



# Self-Study 2016

A Self-Study Submitted to the  
Middle States Commission on Higher Education  
January 2016

**SUNY** POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE



**Middle States Commission on Higher Education**

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**Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and Related Entities Policy**

*(For use by SUNY State-Operated Institutions)*

*Reviewed and Affirmed July 16, 2015*

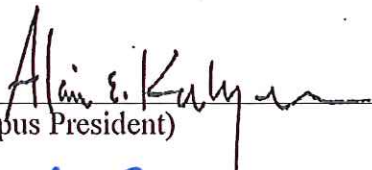
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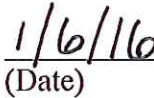
SUNY Polytechnic Institute

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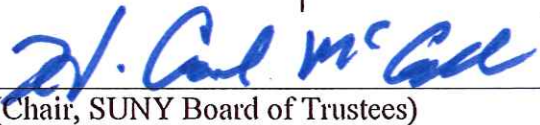
The State University of New York represents that this institution operates within the program of the SUNY System. The undersigned hereby certify that SUNY recognizes the Commission’s compliance requirements for this institution and will uphold State University’s policies pertaining to MSCHE Standards and Requirements of Affiliation.



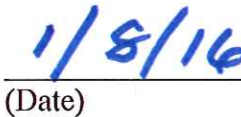
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Campus President)



\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)



\_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair, SUNY Board of Trustees)



\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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# Preface

The narrative and appendices contained herein comprise the revised Self Study document for SUNY Polytechnic Institute (SUNY Poly) as part of its decennial evaluation by the Middle States Commission of Higher Education (MSCHE) through the Review Committee chaired by Dr. John Anderson. The Review Committee carries out the onsite portion of its evaluation February 21-24 at SUNY Poly's Utica and Albany sites.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute was formed by the SUNY Board of Trustees on March 19, 2014 through the combination of the SUNY Institute of Technology (SUNY IT) located in Utica, NY – a SUNY campus previously accredited through MSCHE – and the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) located in Albany, NY. CNSE previously existed as an autonomous academic unit of the University at Albany, SUNY (UAlbany).

The Middle States Commission of Higher Education was consulted at the earliest opportunity during the process to formally combine SUNY IT and CNSE. Based on this consultation CNSE was designated, for the purposes of MSCHE review and accreditation, as a branch campus of then-SUNY IT. Working with SUNY IT's MSCHE liaison, Ms. Debra Klinman, a complex substantive change request was submitted to MSCHE in November, 2014. The complex substantive change submission formally requested that: CNSE be designated as a branch campus of SUNYIT; that the mission of the combined entity (renamed SUNY Polytechnic Institute) be modified to reflect the combination; and that a doctoral degree level be added to the MSCHE accreditation for the combined institution to accommodate CNSE doctoral degree programs which had begun the process of transfer from UAlbany to SUNY Poly.

The complex substantive change request was approved by MSCHE in March, 2015. This action granted provisional approval to the combination of SUNY IT and CNSE. The provision approval was slated to be formalized upon the re-accreditation following the institution's (SUNY IT's) decennial review.

The aforementioned decennial review was originally slated for March 22-25, 2015. In October, 2014 the Chair of the Review Committee (Dr. Anthony Collins at the time) requested that SUNY Poly request a one-year postponement of its decennial evaluation in light of SUNY Poly's pending MSCHE complex substantive change request and the administrative complexities of the combination of SUNY IT and CNSE. On October 28, 2014 SUNY Poly formally submitted such a request which was subsequently approved. (Note: In early 2015 Dr. Collins had become unable to serve as Chair of the Review Committee for SUNY Poly's decennial evaluation and was replaced by Dr. Anderson).

The decennial evaluation visit for SUNY Poly was rescheduled for February 21-24, 2016. The additional 12 months was utilized by faculty and staff from across SUNY Poly's Utica and Albany sites to begin the process of integrating the addition of the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering into the self-study report drafted for then-SUNY IT documenting compliance with MSCHE's 14 standards of excellence.

The narrative and appendices contained herein reflect those additions. Keeping in mind the very recent combination of the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering with the former SUNY IT, the process of integrating all the elements associated with the 14 MSCHE standards is ongoing. The narrative and appendices referenced with regards to each of the 14 standards distinguishes contributions from both SUNY Poly's Utica (the former SUNY IT) and Albany (CNSE) sites. Noting that the vast majority of the material represented in the narrative and appendices predates the combination of the two entities, there is a preponderance of information referencing the Utica (former SUNY IT) site.

