goal of intellectual and spiritual development, the mission statement is not only printed in all the customary places—the catalogue, the student handbook, the employee handbook, and so forth—but also imprinted on the community. All individuals and groups we spoke with emphasized their keen awareness of the College’s mission. Members of the self-study committee remarked that the process of preparing the NEASC self-study made it even clearer how Holy Cross has internalized a sense of shared purpose; in one member’s words, “this college has never had an identity crisis.” Students spoke passionately about the importance of the college’s mission from their first day on campus, and they have a concise version of the mission that resonates in their collective identity: “Men and women for others.” The formal mission statement has been used to inform administrative and curricular planning since 2000. Foundational to the development of the current Strategic Plan 2007-2011, it has also shaped planning and programming in many areas of the campus,
ranging from the Division of Student Affairs to Information Technology Service, and is also strongly reflected in the new first-year curriculum, Montserrat.

The previous NEASC report (2000) expressed a concern that it might be difficult to sustain the Holy Cross mission without a “critical mass” of faculty (both Catholic and Jesuit and non-Catholic and non-Jesuit) willing to entertain and debate the religious and ethical questions that are at the heart of the mission statement. The evaluating team at that point queried one sentence in particular and wondered if the College was adequately providing all students an opportunity “to encounter the intellectual heritage of the Catholicism.” We did not find extensive concern about this question today, although we did hear from a few faculty members who perceived that the College was emphasizing its Catholic and Jesuit identity more than other Jesuit universities and that this emphasis could leave some of their colleagues feeling excluded.

Several structures and processes have been designed to focus attention on mission and identify at the College, and we trust that this latter concern can and should be considered through these avenues. The Center for Religion, Ethics, and Culture was established in 2000 to provide resources and support for events and programs demonstrating how “faith and learning are partners in a liberal education.” The Office of the College Chaplains sponsors many service and social justice programs that intentionally carry out the mission, as does the work of the Donelan Office of Community-Based Learning. The president has also established a campus Committee on Mission and Identity, which operates with four sub-committees respectively responsible for “Jesuit heritage” programming, faculty development, administrative and staff development, and goals and outcomes. Furthermore, their work on mission and identity is overseen and assessed by a standing committee of the Board on Mission and Identity, and the Director of the Office of Assessment and Research meets regularly with the trustees to review the data now being collected to guide the assessment of the College’s mission.

**Institutional Effectiveness:** As the evidence suggests, the Holy Cross community seeks to align its mission thoroughly and consistently with planning and implementation efforts at every level. It is anticipated that as the twentieth anniversary of the current Mission Statement approaches (in 2012), the College will be well positioned to review and if appropriate update the statement.

**Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation**

In both the last ten-year review (2000) and in the fifth-year follow-up (2005) NEASC’s CIHE has called for more evidence that Holy Cross has made progress with regard to planning and evaluation as well as the assessment of student learning outcomes. The CIHE’s 2005 letter observed that a process had been established in 2003 to develop a Strategic Plan, but that a progress report on its implementation would be needed. The letter further noted that in spite of a number of “informal departmental assessments, the appointment of a dean to oversee assessment efforts…the College reports that no institution-wide formal outcomes assessment process has been undertaken, and that no relationship between these efforts and strategic planning has been established.” While much remains to be done, in recent years Holy Cross has made substantial progress with regard to institutional planning and evaluation.
Planning: Following a series of informal Trustee retreats in summer of 2002, a Planning Steering Committee (PSC) composed of representatives from key areas of the College was created in May 2003. The PSC and/or the President authorized studies to be undertaken in a number of areas of strategic interest to the College and enlisted outside support from the Linkage, Inc. consulting firm. The results of the studies were reviewed by the President’s Cabinet and presented at Trustee meetings in May and September 2005. The resulting Strategic Plan for 2007 to 2011, presented at Board meetings in May and September 2005, identifies six major strategic priorities:

1) A faculty salary initiative to improve Holy Cross’s competitive position
2) New construction and renovation of science facilities (Haberlin Hall) [Completed in 2010]
3) Improving funding for financial aid in order to maintain its commitment to admit student without regard to financial need
4) A major marketing/admissions initiative to help diversify the student body, to bring more students from outside of New England, and to compete effectively in a market where cost and demographic changes make it increasingly difficult to attract students to a college with a clear Jesuit mission
5) Curricular initiatives, including its Montserrat first year program which integrates focused academic study and residential life, improving off-campus study experiences, and reviewing core area curricular requirements
6) Providing discretionary funds for “Presidential Initiatives”, particularly with regard to improving student outcomes assessment, improving faculty development, and initiatives that directly support Holy Cross’s Jesuit mission and values.

There has been substantial progress in addressing each of the initiatives, more of which will also be addressed in reports on other Standards. As the AY 2007 – 2011 plan draws to a close, the Strategic Planning committee is already drafting a list of goals and priorities for the next plan (2012-2016). The committee is chaired by the Senior Vice President and includes representatives from major divisions of the College. A draft plan is expected to be vetted with the campus community by January 2011 and reviewed by the Trustees in spring/summer 2011. The first plan was carried out in a period where supporting resources were clearly identifiable; the current economic situation suggests that long range planning will be more unpredictable, and that more hard choices and tradeoffs may need to occur.

Several divisions of the College have developed their own strategic plans or sets of long range goals, as will be reported in other standards.

Evaluation: The Annual Report to Trustees includes comprehensive reports from each area of the College detailing recent accomplishments and listing goals for the coming year(s). Most reports are well-supported with data and with a statement of how activities in the area support the overall Jesuit mission of the College. Many reports include a local divisional mission statement. The Executive Summary of the report includes six pages of Key Indicators (Student Enrollment, Faculty/Staff, Fund-raising, Financial Indicators, Operating Results, and Student Outcomes). These include five years of trends, comments about key changes in the current year, and major goals for the coming year.
The College has adopted a Balanced Scorecard approach to evaluation. The Office of Planning and Budget and the Office of Assessment and Research work together with others to update the Scorecard. The process of identifying critical indicators in the scorecard revealed several “gaps” in desired outcomes data that the College is now trying to find ways to collect on a regular basis. For example, the need for an “employee satisfaction” indicator has prompted Holy Cross to plan for an upcoming employee survey. Holy Cross has recently instituted a formal evaluation of key administrators using a 360 degree model.

**Academic and Student Outcomes Assessment:** In 2007 Holy Cross established the Office of Research and Assessment (OAR), using Presidential discretionary funds. It is currently staffed by one Director and a half-time program support person. OAR reports to the Senior Vice President of the College, but works closely with the Dean of the College, the Office of Planning and Budget, and many other offices around the College. The director sits on many high level committees, including the Human Subjects Review Board. The Office of Planning and Budget has historically had, and will retain, most of the responsibility for many of the external reporting and peer analysis functions that are often assigned to an Institutional Research office in other institutions. This allows the OAR director to focus more directly on assessment issues.

The College routinely administers several nationally-normed student surveys, including the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Cooperative Institutional Research Project Freshman Survey (CIRP), College Senior Survey (CSS), and several surveys dealing with wellness, drugs and alcohol, and residence life issues. Holy Cross also participates in consortial studies, such as the climate survey sponsored by the Consortium of High Achievement and Success and the Wabash College Study of Liberal Arts Education. A multi-year cycle of surveys has been established, with cohort-based surveys rotated on a staggered basis, so that students won’t be over-surveyed.