Per the revised institutional mission, and as documented in this self-study under Standard 1, the vision for the SUNY Polytechnic Institute is that of a unified institution where students, faculty, staff and all stakeholders have full access to the intellectual resources at both the Utica and Albany sites. This document reflects the first, substantial steps towards that goal through our institutional compliance with all 14 standards.

# Executive Summary

## **Background**

The SUNY Polytechnic Institute is a new institution. Formed by the merger of the SUNY Institute of Technology (SUNY IT) and the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (formally an autonomous academic unit of the University at Albany, SUNY) ‘SUNY Poly’ is not yet two years old. The formation of SUNY Poly – the SUNY System’s newest doctoral granting institution – represented both the next logical step for the former SUNY IT, which established itself as a full, four-year undergraduate polytechnic institution relatively recently in 2003, as well as for the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, which had established its leadership and programs in the various disciplines of nanotechnology well beyond the mission of the University at Albany. Preparation for this current regional re-accreditation began well before initiation of the merger process and had previously focused solely on SUNY IT. The intent for the current MSCHE decennial review cycle was to pursue re-accreditation with some forethought to the eventual merged institution. However, the merger of SUNY IT and CNSE moved forward relatively quickly with the result that a one year postponement in the MSCHE decennial review was requested to enable a thorough update of the Self-Study so as to reflect the merged institution. That postponement was approved by MSCHE.

Much progress has been made in forging SUNY Poly as a single, thriving institution, nevertheless much remains to be done. The self-study process has both chronicled accomplishments and highlighted needed efforts going forward.

## **Self-Study**

Preparation for the self-study process – both before and since the merger – included appointment of the Steering Committee which decided on the self-study model, establishment of working groups, and design of the self-study. The initial self-study, approved by MSCHE prior to the merger, was updated to reflect the nature of the merged institution after the aforementioned approval of the one-year review postponement.

The Steering Committee established Working Groups and their charges to review new and existing data and prepare evaluation reports. Based on the Working Groups’ reports the Steering Committee generated the draft Self-Study report. Feedback was requested from all SUNY Poly faculty and staff members, as well as the Chair of the SUNY Poly College Council regarding the draft document. (Feedback was solicited and collected electronically with all documentation posted on a secure website.) The Steering Committee finalized the accompanying Self-Study report on January 8, 2016

## Major Findings

This self-evaluation has provided an opportunity for the SUNY Poly community to reflect on its history, accomplishments, and future in light of the SUNY IT/CNSE merger. This is an exciting “work in progress” with many accomplishments achieved and plans to move ahead in place to deliver on the tremendous and innovative capabilities and potential of the merged institution.

Each standard has been addressed in depth in the body of the report. Some highlights are presented here. The standards have been met in the face of many challenges and unique opportunities.

- In past years the former SUNY IT had struggled financially because of state allocation cutbacks and tuition caps. Planning analyses showed that financial stability would be better suited by establishing a high-quality student population approaching 3,500 in line with the original vision for the Utica site and which SUNY Poly is on track to achieve by 2020.
- Joint governance of the merged institution has been achieved that maintains the strong traditions of local governance at SUNY Poly’s Utica and Albany academic sites while maintaining the vision of the overall institution.
- A functional, unified organizational structure has been established and is adequate at this time.
- A multi-college structure has been established with five academic units:
  - Arts and Sciences – Utica
  - Engineering – Utica
  - Health Sciences and Management – Utica
  - Nanoscale Sciences – Albany
  - Nanoscale Engineering and Innovation – Albany
- Overall institutional planning and budget development are in the formative stages. Substantial focus has been applied to needs for residential housing, classrooms, laboratories, and health and wellness. Similarly, a unified, institution-wide budget development process has been designed and is being implemented.
- Outcomes assessment has been achieved in most academic programs and in operating units and is being implemented in others.
- Academic offices including registrar, financial aid, admissions, student success and library have responded quickly and effectively to the needs of the merged institution.

- Business offices including research, human resources, finance, and institutional research are responding to the needs of the merged institution.
- Student support services are strong at the Utica site and under rapid development at the Albany site.
- Faculty recruiting at both SUNY Poly's Utica and Albany sites has been very strong for the past three years in terms of both ability and number. Retirement of many long-term faculty members is expected in the next few years. Tenure and promotion processes are slightly different at the two sites but function smoothly.
- Educational offerings have increased substantially. New programs account for nearly all enrollment growth.
- Online learning has become a substantial part of educational offerings. Recruitment of additional staff is underway.
- Applied learning is integral to most academic programs and engagement with industry a strong and growing pursuit.

### **Steering Committee**

- Bill Durgin, provost
- Ron Sarner, faculty senate
- Valerie Fusco, assistant vice president for institutional research
- Joanne Joseph, assessment coordinator and professor of psychology
- Carlie Phipps, faculty assembly chair and associate professor of biology
- Marybeth Lyons, associate provost for student affairs
- Susan Head, associate vice president for business affairs
- Kathy Dunn, associate professor
- Dan White, associate vice president for student affairs and professional and corporate
- Richard Matyi, professor
- Rhonda Haines, vice president for human resources and special projects



# Acronyms and Terms

**Albany Site** - that part of SUNY-Poly physically located in Albany.

**Board of Trustees** - the oversight body for the entire State University of New York. Membership consists of gubernatorial appointees, the chair of the statewide student governance structure, the president of the statewide University Faculty Senate (without vote), and the president of the statewide Faculty Council of Community Colleges.

**College Council** - an advisory body to the campus president, with members appointed by the Governor, and with enumerated responsibilities such as recommending the appointment of a president to the Chancellor, naming of buildings and grounds, adoption of a code of conduct, approval of parking fees. The Council is not a board of trustees in the traditional sense.

**CNSE** - College of Nanoscale Engineering; formerly a unit of UAlbany, merged with SUNY IT to form SUNY-Poly.

**Construction Fund** - an autonomous body responsible for the design, construction, and rehabilitation of state-owned buildings and grounds throughout the State University of New York.

**Faculty Assembly** - the governance body at the Utica site consisting of the president, full-time faculty, and selected academic administrators at that site. It is a body of the whole, not a representative body.

**Fort Schuyler Management Corporation** – A 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation affiliated with SUNY Polytechnic Institute to advance high-tech research, development, and commercialization opportunities through the acquisition, construction, and management of state-of-the-art facilities, and promoting economic development, education and workforce training throughout New York.

**Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR)** - a segregated budget fund into which specific fees are placed and from which costs of running that particular program are disbursed. Examples are the Summer Session IFR, or the Parking IFR.

**Information Technology Services (ITS)** - an internal department responsible for the provision and maintenance of those services.

**Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)** - agency responsible for institutional accreditation.

**Other than Personal Service (OTPS)** - funds used for purposes other than wages, salaries, and utilities.

**Staff Assembly** - the governance body at the Utica site consisting of the classified and professional staff members at that site.

**State Education Department (SED)** - the administrative arm of the University of the State of New York, a constitutionally-established body originally chartered by the English crown in colonial days and responsible for the oversight of education in New York, public and private.

**SUNY** - the State University of New York, encompassing the thirty state-operated campuses, contract colleges at Cornell University, the College of Ceramics at Alfred University, and the community colleges except for those that are part of the City University of New York.

**SUNY IT** - short for State University of New York Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome, the predecessor of SUNY-Poly.

**SUNY-Poly** - the shorthand form for SUNY Polytechnic Institute, the current official name of the institution.

**SUTRA - State University Tuition Reimbursable Account** - a segregated budget fund used to carry over unspent funds from one fiscal year to the next.

**UAlbany** - the shorthand form for State University of New York at Albany.

**University Faculty Senate** - the statewide governance body for faculty and professional staff in the State University of New York. SUNY-Poly has one elected senate seat.

**Utica Site** - that part of SUNY-Poly physically located on the Marcy campus, adjacent to the City of Utica.

# Standard 1: Mission and Goals

*“The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates who the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 1.

## **Overview**

### *Past History: SUNY IT*

Following years of advocacy by local civic leaders and elected officials, in 1966 the State University of New York Board of Trustees approved the establishment of a baccalaureate-granting college in the Mohawk Valley, the Upper Division College at Herkimer/Rome/Utica. After operating for more than a decade in West Utica, Rome, and other locations, the college moved onto the newly constructed Marcy campus in 1985, and enrollment was reduced to planned levels focusing on technology. Having changed its name to “SUNY College of Technology at Utica/Rome” in 1977, the college responded, in 1988, to the adoption of the name “College of Technology” by the six agriculture and technology campuses, and thus the name SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome, or SUNY IT, was born.