Assessment at the College-level is supported by a Campus-Wide Assessment Committee (CWAC), co-chaired by the OAR director and the Senior Vice President. CWAC helps OAR set priorities, and the committee recently adopted a “Assessment Data Collection, Use and Dissemination Policy.” Shortly before the visiting team’s arrival, the Faculty Assembly narrowly rejected a revision of statutes to create a permanent College-wide Academic Assessment Committee. A two-thirds majority vote was required, but only 63% supported the committee. Faculty who were interviewed gave many reasons for the failure of a statutory committee. While most faculty generally acknowledged the need for assessment of student learning, some feel that liberal arts learning can be “ineffable” and difficult to measure. Some resist having standards of assessment imposed upon them from outside the institution. Many opposed adding another committee to the governance structure, or were concerned about the additional time that more formal assessment will require. Efforts are ongoing to create a two-year ad hoc committee to address immediate assessment issues.

In April 2009, the Faculty Assembly approved a set of institutional “Goals of Liberal Arts Education” that had been developed by an earlier ad hoc committee on assessment. These goals are published in the current catalogue. Every academic department has identified student
learning outcomes for its major(s). Department annual reports are required to include a section on assessment, and the Dean of the College has recently responded to each of these plans with letters that acknowledge progress made (or lack thereof) and offer suggestions for future improvements. The campus-wide academic assessment process has been by design highly decentralized, and progress in documenting improvements in student learning is uneven and varies by department. OAR has started to track annual departmental progress towards a comprehensive assessment program, and approximately half of departments have reached the stage of actively gathering data for assessment. Even fewer have reported how findings from data-based research have led to changes or improvements in pedagogy or student learning.

Previously, the College has had no formal system or timetable for departmental reviews, and no tradition of bringing in outside reviewers. A tentative schedule now exists, with the goal of having each department reviewed every five to seven years. In the last two years, six departments have done reviews with the assistance of peer reviewers. So far, only one review has been completely finished with comments and a response from the Dean of the College. Many faculty need guidance and training in the language and methods of assessment.

OAR and the Dean of the College have sponsored six workshops for faculty in conducting assessment, including two led by outside experts. Some included presentations by faculty members who have already adopted assessment methods in their areas. Funds are available for assessment workshops and department start-up projects from the Presidential Discretionary Fund and from the Senior Vice President. The College was also recently informed that it would receive a grant to create a Teaching and Learning Center, to be established within a year. This should become a forum for sharing information about student learning outcomes and methods for assessment. Holy Cross, St. Anselm College, and Assumption College were recently awarded a Teagle Grant to support a cooperative program to assess student development in connection with religious experiences.

The College has developed a cycle of nationally respected student surveys, providing a wealth of data at the institutional level, but it remains to be seen how useful these can be applied to improving learning in the academic departments. The College is seeking to develop more direct measures of student learning, and it might also make better use of evidence from other sources, such as focus groups, and/or the administrative database. The director currently has no direct access to Admissions, Student Records, or Alumni databases, and must request extracts from others when information is needed for assessment projects. Future (and growing) needs for assessment support suggest that she will need direct query and reporting access to do her job effectively. A current project by ITS to develop an institutional data warehouse should make the extraction of assessment-related data much easier.

Ultimately, responsibility for academic assessment needs to be shared by faculty, administration, and the Office of Assessment and Research, but much of the routine burden of collecting and distributing information falls to the assessment office, and the director is torn between that and the need to be present on many College committees. The College may wish to consider whether the academic assessment functions may need more staff as more assessment activities get underway, and departments will require more support. As others discover the capabilities of
OAR, and as data become more readily available (and required), its workload should increase sharply. Likewise, as departments and programs work to review curricular changes and to implement periodic departmental reviews, they will need more training, financial support, and perhaps release time to implement work that can only be done at the departmental level.

**Institutional Effectiveness:** Goals in major College areas are clearly stated and closely connected to the mission of the College. They are communicated to the Trustees in the Annual Report, with data to support and monitor changes, using a Balanced Scorecard approach. Trustees are actively involved in all phases of the planning process. The College has made extensive use and effective of outside consultants to provide an unbiased perspective on various programs. Although in its early stages, Holy Cross is beginning to make progress in the area of academic and student learning outcomes assessment as well as institutional planning and evaluation since the fifth year report. There is much stronger evidence of improvement in the strategic planning side, since this activity began much earlier in the decade. Many assessment activities could not begin until the College had decided on revised curriculum standards, established departmental goals and learning outcomes.

**Standard 3: Organization and Governance**

Holy Cross has a comprehensive set of institutional bylaws which are supplemented by the Faculty Statutes and the by-laws for the Student Government Association. These governance documents provide the Board of Trustees, the administration, the faculty, the staff, and the students clear and appropriate roles in insuring the functioning of the institution in a manner consistent with its mission and goals.

The Board functions effectively and independently in the best interests of the institution, and has put in place procedures for insuring it's own integrity in financial and management matters as well as the integrity of the institution and its employees. The Board regularly reviews institutional planning and initiatives, finances, the mission of the institution, and its own effectiveness; it does so with a well-conceived committee structure as well as in general meetings of the entire Board. It engages in regular biennial retreats, each focused on one or more key issues. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees does annual reviews of the President's performance, and works with the President to review the performance of the senior administrative officers of the institution. It also engages in regular consultation with faculty, students, and staff in order to remain well informed about the functioning of the College.

The President has established a clear organizational system of reporting relationships through which the major academic and business functions are accomplished. Although related administrative offices are sometimes not assigned to the same administrative reporting areas, senior administrators and managers have developed a system of personal relationships and operating collaborations across reporting lines which serve to achieve the institution's goals. Because many of the organizational structures arise from and depend upon the talents and preferences of individual senior officers, they are re-evaluated by the President regularly, and particularly when there is changeover in personnel.
Both students and faculty have well-defined roles in the shared governance structure. Students are involved in a wider range of academic decision-making at Holy Cross than is typically the case at other institutions, but students are both energetic and extremely responsible and helpful participants in student government and college-wide governance roles.

The faculty governance system was last reviewed and revised about fifteen years ago, and seems to have become an onerous and not always effective system of faculty participation in shared governance. There is a general expectation that all faculty serve on the various elected and appointed committees within the system (or which there are many), and unlike at many other institutions, junior faculty are expected to present a portfolio of significant committee service in order to achieve tenure. The majority of faculty and many administrators who met with the Site Visit Team complained of the cumbersome, often redundant, and onerous systems which sometimes saddles faculty members with committee assignments they neither want nor are well suited to perform. The current system does not appear to be serving either the faculty or the college well.

**Institutional Effectiveness:** Holy Cross has a system of governance that supports the accomplishment of its mission and provides appropriate support for the functioning of the institution. The commitment and effective functioning of the Board of Trustees both individually and as a unit is a significant strength, as is the willingness of key administrators and managers to form effective operating teams across administrative reporting lines to accomplish the institution's mission and strategic goals. Students are responsible participants in the governance of the institution. The faculty are committed to participating the many elected and appointed committees and advisory boards the current faculty governance system requires. However, the current system of faculty governance is overly labor intensive, includes sometimes redundant committees and committee activities, and is based on a nomination and election system that often distributes the service workload unequally and with inconsistent regard for the preference, abilities and rank of individual faculty who participate. The faculty governance structure and processes have not been reviewed systematically for over a decade and should be re-examined in the spirit of Standard 3.12 (Institutional Effectiveness in Organization and Governance).