In 2001, the Governor and the Chancellor announced their support for the fulfillment of three mission-related initiatives advanced by the college. These were for SUNY IT to evolve into a full Institute of Technology, to add selected lower-division components to its upper-division programs, and to add a technology management MBA degree program. The reasoning was predicated on providing a four-year college opportunity to students from the Mohawk Valley who, in disproportionate numbers, left the region to pursue their degrees. This was also meant to attract new students to the Mohawk Valley, particularly from the Albany and Syracuse metropolitan areas, and to enable recruitment of top-quality freshman while increasing selectivity of transfer admissions. These initiatives were designed to enhance overall academic quality and maintain SUNY IT’s unique and specialized mission within the New York state university system.

As a result of the implementation of these initiatives, the institution had to reconsider course scheduling, establish new co-curricular programs, and develop new recruitment strategies. Admissions criteria fluctuated with changes in senior leadership during the past decade but in recent years were raised and student recruiting focused on Tier 1 and Tier 2 applicants, increasing the demand for financial aid and alumni philanthropy. SUNY IT constructed new dormitories, a Student Center building, and a Field House along with new athletic facilities to support the increased residential student body.

SUNY IT had the Carnegie Classification of “Regional University”, but could not be easily grouped with other institutions in that classification. It shared many features with smaller private technological universities, but met “systemness” characteristics of SUNY comprehensive colleges, resulting in difficulties with fully comparing SUNY IT to either group.

When compared to its best fit peer institutions, SUNY IT was one of the smallest with a total headcount of 2,820. There are three similar institutions that are smaller (Milwaukee School of Engineering, Kettering University and Virginia Military Institute), and two that are slightly larger, but in close proximity (Clarkson University and Norwich University, the latter as of fall 2010). None are public.

From 2010-2014 the college’s focus sharpened. Enrollment targets increased, some academic programs were consolidated; and some academic programs were eliminated. A program in electrical and computer engineering had begun, a program in community and behavioral health was launched, and a program in civil engineering began in the fall of 2012. A biology program, the first natural sciences degree at SUNY IT in more than twenty years, enrolled its first class in the fall of 2012. Existing undergraduate and graduate programs in telecommunications evolved into programs in network and computer security. A partnership for program development was forged with the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) at the University at Albany, SUNY (UAlbany). The graduate MBA program specializing in Technology Management and the graduate Accountancy program were accredited by AACSB. The graduate program in Nursing became strong and unique by offering an online option to reach out to students who are place-bound in areas far from campus. Undergraduate programs in civil engineering and mechanical engineering were initiated (and expect their first graduates soon). Additionally, a master’s program in systems engineering was developed and is awaiting state approval.

### *The Present*

In early 2013, Chancellor Nancy Zimpher charged a working group with reviewing the relationship between UAlbany and the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering which until that point was an academic unit affiliated with UAlbany.

In response to the working group's report, on July 16, 2013, the SUNY Board of Trustees voted to create a new entity to focus on expanding the strengths of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, resolving that:

***“The Board of Trustees fully endorses the Chancellor taking immediate steps to implement the separation of CNSE and UAlbany, and to identify and assist in the implementation of the actions required to establish a new degree-granting structure that shall include CNSE, at which time the separation will commence, and be subject to oversight and governance by the Board of Trustees...”***

A Steering Committee was formed with the chief executives of UAlbany and CNSE and charged an implementation team task force with developing action plans to realize the creation of a new entity. Dr. Robert Geer served on that task force in his dual capacities as acting President of SUNY IT and a former member of the CNSE faculty. The Steering Committee and implementation teams offered a final recommendation that CNSE be combined with SUNY IT. Formally, the combination would be executed as a transfer of CNSE from the administrative authority of UAlbany to SUNY IT.