**Standard 4: The Academic Program**

**Undergraduate Education and the Major or Concentration:** Holy Cross has a longstanding focus on undergraduate education in the liberal arts and sciences. The commitment to liberal arts education is clear in the mission statement and is reaffirmed by the administration and faculty for the Bachelor of Arts degree, the only degree offered by the College. All students are required to fulfill the Common Requirements (general education) that include one course each in Arts, Literature, Studies in Religion, Philosophical Studies, Historical Studies, and Cross Cultural Studies; and two courses each in Language Studies, Social Science and Natural and Mathematical Sciences, as well as a major concentration. Additionally, first-year students participate in Montserrat, a multi-disciplinary academic experience. Only one semester of Montserrat can be counted toward the Common Requirements.
Major requirements beyond the core vary by department in terms of the number of courses required, but all seem to provide the depth and sequencing of study typically associated with a major and support students who continue on to graduate and professional study (roughly 22% of alumni in the last two years). There is no mandate that majors require formal capstone experiences.

Retention (94-96%) and graduation rates (89-92%) for students at Holy Cross are consistent and high. On significant note, graduation rates for NCAA athletes (93%) and ALANA students (87-90%) (African-, Latin-, Asian-, and Native-Americans), who comprise 22% of the current first-year class and 17% overall, are consistently high.

New majors, four in the last ten years, and new courses are reviewed by the Committee on the Curriculum. Concentrations and majors are approved by the faculty (through the Faculty Assembly).

In addition to the major, students also have the ability to choose a second major, minors, or concentrations (multidisciplinary minors). Over the past 5 years, 15% of students have graduated with double majors, and about 45% have graduated with some type of multiple plan. Additionally, students are able to design their own multidisciplinary majors or minors, after an appropriate approval process.

Since the last self-study, the College has conducted a comprehensive curriculum review process. One significant result to come out of this process was the expansion of the College’s first year program (which involved 20% of the class) to all first-year students. This new program, entitled Montserrat, seeks to “unite curriculum, co-curriculum and extra-curriculum, toward educating the whole person” and introduces all Holy Cross students to the “life of the mind.” The design of this new program included its own program of assessment. As another part of the comprehensive curriculum review, a committee on the Common Requirements was formed with a mandate to “review [the] Common Requirements especially with an eye toward the aim of intellectual integration.” After the review of several proposals, the Faculty Assembly formally tabled the proposals and the process ended. Another area on which the faculty could not come to agreement dealt with the College’s Honors Program.

As previously noted, last year the College began a process of Departmental review, using external input as part of the process. Three departments are scheduled to undergo this process each year, resulting in a 5-year cycle College-wide. To date, one department (Visual Arts) has completed the entire process and is reviewing the results in anticipation of making improvements.

**Assessment of Student Learning:** There is no capstone or comprehensive examination requirement for graduation.

As noted above, in October 2006, the College created an *ad-hoc* Committee on College-Wide Academic Assessment with a mandate to formulate a “comprehensive set of assessable learning
outcomes…that address the College’s four-year undergraduate program of study.” In April 2009, the Faculty Assembly approved a list of learning goals for the College.

The College, based on NSSE data, has begun to question if students are receiving the oral and written communications skills that they need. In 2008, the College commissioned an external review of writing instruction. The reviewers concluded that language arts pedagogy, especially related to written and oral composition, is not sufficiently informed by current research on teaching and learning. In response, the College has moved responsibility for the Writers Workshop to the Office of Academic Services and Learning Resources and the Dean and English Department are discussing a possible position in the area of writing pedagogy.

The College asserts that the Common Requirements in Natural and Mathematical Science and in Social Science serve to develop the areas of Quantitative Literacy in a significant majority of students. Based on the fact that “critical examination of fundamental…questions” lies at the heart of the College’s mission, students should be well prepared for Critical Analysis and Logical Thinking. In both cases, the documented evidence is limited.

As also observed in discussion of Standard 2, since the production of the self-study report, a motion to establish a statutory (standing) committee on academic assessment was narrowly defeated by a vote of the Faculty Assembly (63% voted in favor, with 2/3 required for adoption). It is believed that the rejection of the proposal resulted from a concern on the part of some about the additional service burden required to those elected to the committee; others were unclear about the relationship of this committee’s work (which was to oversee assessment of the general education program) to assessment within the departments. The Dean plans to form an ad-hoc group to carry out this work for the next two years. After that period, there would be another attempt to establish a permanent committee.

Recently, all departments have developed their own mission statements and learning outcomes for their programs. At the time of the site-visit, approximately half of all departments were in the process of gathering data to carry out some form of assessment.

In January 2010, five departments presented results to the faculty of their work on assessing their own programs. The Economics department presented an example of using assessment data to add a course to their departmental offerings, to address a weakness they discovered in the assessment data. This example of closing the loop is hoped to provide an internal success story for assessment.

In the past three years, Holy Cross has undertaken several internal efforts to gather data on learning outcomes to complement the data they derive from participation in national surveys like NSSE, CIRP, and Wabash. They have created a new Office of Assessment and Research and appointed a Director with specific expertise in educational assessment, as well as a part-time assistant in the office. They have established learning outcomes at the College and departmental level and have begun data collection to support efforts at the departmental level. The next steps are to increase the level of buy-in among the faculty, increase data collection and to begin to close the assessment loop. Work also needs to begin on developing strategies for assessment of
the General Education Program. Significant progress has been made in the last few years. However, the majority appears to be “top-down,” being lead by the administration.

**Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit:** Holy Cross monitors a grading scale that seeks to resist the pressure towards grade inflation. The average grade for the academic year 08-09 was 3.24; the average for Fall 09 was 3.21; for Spring, 3.28. Credit for the four courses required each semester is clearly described.

**Institutional Effectiveness:** In the last five years the faculty and administration at Holy Cross have made progress in defining learning outcomes as a means of improving all aspects of their traditional liberal arts undergraduate academic program. Their graduation rates and retention rates are consistently high for all categories of students (ALANA, student athletes, and the general population). They have developed learning outcome measures and have models of assessment that have led to changes in some departmental major programs. While they have not yet closed the assessment loop with regard to using data to inform decisions about the academic program, they have declared goals to institutionalize data gathering and interpretation and to use it more effectively in strengthening the quality of their education and achieving their distinctive institutional mission.

**Standard 5: Faculty**

Members of the visiting committee met formally and informally with a range of faculty members, including most department chairs, twenty seven assistant professors, numerous associate professors and professors, as well as a few administrative faculty, defined as “persons with faculty status by reason of their office.” We found a group of dedicated teachers, actively engaged in excellent teaching and scholarship, and deeply committed to the mission of Holy Cross and its centrality for the Liberal Arts at their institution.