The primary strategic advisory body for SUNY IT, the College Council issued the first formal (unanimous) written endorsement of a combination of CNSE and SUNY IT. Immediately following the Council action, the chairs of the SUNY IT Faculty and Staff Assemblies were thoroughly briefed by the SUNY IT Acting President. Concurrently, the SUNY IT Acting President initiated the formation of a SUNY IT governance advisory group to interface with the faculty governance and leadership at CNSE and the governance bodies at SUNY IT. A parallel process with CNSE faculty, students, and staff was implemented in late fall 2013.

A joint SUNY IT-CNSE working group was subsequently formed of SUNY IT and CNSE faculty and staff, including the Chair and Secretary of the CNSE Council, the Chairs of the SUNY IT Faculty and Staff Assemblies, and SUNY IT's University Faculty Senator. These and additional consultation activities proposed overarching structures of the combined institution in terms of academics and scholarship, governance, leadership and administration, and student engagement, as well as delineating a pathway to engage the necessary accreditation bodies for appropriate reviews and actions.

The SUNY Board of Trustees passed a formal resolution on March 19, 2014 authorizing

***“...the combination of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE), and all of its related academic programs, presently under the administrative authority of the State University of New York at Albany (UAlbany), with the State University of New York Institute of Technology at Utica-Rome (SUNY IT). The resolution authorizes***

***Master Plan amendments to allow the new SUNY IT to award degrees at the Ph.D. level in the areas of Nanoscale Science and Engineering.”***

SUNY System Administrators engaged the Middle States Commission on Higher Education regarding appropriate substantive change actions that would be necessitated to maintain SUNY IT’s MSCHE accreditation. Discussions identified three principal areas of substantive change requiring consideration: *(1) a change in mission; (2) a change in degree level (necessitated by the addition of existing CNSE PhD programs); and (3) an additional location.* Substantive Change petitions were submitted to MSCHE addressing these three areas and approved in March of 2015.

The transfer of CNSE to SUNY IT, commonly referred to as a merger, has been completed. Faculty members were transferred as of July 1, 2014 and the name was officially changed as of September 9, 2014 to the State University of New York Polytechnic Institute (SUNY Poly) by vote of the Board of Trustees. Academic programs associated with CNSE have been transferred from UAlbany to SUNY Poly. A Master Plan amendment allowing the newly formed SUNY Poly to offer doctoral programs was approved in May of 2015 and SED approval was also granted for the B.S., B.A. and Master’s level degrees. For the most part, upper division and graduate students associated with CNSE have not yet formally transferred from UAlbany to SUNY Poly. They, of course, have the option of completing their degrees at UAlbany. Nevertheless, some (4) have transferred and were awarded SUNY Poly B.S. degrees in May 2015. A copy of the report to the SUNY Board of Trustees on the potential merger of the SUNY Institute of Technology and the SUNY College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering is available in the resource room.

In September 2015, first-year freshmen were admitted to SUNY Poly at the Albany site majoring in Nanoscale Science or Nanoscale Engineering. Going forward, students will be admitted/transferred to programs including B.S. and M.S. in Nanoscale Engineering, B.S. and M.S. in Nanoscale Science, and Ph.D. programs in those two disciplines.

### **Mission**

The State University of New York Polytechnic Institute serves as an intellectually vibrant, creative, and stimulating environment for innovation, education, and outreach that prepares our students to apply basic and applied knowledge to challenges, complexities, and opportunities of a modern technological society.

- Provide an affordable, comprehensive, and integrated range of undergraduate and graduate educational and research programs of the highest quality

- Provide students with a well-rounded education to prepare them as future leaders in a dynamic and diverse world by demonstrating the interconnectedness of knowledge and cultures and emphasizing the importance of continuous learning
- Engage in the formulation of dissemination of new discoveries, exciting innovations, stimulating research endeavors, and fundamental and applied knowledge in the science, engineering, technology and related disciplines of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, through research and creative inquiry
- Foster economic development and create educational opportunities within New York, the nation, and beyond and promote responsibility and commitment to public service
- Serve as a leader for innovation and education in the interdisciplinary traditional and emerging disciplines of science, engineering, and technology, from theoretical principles and practical applications

## **Vision**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is a vibrant community engaged in the pursuit of scholarship, public service, and intellectual and creative endeavors. We will become a premier polytechnic institution dedicated to improving society by advancing knowledge and technology.

These mission and vision statements were derived from those of SUNY IT's strategic plan of 2012 and from the mission and vision statements of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and are consistent with the educational charge of institutions of higher learning. The goals and objectives associated with SUNY IT's 2012 strategic plan represented the means to launch and achieve that mission. The mission, vision, goals and objectives of the 2012 strategic plan were aligned with the SUNY-wide Strategic Plan. The goals and objectives specified guided institutional planning and provided the basis for institutional assessment.

Those goals generated in 2012 are itemized in [Appendix 1.1](#).

A summary of the actions and accomplishments taken to fulfill the SUNY IT 2012 goals and mission of the institution is also tabulated in that appendix. SUNY IT made substantial progress from 2012 to 2014 in meeting the goals and objectives specified in the 2012 strategic plan. Furthermore, [Appendix 1.2](#) provides evidence that SUNY IT was focused on its goals and objectives and that the activities undertaken served to advance the mission and vision of the institution.

Following the merger work on a new strategic plan was begun and it was brought to the stakeholders for review in fall 2015. Assessment metrics have been identified to monitor the effectiveness of the new strategic plan. The first formal review of the new plan will take place in fall 2016. Table 1a provides an overview of the strategic planning process.

*Table 1a – SUNY Poly Strategic Planning Process*

Date	Milestone Event
16 January 2015	Task force appointed
20 January 2015	Charge and process determined
27 February 2015	Task force conducts SWOT analysis
4-27 March 2015 and 7 April – 5 May 2015	Task force collects SWOT analysis input from core constituents
10 April 2015	Task force conducts TOWS activity to determine “big ideas”
17 April 2015 and 24 April 2015	Provost and facilitators hold Town Hall meetings to share formative strategic planning results and solicit feedback and additional big ideas
13 May 2015	Task force incorporates feedback and prioritizes big ideas
June – September 2015	Provost and others finalize strategic plan and share with core constituents



# Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

*“An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain Institutional quality.”*

(2012 Middle States Commission on Higher Education Publication: Self-Study Creating a Useful Process and Report).

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 2.

## **Planning Activities**

Since the merger of SUNY IT with CNSE into SUNY Poly a new strategic plan is in process and will be brought to the campus community for ratification. Table 1a provides a summary of the process used to develop a new strategic plan. It is subject to annual review as outlined in the strategic plan itself. Several units of the institution also have their own formalized planning documents. Some of those plans have been in place for more than one assessment cycle and therefore have assessment data that have been used to inform further actions (such as closing of programs) and resource allocation decisions (such as hiring a consultant and then hiring a vice president for enrollment management). Other departments, such as instructional resources, do not have formal planning documents of their own as they operate to support other functions in the institution. Their plans are therefore directly generated by the needs of the units they serve.

## **Institution-Wide Strategic Plan**

[Appendix 2.1](#) contains the 2012 strategic plan for SUNY Poly which is currently in place until ratification of the newly developed SUNY Poly strategic plan. The strategic plan, submitted for ratification in December of 2015, includes the mission, vision and strategic goals of the institution. The strategic objectives provide lists of specific initiatives designed to achieve the specified goals, which themselves are in line with the mission of the institution. Toward that end degree programs that fit within the strategic plan (e.g., Biology, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Nanoscale Engineering and Nanoscale Science) have been started/added to program offerings. The strategic goals and objectives

identified in the plan provide a detailed list of specific initiatives and broader areas of improvement arrived through a comprehensive, long-term process. Some are cost-free; others are self-supporting; and a number will require additional resources to be successful.

Increased academic, non-capital, expenditures (such as the addition of faculty necessitated by the launch of academic degree programs) are reflected in the goals and objectives and have informed both current fiscal year budget and projected budgets. Enhanced revenue from a variety of initiatives has also supported additional faculty lines. For example, for the last three years, SUNY Poly received a legislative appropriation of \$500,000 to support STEM programs including additional faculty in engineering and computer science, as well as laboratory equipment and supplies. [Appendix 2.2](#) contains budget projections through 2020-21.

### Academic Unit Plans

The academic structure has varied considerably in recent years and has now been further altered as a result of the SUNY IT-CNSE merger. The present configuration of SUNY Poly’s five colleges with member departments/constellations is shown in Table 2a.