In the past decade, Holy Cross has increased the number of tenure track faculty. In 1999, the College had 204 faculty members in tenure ranks and in 2009, the number had risen to 230. The reliance on non-tenure track faculty has not increased, and the student-faculty ratio has improved from 12.4:1 to 10.4:1. The College also changed the teaching load of faculty in tenure ranks from 3/3 to 3/2. Full-time visiting faculty and adjuncts are used to meet short-term needs. Visiting faculty teach a 3/3 course load and receive a salary set at 72.5% of the entry-level tenure track salary. Adjuncts generally hold the rank of lecturers and are paid per course. Some have a long-standing relationship with the College. The teaching obligations of the administrative faculty are not described in the self-study. Another significant change has involved a plan to enhance salary increases for faculty in order to close the gap between the salaries at Holy Cross and those at comparable institutions. Faculty research support programs include Junior Research Leaves for faculty after two years of service, but before the review for tenure, and sabbatical leaves for tenured faculty after six years of service; there are also Summer Faculty Fellowships, start-up funds for all new tenure-track faculty, and funds for travel to conferences (which some members of the faculty perceive as insufficient). The Self-Study observes that fewer resources are devoted to support for pedagogical development, however.
Tenure track faculty responsibilities at Holy Cross include a number of activities. Teaching is particularly emphasized; according to the Statutes of the Faculty the College expects faculty to demonstrate “effectiveness in communicating the content of the discipline and in stimulating intellectual curiosity and disciplined inquiry” as well as “direction and evaluation of students, in and out of the classroom.” Faculty members are therefore expected to evaluate learning processes and outcomes in courses, advise students, engage in scholarly research, and participate in committees and curricular development. One example of the engagement of the faculty in curricular development is the recent comprehensive review of the College curriculum, which lasted for seven years. Another example is the development of the Montserrat Seminars. A Montserrat Seminar is a two-semester course organized into one of five clusters for all first-year students. Monserrat Seminar members live in a residence hall assigned to the cluster and take part in activities designed for the cluster and the seminars. Participation in Monserrat Seminars requires substantial work on the part of the faculty; some faculty felt that there should be additional compensation.

Guidelines for faculty recruitment and appointment as well as tenure decisions and promotions are described in the Statutes of the Faculty. Procedures are also spelled out in the Faculty Handbook on Tenure and Promotion Procedures, and an ad-hoc Committee on Tenure and Promotion Procedures (CTPP) has been charged with the task of reviewing these documents as well as “the practices that have evolved outside the framework of governance documents.” The committee will seek to improve the existing protocols to achieve uniformity and greater transparency and will review the participation of students in tenure decisions and promotions, as well as the long-standing Holy Cross tradition of not using external peer reviews at tenure time.

As the self-study indicates, faculty have reported, as they did to the visiting team, that expectations and workloads have “increased steadily” since the College adopted the five-course load policy. Service demands have also grown. Although the Self-Study did not include an organizational chart of standing committees, Holy Cross appears to have an unduly cumbersome committee structure for a faculty that takes its teaching duties extremely seriously and is also engaged in research. The structure becomes additionally burdensome at times because of the creation of ad-hoc committees.

The College has made important strides towards increasing the number of women faculty in the ranks--they are slowly reaching the rank of full professor in appreciable numbers. From 26% of the tenure-track faculty in 1989-90, they rose to 46% in 2008-2009, making up over half of the assistant professors, under half of the associate professors and under a third of the full professors. Women faculty members are often holders of endowed rotating chairs but not of permanent endowed chairs. The Faculty Assembly has recently amended the language associated with the requirement for promotion to the rank of Professor. It is the hope that this new language/criteria will encourage more faculty (especially women) to apply for promotion.

At the same time, according to the Self-Study, the racial and ethnic composition of the faculty has “barely changed.” This is a particularly serious issue because the College has been successful in attracting and retaining a growing number of minority students. The Self-Study observes that Holy Cross “has made a late start in seeking to address issues of faculty diversity and inclusion,”
and notwithstanding its commitment to Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity, the College has been less successful in recruiting minority faculty than it desires, and, more importantly, in retaining them. In the Fall of 2008, the Dean of the College asked two diversity consultants to visit the campus and write a report. Both documents were circulated and an ad-hoc committee spent the Summer of 2009 drafting recommendations. Discussions have continued, but no decisions have been taken.

**Institutional effectiveness.** Holy Cross has improved support for faculty through recent salary initiatives and has protocols in place for reviewing the effectiveness of faculty as teachers, scholars, and participants in the shared governance of the institution. Its practices and policies have not yielded the desired results in recruiting and retaining minority faculty.

**Standard 6: Students**

The Jesuit mission of Holy Cross is expressed and alive explicitly and implicitly in the programs and services available to students and made manifest in the experiences of the students themselves. The self-study states that “Holy Cross graduates are accomplished but modest, capable of great achievement but aware of their obligation to use their gifts in the service of others, and prepared for leadership in a rapidly changing world.” This is a powerful statement that was supported by students’ comments about their experiences and what they value and appreciate most about their college experience.

**Admissions, Retention, and Graduation:** Holy Cross enjoys a solid enrollment pool, both in terms of numbers and in terms of qualifications and diversity. The current senior class, the Class of ’10, represents a pivotal year for the College in terms of the number of applications received – a total of 6,706 applications, which represents an increase of 41% over the previous year. The increased number of applicants contributed to a reduction in the acceptance rate from 48% for the prior year’s class to 34% for the Class of ’10. (The total number of applications and the acceptance rate for subsequent classes have held consistently at these new “normals” for the College.) Yield has remained essentially constant since the College’s last accreditation, at approximately 30%. The admission staff attribute these positive changes to the combination and influence of two primary factors: an aggressive marketing campaign and the elimination of the requirement that applicants report standardized testing scores.

Over the past ten years, the College has made a concerted effort to increase its percentage of enrolled ALANA students, and 22% of the current first-year class, the Class of ’13, are ALANA students – more than in any previous class and double what it was ten years ago. In 2000, the College received a $1 million grant from the Cassin Educational Initiative Foundation devoted to the recruitment of ALANA students. The grant supported three new positions in the admissions and financial aid offices. The College has since absorbed and covered the funding for these positions in the operating budget. Faculty, staff, and students universally commented positively on the efforts and achievements of the College in this area. While there is no specific goal for the percentage of ALANA students, generally the admissions staff have set a target to achieve 25% ALANA students within a few years time.
The College maintains a need-blind admissions policy, along with a strong commitment to meet 100% of demonstrated financial need. This policy and commitment appear to be supported fully by the president and senior administration, as well as by the Board of Trustees. The College recognizes the potential challenge of its policy and commitment but states it has already prioritized them—and will continue to do so--accordingly when assessing and allocating its limited pool of resources against its current and future strategic goals, and also in light of the current economic climate and multi-year financial projections.

The admission and financial aid processes are set out in clear and comprehensive detail in the publications and on the websites of the respective offices. Staff members are in the process of evaluating and implementing the required disclosures in accordance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

Holy Cross ranks among the best in class in terms of retaining and graduating its students, with first-year to second-year retention rate averaging 94% for the past five entering classes, and the six-year graduation rate for the past five graduating classes has averaged nearly 92%. The admission office tells incoming students that “admissions does not make mistakes,” and as noted below, a wide range of academic support and advising services are available and credited with supporting student retention and graduation. Students and staff also spoke very highly of the faculty’s role in student retention and graduation, noting significant levels of time spent with students outside of the classroom providing formal and informal advice, guidance, and extra help.

Holy Cross conducts a post-graduation survey of its recent graduates six months after graduation in order to solicit and record self-reported data about employment, enrollment in graduate or professional schools, service, etc. The number of responses appears very good, in excess of 50% of those solicited responding on a consistent basis, and a significantly higher percentage for the last year reported (2009). Holy Cross reports goals to remain stable in all categories for recent graduates with the exception of post-graduate fellowships which the College has a goal to increase. Holy Cross maintains and monitors records for other important success indicators the College feels important, including but not limited to study abroad participation, service immersion trips, internships and research opportunities, and engagement in liturgical or other religious ministries.

**Student Services:** Student programs and services at Holy Cross reflect and are guided by the College’s Jesuit and Catholic mission. They are comprehensive in breadth and depth, consistent with the College’s goal of educating and developing the whole person.

Holy Cross is primarily a residential campus, with about 88% of students living on campus, and this percentage is expected to increase to over 90% with the addition of one residence hall currently under construction and another one under consideration. Students commented on high levels of engagement in student programs and activities, and utilization and satisfaction data compiled by College offices and staff confirm these levels. Students at the same time report a desire for improved or additional space, particularly for recreational/fitness and social activities.
The Office of Housing and Residential Life employs 79 student resident assistants (RAs) and reports 1.5 applicants for every available position. In addition to handling operational responsibilities related to the effective operation of a residence hall, RAs serve as peer mentors and sponsor programs for their floors and halls. Some concern was expressed about the compensation for RAs, which appears to be lower than comparable peers.

Students are engaged in multiple levels of decision-making and have a clear voice in and contribute to institutional thinking, planning, and decisions. Students serve on all major administrative and academic committees, have several student votes in the Faculty Assembly, and organize themselves through an active and multi-faceted Student Government Association.

Since its last self-study, the Division of Student Affairs has made it a priority to embrace and promote diversity. Established 10 years ago, the Office of Multicultural Education was formed not only with the mission and purpose to support students from diverse backgrounds but more importantly to advance and promote cultural change and educate the majority students about matters related to diversity. While focused primarily on students, the office and staff have also been called at times to address or assist with institutional diversity issues and programs.

The Office of College Chaplains enjoys a prominent role and position within the College. In addition to the standard liturgical, religious, and spiritual offerings, the chaplains’ office recently received a substantial gift which funded an endowment to support the addition of a director of retreat programs and a substantial operating budget for these programs. Notably, the chaplains’ office sponsors SPUD, a community service umbrella that involves several hundred students each year in local, regional, national, and international service activities, ranging from one-time, weekly, or dedicated immersion time periods. Over 65% of the recent graduating classes report having participated in SPUD programs during their time at Holy Cross.

The Division of Student Affairs has made a concerted effort to increase the number of leadership opportunities for students. By establishing the Office of Orientation, Transition, and Leadership, summer, fall, and extended orientation programs for first-year students were introduced and have been recognized with a national award for their success. These and other programs sponsored by this office provide over 70 student leadership positions and internships annually.

Holy Cross sponsors 27 varsity sports, as a founding member of the Patriot League, with a strong commitment to balancing students’ academic and athletic pursuits. Graduation rates for student-athletes are very high, with the College ranked 4th of 335 Division I institutions in the 2008 NCAA graduation report. Approximately 25% of the student body plays on a varsity team, with the percentage increasing when inclusive of club sports teams. In recent years, the Office of Student Programs and Involvement assumed responsibility from the Athletic Department for the coordination and oversight of club sports, intramural, and other recreational programs. Staff report this change as a positive one.

Students commented favorably on the role of career services and the encouragement to begin the career planning process early in the undergraduate career. A long-standing summer internship program appears to be well-known and understood by students.
The Division of Student Affairs developed a strategic plan in conjunction with the College’s strategic planning process. Largely a vision statement and list of guiding principles and philosophy, the plan nonetheless appears to guide the work of the student affairs area. Recently, the division completed a self-assessment and invited three external peer reviewers to campus to complete and evaluation and offer recommendations.

**Institutional effectiveness.** Holy Cross has advanced its commitment to diversity through recent attention to improved recruiting and retention of ALANA students as well as continued prioritization of need-blind financial aid policies. Assessment appears to be happening in numerous and myriad ways across the Division of Student Affairs. In addition to the strategic planning process and external peer review, assessment initiatives include but are not limited to the ACHA and CORE surveys which led to enhanced education with regard to alcohol consumption, the establishment of a stress management group, and expanded wellness and alternative programming. Perhaps a minor but effective result of an annual assessment of students' and parents' orientation experience was the consolidation of numerous mailings and informational materials into a single-packet mailing which has achieved its desired results.

**Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources**

The College primarily supports library and information services through two departments: the Library, including an Educational Technology group, which reports to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College; and Information Technology Services (ITS), which reports to the President. The Library is responsible for collections and services in relation to information resources, but also, via the Educational Technology group, facilitates the academic application of technology, including the course management system. ITS provides centralized support for the administrative technologies, and the campus IT infrastructure. Additionally, there is an Audio-Visual Services Department that reports to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College and is responsible for the College's classrooms and some specialized facilities.

While each of these departments describes extensive collaboration with the other in the provision of services, each retains a distinct reporting line. Even with distinct reporting lines, however, much of the planning and budgeting is intermingled. The Educational Technology Advisory Group (ETAG) acts as the common forum for cross collaboration even though, as a committee, it formally functions only as advisory to Information Technology Services. ETAG is also the only structured forum in which faculty have a voice concerning instructional technology at the College. Although this structure has made some significant progress in supporting instructional technology, such as the implementation of Moodle, a more cohesive approach to supporting the use of technology in fulfillment of the academic mission would benefit the College.

There are three libraries located on the campus: Dinand, the main library; the O’Callahan Science Library, and the Fenwick Music Library. Additionally, the campus is served by the College Archives & Special Collections and the specialized non-circulation Rehm Library that supports the Center for Religion, Ethics and Culture. In 2000, the Library also assumed the administrative role for the Worcester Art Museum Library. The combined libraries house some
620,627 items and provide access to 31,974 print and on-line journals. The Library informs academic resource purchases via a liaison program; and balances monographic and subscription purchases across the departments via formulaic allocation. In addition, a written Collection Development Policy helps govern growth of the collections. The Library reports that there are no systematic ongoing collection assessment or de-accession activities and that segments of the collection are reaching shelving capacity, most notably in the Music Library.

The 2009 budget totaled 3.97 million with 1.36 million dedicated to acquisitions; and the data forms reflect regular growth in the materials budget. Despite periodic infusion of supplemental funds, the Library reports that it is unable to maintain pace with the rising cost of journals and has been forced to keep the monographic budget flat. Comparisons with peer institutions show that the acquisitions budget is lower than similarly sized peers. While the Board has expressed concern, no plans are in place to provide more systematic support of library expenditures.

Library buildings are readily accessible to the campus community, open 114.5 hours/week. The Data Forms show regular use of the libraries and their services with 3,470 reference queries conducted both in-person and on-line, and a circulation of 35,000 items. In addition to reference services the Library has reached some 1,300 students via 65 instruction sessions, and participates in the College's first-year program, Montserrat.

In response to a LibQual survey done in 2006, Dinand reader spaces were refurnished in 2007, and provide seating for 500; the Science Library was recently lightly renovated and provides seating for an additional 140. These renovations have begun to address some of the identified issues, but librarians in all of the facilities noted the lack of flexible study spaces and the need for more mixed-use space. When taken with the concerns for collection space, the Library may benefit from a focused study of space utilization.

The Library is staffed with 15.75 professional librarians and 16 support staff, a number that is cited as comparable to its peer group. There have been ongoing staff adjustments, including the creation of a Visual Arts Resource Coordinator, and a stated expectation that staff functions will need to be regularly reviewed and evaluated. The librarians remain active in professional organizations, and the library was recently invited to join the Oberlin Group, a selective group of liberal arts college libraries that share a wide array of professional knowledge and resource. There is little evidence that the Library, and the professional librarians, are seen as active participants in the ongoing campus conversations regarding the academic program; for instance it was noted that the Library’s participation in the Montserrat program was in reaction to the program, rather than being involved in the program’s development. The College would benefit from a more proactive approach to involving the Library in academic planning.

Information Technology Services maintains 12 computer laboratories providing access to a variety of computing platforms. At least one lab is available 24/7. According to the Data Forms, 100% of classrooms offer multimedia equipment and Internet connectivity. Student ownership of computers is 100% with all of the residence halls connected to the network; 80% of the campus is currently connected via wireless and coverage is expected to reach 100% in 2010. The campus recently increased bandwidth from 60MB to 1GB and network storage is available
to all users. A detailed security policy and procedure framework is in place and maintained, and ITS publishes policies on its web site. A designated manager oversees an established change-control system to ensure system integrity.

A wide range of academic and administrative software is supported, with the main administrative function supported by PeopleSoft products. The College has recently migrated its course management system to the open-source product Moodle. A Help Desk provides staffed support M-F 8-5p.m., with an online ticket system always available. Regular feedback of this service is gathered and a 2008 survey indicates satisfactory response times. All incoming students and new faculty are provided with technology orientation opportunities, and ongoing training opportunities are also available.

The Information Technology Services staff numbers 43.5 FTE with over 80% holding degrees in technology or related disciplines and one-third hold appropriate certifications. The self-study notes that ITS is sufficiently staffed to maintain current levels of service. Since 2000, ITS has reported directly to the President of the College and a tiered committee structure has been put in place for planning and advisory roles. In 2005, ITS developed a strategic plan and an IT Steering Committee annually reviews organizational objectives. Six advisory groups inform the Steering Committee: IT policy, architectural standards, PeopleSoft, administrative systems, educational technology, and future technologies.

The Information Technology Services budget for FY 2009 was $7.5 million. The operating budget per student was at the median standard of the College's peer list, and the budget represents 6% of the total institution budget. ITS reports that it has responded to current economic issues with some cost-saving measures, such as the adoption of open-source systems, and that it is sufficiently funded to maintain current levels.

**Institutional Effectiveness.** Information Technology Services and the Library report regular data collection with regard to services, usage and peer benchmarking. Both organizations are active with professional peer groups, and use them as a means of evaluation. ITS has a multi-year strategic plan, uses a Balanced Scorecard to collect key measures, and has a committee structure to inform and monitor progress and initiatives. The Library has yet to define the means and measures by which it will systematically evaluate its adequacy, utilization, and impact; this is something that the Library should address.

**Standard 8: Physical and Technological Resources**

Holy Cross has developed a culture of facilities condition assessment and benchmarking that has supported planning for new buildings as well as prioritization of renewal projects. Just since 2005 the college has engaged a succession of consultants to study facility conditions, to benchmark deferred maintenance needs, to prepare a campus plan, and (twice) to analyze space needs.

Since 2001 the college has invested over $132 million in capital improvements, including a new academic and administrative building, an apartment-style residence hall, a large parking garage,
and, as part of an Integrated Science Complex, a new building to house chemistry classrooms, labs, and social space as well as the comprehensive renovation of a connected existing building to house physics and chemistry along with additional study and dining facilities. Additional new construction included a new roadway providing an additional entry point to the campus, and donor-funded sports facilities that include a 3000-seat baseball stadium, new outdoor tennis courts, and an artificial turf field for lacrosse competition and football practice.

A decade of significant investment in new and renovated facilities, however, appears to have whetted rather than satisfied community appetites. Even in the face of broadly acknowledged constraints on resources in the future, there appears to be a widely held expectation that the new strategic plan will include significant new investments in desired facilities.

The college budgets to fund facilities renewal at a level about equal to half of annual depreciation expense, or $6 million, although this amount was reduced by half in FY09 as part of the college’s response to the economic downturn. The $6 million target represents a recent increase from $5 million on the basis of a consultant report. Major renovations include the Lower Chapel, Seelos Theater, and changes to residence halls to incorporate more social space as well as accommodating the co-curricular events of Montserrat clusters. Remaining remedial work will focus on mechanical systems and building envelopes of older buildings, as well as older-style dormitories.

One of the consulting studies produced a 20-year campus plan that identified a number of facilities needs, many of which will be considered in the creation of the new strategic plan. The list includes new residence halls (ground has just been broken for one such), improved facilities for both athletics and recreation, a new fine and performing arts center, and additional outdoor gathering space.

Additional capital resources support the technology infrastructure. All library spaces and residences now provide wireless internet access, as do 80% of classrooms, with the balance expected to be fully wireless by FY11. Bandwidth of the college’s network was recently increased from 60Mb to 1 Gb. College-owned computers are on a four-year replacement cycle.

A presidential task force last fall submitted a Carbon Neutral Plan, reflecting the college’s charter membership in the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment group. The plan envisions a 20% carbon reduction by 2015 (from 2007 levels), with a goal of climate neutrality by FY2040. The plan acknowledges that both the necessary technologies and the necessary funding sources remain hypothetical at this point, but identifies three approaches—switching from oil to natural gas for the campus boiler plant, reducing electrical usage though ventilation optimization projects, energy-efficient lighting projects, and occupancy sensor projects, and encouraging behavioral changes—as the strategies for achieving the interim 2015 target.

The Physical Plant department participates in the college’s Balanced Scorecard system, tracking key performance indicators such as projects delivered on time, projects on budget, and utility spending.
**Institutional effectiveness:** Holy Cross regularly uses evidence-gathering, analysis, and benchmarking to support decision-making, and facilities plans are driven by college-wide strategic planning. The results of strong planning and budget allocation are a well-maintained campus without significant deferred maintenance.

**Standard 9: Financial Resources**

Holy Cross College has a longstanding (39 year) and honored tradition of operating budget surpluses, and FY2009 was no exception in spite of changed economic conditions. The college’s endowment, which supports 14% of the budget, lost 25% of its market value from peak to trough, but budgeted contingencies, deferral of some discretionary renovations expenditures, other operating budget cutbacks, and a higher bar for refilling vacant positions all contributed to yet another operating surplus. Additional actions, such as an early retirement incentive, laid the groundwork for additional budget savings in FY10 and beyond.

Financial planning is informed by the goals of the Strategic Plan as well as a continuously updated five-year model that incorporates input from the college’s major governance councils and senior leadership. The full Board of Trustees as well as its Finance Committee review planning assumptions and market data. Against this backdrop, bottom-up department needs are submitted and reviewed. The resulting budget typically includes conservative assumptions, with a 1.5% contingency that is expected to double by year-end (because of other distributed contingencies). This conservative budgeting and holding of funds in reserve provides a cushion against unanticipated problems. Non-cash depreciation expense, now about $12 million, is offset by $6 million of facilities renewal, with the balance covering equipment and other acquisitions.

The college’s endowment (as of June 30, 2009, at $493 million) is about half true endowment and half Board-designated funds. Support to the budget is based on a spending rule that calls for distribution of an amount equal to 4.5% of the 3-year rolling average market value, with a one-year lag. A portion of the Board-designated funds have historically been treated as a stabilization reserve, not subject to distribution, but about $20 million of these reserves have now been put into play to provide distribution to fund the current strategic plan. About another $8 million of such funds are still being held in reserve without distribution.

Current financial modeling assumes no change in the spending rule to anticipate the delayed effect of last year’s market drop. Models show endowment support to the budget beginning to decline in FY12, with a drop of $8 million by FY13. A failure to anticipate the budget impact of endowment market losses until it is required by the spending rule could limit the college’s flexibility to deal with other potential financial threats that could have an impact in the same time frame: the demographic drop in New England high school graduates, another potential market correction, inflationary pressures on salaries and other budgeted expenses, or a growing consumer resistance to tuition inflation, coupled with reduced family ability to pay.

Investments are overseen by the Investment Committee of the Board, with membership consisting of investment professionals from a variety of disciplines. The chair of the Finance
Committee serves as a member, and the chair of the Investment Committee serves on the Finance Committee. With recommendations of strategic allocation and manager selection from the on-campus CIO as well as an investment consultation, the Board committee makes all final decisions on both. Investment expense of about $1.2 million was taken out of the operating budget and charged against net investment earnings.

The college recently restructured part of their debt portfolio, replacing bullet maturities with amortized liabilities. Plans for additional debt-financing construction have been put on hold in order to prevent further stress on the operating budget in addition to an already high debt burden. In June and December 2009 Moody’s and S&P respectively affirmed their existing bond ratings for Holy Cross. Both cited the college’s strong financial management.

**Institutional effectiveness:** Financial planning is based on strategic goals, with multi-year modeling to test out-year implications of proposed initiatives. Strong centralized budget controls and a culture of budget discipline make mid-course corrections achievable when necessary.

**Standard 10: Public Disclosure**

The College of the Holy Cross maintains a comprehensive and accurate set of information about itself in both print and electronic forms. The institution has gradually moved away from hardcopy for many of its publications for reasons of cost and convenience, with some publications being available only electronically through the institution's website. All print and electronic sources are clear about the institution's mission, and its catalog, available in both print and electronic forms, is a comprehensive and accurate source of information on the programs offered at the college, courses offered, and the policies governing admission to and attendance at the institution. All forms of the institutional publications appear to be reviewed and revised yearly to maintain accuracy.

Specific information about Holy Cross's admission and financial aid is available both in print and on easily found sections of the institutional website, both of which give prospective students clear information about admissions procedures, the institution's financial aid policies, the types and amounts of aid a student might expect and the procedures to follow for obtaining aid. The Financial Aid Office is still researching best practices for meeting the federal government's new regulations to take effect this summer to make available to prospective students and their parents information on total student indebtedness and an online calculator for estimating the actual costs to a student of attending Holy Cross.

The online and print catalog also provides complete information about objectives and expected educational outcomes at the institutional level but not at the level of the individual program since the latter are still being developed. The catalog details procedures and policies related to the transfer of credit, student fees, charges and refund policies, other items related to attending or withdrawing from the institution, academic programs, courses currently offered, and other available educational opportunities, and academic policies and procedures and the requirements for degrees or other forms of academic recognition. It also includes a full list of the Board of Trustees, the Officers of Administration, and the Officers of Instruction (i.e., faculty) as well as accurate information about its current accredited status.
Rules and regulations for student conduct are available to both prospective and current students online in the Student Handbook. Information about the size and characteristics of the student body, the campus setting, the availability of academic and other support services, the range of co-curricular and non-academic opportunities available to students are accessible online through the "At a Glance" and "Students" section of Holy Cross's website.

The Athletics Department should consider placing a link on its "Prospective Student-Athlete" page leading to its page on "Compliance" which details NCAA Rules. This information is currently difficult to find unless the user knows where to look for it. Similarly, it should be made obvious on each of the individual team pages on "GoHolyCross.com" how prospective athletes can find information on recruiting and compliance issues. Looking forward, information about learning outcomes and assessment data for individual programs should be made available on websites and in the Catalog as it becomes available.

**Institutional effectiveness:** Holy Cross's information disclosure vehicles are accurate and complete and appear to be reviewed and revised yearly to retain currency and reflect improvements.

**Standard 11: Integrity**

Holy Cross has demonstrated that it subscribes to and advocates high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and in all of its dealings with students, faculty, staff, its governing board, external agencies and organizations, and the general public. This level of integrity is not limited to the need to simply comply with legal mandates, but it can be seen as an extension of its Jesuit mission and values.

Policies are periodically reviewed and revised, and as the need becomes apparent, new policies and guidelines are drafted. For example, the Academic Honesty Policy, which was last revised in 2003, has been reviewed and will be discussed by the Academic Affairs Council in 2009-10. A Scholarly Misconduct policy was approved by the Faculty Assembly in April 2007. Faculty (Faculty Information Manual), Staff (Holy Cross and You) and Student Handbooks are published in print form and/or are available online through the College’s web or Moodle. The College has a Sexual Harassment Policy, and the Student Handbook contains clear guidelines and procedures about sexual assault and harassment allegations, as well as for student disciplinary procedures and sanctions.

The list of institutional policies is extensive and follows both legal guidelines and recognized standards of best practice. While there are far too many to list here, in an effort to make its policies more transparent and discoverable to all, the College has recently created a web page (http://offices.holycross.edu/policies/) which compiles and organizes the primary institutional policies. In similar fashion, a page of key institutional forms for a variety of purposes is being published. The College maintains an Office of General Counsel which is charged with the technical review that policies are in compliance with legal standards, but most policies and compliance standards are developed at the appropriate level or office within the institution and are vetted and approved by the relevant governing or advisory body. For example, the Controller has recently led the development of a Financial Misconduct Policy, a Conflict of Interest Policy,
and a Whistleblower Policy, and similar policies deal with standards of accountability and/or 
financial transparency. Likewise, Information Technology Services has an online list of best 
practice policies which include Data Security, Data Retention and Storage, Vendor and Student 
Confidentiality Agreements, and a Written Information Security Plan. The Registrar is 
responsible for privacy rights and FERPA compliance. Copyright policies are posted by the 
Library. The College maintains a Human Subjects Review Board and an Animal Care and Use 
Committee. It has developed safety guidelines concerning issues such as Radiation Safety, 
Blood-borne Pathogens, and Emergency (Crisis) notification; and post-event procedures have 
recently been established.

Strong support for diversity is apparent in the Mission Statement: “[informed by] diverse 
interpretations of the human experience, Holy Cross seeks to build a community marked by 
freedom, mutual respect, and civility”. With regard to employment, Holy Cross publishes an 
annual Notice of Nondiscrimination, which forbids demeaning individuals on the basis of ethnic 
origin, religion, economic class, or sexual orientation. The College’s commitment to diversity is 
clear and is backed up by financial support. Successes include increased enrollment of ALANA 
students and the funding and staffing of programs to support their needs, and by the strong 
commitment of the College to maintain need-blind admissions while meeting the full financial 
need of students in a very challenging economic environment. The Office of Development and 
Alumni Relations has recently secured a $250,000 endowment to assist services for students 
with disabilities. The College recently employed a Protestant Chaplain to support non-Catholics 
in the student body.

Although the issue has been discussed by the President’s Cabinet, the College has not yet 
developed a coordinated and systematic audit of the many new reporting, disclosure, and 
notification requirement mandated by the 2008 Higher Educational Opportunity Act and related 
legislation. Many regulations required immediate compliance with the passage of the legislation 
or by a specified deadline. Many offices that are individually responsible for elements are either 
already in compliance or are aware of the regulations and are acting appropriately. However an 
institution-wide compliance audit would be wise to develop new policies and procedures where 
required, and to organize them in a way that they can be found, such as in a “Consumer 
Information Guide” suggested by the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative.

The College does not currently employ a full-time Affirmative Action Officer, although many of 
the reporting functions are done by the Office of Administrative Services. The lack of such a 
position has been of concern to some, and might be subject to future review in conjunction with a 
broader concern that the College has not been as successful in recruiting and retaining faculty of 
color as it has with recruiting a more diverse student population. Some faculty members have 
raised a concern about whether the College should employ one or more Ombudspersons to 
address issues of concern from faculty and/or staff. Others have voiced concerns about a 
maternity leave policy that is significantly less generous than many of its peers or the lack of a 
paternity leave policy. Others have raised issues about differences in tuition remission policies 
for children of faculty and staff, or about differences in retirement plans offered to exempt and 
non-exempt employees.
Institutional Effectiveness: Although there is no systematic timetable or schedule for reviewing policies, best practices, and procedures, it is a tribute to the professionalism of faculty, staff, administrators, and the Board that, with few exceptions, the College is not only compliance with the letter of the law, but often goes well beyond to support the spirit of full disclosure, openness, and transparency. Where any gaps are discovered, the College endeavors to quickly correct them.

Institutional Effectiveness Summary:

The widespread awareness of and commitment to the Holy Cross mission has become increasingly tied to planning and assessment efforts in recent years. The President’s Annual Report clearly states the goals and priorities of the institution and uses data to support and monitor changes, through the Balanced Scorecard approach. The College has used consultants effectively in various aspects of the planning processes. Examples of how Holy Cross has worked effectively to correct problems and reach goals are numerous. Faculty salaries have been enhanced in recent years, in response to evidence that the College was falling behind its peers in this area. Attention to recruiting and retention of ALANA students also led to significant improvements in the last decade, and the College plans to assess the impact of increased diversity on academic and support services. ITS and the library regularly collect data with regard to services, usage, and peer benchmarking; ITS also has a multi-year strategic plan and a committee structure to inform and monitor progress and initiatives, although the library has yet to fully define the means and measures by which to evaluate its performance. The Student Affairs division also has a written strategic plan. Facilities plans are aligned to college-wide priorities, and financial planning is similarly connected to strategic goals. Multi-years models are used to test the implications of proposed initiatives.

The economic crisis of 2008-09 and 2009-10 led to sharp declines in the endowment, and increased need for financial aid. The College slightly revised its plan by deferring construction of additional senior housing, by targeted cost reduction in many areas, and by offering voluntary separation or early retirement opportunities for a number of employees. With declines in endowment income, with a challenging climate for philanthropy, and with increasing sensitivity to rising comprehensive fees, it may be difficult to accomplish some of the goals in the Strategic Plan in the coming years. In particular, the need-blind admissions model may become increasingly unsustainable as the College tries to maintain this model with resources that are only a fraction of those of a handful of other colleges that still have need-blind admissions. The leadership of the College understands that the next phase of planning will be characterized by many difficult choices and tradeoffs.

In the past five years, administrators and staff have worked together to define learning goals for the four-year undergraduate program and have begun to use data to assess whether these goals are being met and to seek improvement where the evidence suggests it is needed. NSSE data, for example, led the College to question the effectiveness of writing instruction; external reviews suggested strategies for informing pedagogy with more current research, and steps are being taken to provide a different structure and deeper support for developing students’ oral and
written communications skills. Learning outcome measures and models of assessment have also
been developed for some of the academic majors.

The Office of Research and Assessment has accomplished much in less than three years of
existence. It struggles with balancing the challenges of establishing a new office and
prioritizing more requests for support from around the College than it can realistically support. It
has developed a metric to track progress with assessment at the level of each academic
department. While the College should be commended for establishing OAR and increasing its
assessment activities, assessment is still in a “building phase”, and it is early to effectively
evaluate progress in new areas such as the Montserrat program or the departmental reviews.

Summary:

Holy Cross is a well-run, mission-driven institution, aligning mission, planning, and people to an
exceptional degree. The Jesuit identity of the College is expressed throughout the programs and
services made available to students who understand and value their distinctive educational
experience. A dedicated faculty of teacher-scholars leads all students in fulfilling a robust set of
general education requirements and provides depth and sequencing in the disciplinary and
interdisciplinary major programs. The College’s commitment to diversity is seen in recent
attention to improved recruiting and retention of ALANA students as well as continued
prioritization of need-blind financial aid policies. Significant investments in facilities and
technology together with a strong tradition of planning and budget allocation have resulted in a
well-maintained and up-to-date infrastructure, without significant deferred maintenance, and the
College has an admirable history of centralized budget controls and a culture of budget
discipline.

In these and other aspects, the visiting team found abundant evidence of many impressive and
valuable aspects of an institution dedicated to the intellectual and moral development of its
students, the life of the mind, and the major disciplines of the traditional liberal arts and sciences.
We would like to commend five in particular for celebration:

Strengths:

1. Holy Cross seeks a powerful, extensively resourced integration of mission into all
aspects of the educational program as well as its external relations with alumni and
communities beyond the campus. There can be few institutions of higher learning where
more people, programs, and resources are dedicated to sustaining and improving a clearly
articulated and widely “lived” mission.

2. Prudent financial management supports this valuable educational enterprise. The
College exercises excellent stewardship of its sizeable resources. Financial practices and
priorities are aligned with educational practices and priorities, and detailed planning and
modeling is done to ensure future stability in this regard,
3. The Board of Trustees fulfills its duty in an exemplary way, supporting the College’s mission and purposes with appropriate degrees of both engagement and independence, and with a systematic process for informing and evaluating itself.

4. Holy Cross is recruiting, enrolling, retaining, and successfully graduating young people who are offered, and who take advantage of, an excellent educational opportunity to realize their intellectual and personal potential. Even as we heard from students that they are proud to be “men and women for others,” we also heard and observed in how many ways it could be said that Holy Cross is faculty and staff for students. The list of exceptional programs and accomplishments is long and embedded in the narrative of this report; it includes the activities of the Chaplain’s Office, the integration of Division I Athletics with a rigorous academic experience, the advising program, and the recent increases in the recruitment and retention of ALANA students.

5. Clear recent strides have been taken toward the goal of more substantial uses of assessment for improvement. Holy Cross has begun to collect the evidence needed to evaluate how it is accomplishing its educational goals. Administrators have initiated the periodic review of academic programs. The College has established an Office of Assessment and Research and hired its first director.

Concerns:

1. Assessment is also an area for concern. As recognized in the self-study, “Much remains to be done.” Assessment activities are emerging but far from where they should be to meet Holy Cross’s high expectations for improvement, innovation, and academic leadership. Campus-wide assessment needs to be more effectively coordinated and prioritized. Decentralized departmental assessment makes sense, but its results are seriously uneven at this point. There is no formal plan to assess college-wide student learning outcomes. Holy Cross still relies on more indirect measures and survey data and should seek where appropriate more direct (and not necessarily quantitative) measures,

2. Faculty governance: The effectiveness of the faculty’s organizational structures and the goals and processes of shared governance merit a thorough review.

3. Faculty diversity, like the concern with assessment, is clearly noted in the self-study as an area that needs attention and improvement. Our meetings on campus confirmed that Holy Cross can and should persist and succeed in addressing its own goals for the achievement of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity among the ranks of the faculty.