*Table 2a – Colleges of SUNY Polytechnic Institute*

<b>College</b>	<b>Department/Constellation</b>
<b>Arts &amp; Sciences</b>	Communication and Humanities, Math and Physics, Biology and Chemistry, Social Sciences
<b>Engineering</b>	Engineering, Engineering Technology, Computer Science
<b>Health Sciences &amp; Management</b>	Nursing, Health Information Management, Business, Accounting
<b>Nanoscale Science</b>	Nanoscience, Nanobioscience
<b>Nanoscale Engineering &amp; Innovation</b>	Nanoengineering, Nanoeconomics

New programs have been established (Figure 2.1) in Civil Engineering (freshmen admitted fall 2012) and Mechanical Engineering (freshmen admitted fall 2013). Relatively new programs (Biology, Electrical and Computer Engineering) have just graduated their first students (Biology 2015, Electrical and Computer Engineering 2014). Additionally, programs associated with CNSE through UAlbany have been transferred to SUNY Poly. The first SUNY Poly classes were matriculated in the fall of 2015. New programs are required to present five-year roll out plans and align with the goals and objectives of the institution’s strategic plan (Goal 2 Obj. 1). Planning for existing programs is done on a continual basis; program and department meetings provide evidence for these strategic discussions.

Figure 2.1 – New Degree Programs Established

Program	Degree	Level (UG/Grad)	Implementation (Semester)	----- ACTUAL -----						1 yr Differ
				Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015*	
Applied Computing	BS	UG	Fall 2009	2	2	1	0	0	1	1
Elect & Comp Eng	BS	UG	Fall 2010	11	33	44	65	72	70	-2
NCS	BS	UG	Fall 2010	8	54	60	73	108	123	15
Biology	BS	UG	Fall 2011		7	17	30	47	53	6
Comm & Behavioral Health	BS	UG	Fall 2011		2	21	38	50	49	-1
Interdisciplinary	BA	UG	Fall 2011		11	12	22	12	13	1
Civil Engineering	BS	UG	Fall 2012			8	22	29	59	30
Data Analysis	Cert	Post Bacc	Fall 2013				1	1	0	-1
Mechanical Eng	BS	UG	Fall 2013				9	51	77	26
NCS	MS	Grad	Fall 2013				12	17	19	2
Nanoscale Engineering	BS	UG	Fall 2015						21	21
Nanoscale Science	BS	UG	Fall 2015						6	6
<b>Total New Programs</b>				<b>21</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>104</b>
* as of 09-02-15				Total Headcount: 2800 2516 2373 2484 2738 2765						

## Student Affairs

The Student Affairs offices at SUNY Poly have been aligned with, and supportive of, the institutional strategic plan and they continue to work to meet the institutional objectives. Student Affairs areas are charged with primary coordination of student life including residence halls, athletics, health and wellness, student activities, counseling and career services.

The Student Affairs areas of Residential Life, Health and Wellness, Student Activities, Counseling, Career Services, Disability Services and Athletics have developed assessment plans that include mission and vision statements, goals, and objectives along with actions designed to meet those objectives. The goals and objectives support the institutional goals and objectives. Review of Student Affairs plans take place on an annual basis, and changes are made based on assessment results. [Appendix 2.3](#) contains the assessment plans and results for student affairs areas.

As the campus-wide strategic plan moves forward and the needs of students at the Albany site have become better understood, the student affairs offices are now better positioned to develop a comprehensive student affairs plan in support of the institutional plan. Plans are underway to update the student affairs offices' current mission statement and develop goals and objectives in support of their updated mission.

## Facilities Master Plan

The facilities master plan for the Utica site was published in August 2011 under the guidance of a steering committee with assistance from an advisory committee. The plan was prepared by

JMZ Architects and Planners, PC. The master plan included a campus profile, assessment of conditions, enrollment projection, SUNY Poly alterations, and fiscal recommendations. JMZ has been recently retained to update selected facilities master plan recommendations in the light of new programs, growth in enrollment, increased number of residential students, and evolving needs for classroom and laboratory space.

Assessments including the JMZ building assessment plan, enrollment projections, and office staff focus group feedback indicate that the campus needs an additional residence hall, a STEM-focused academic laboratory and instructional facility, an administrative office building, and renovations/relocation of numerous existing classrooms, offices, and laboratories, as well as additional staffing to operate and maintain those facilities. Discussions are underway with the SUNY Construction Fund regarding justification, planning, and design of new facilities and renovations. Additionally, the SUNY Poly Utica site has received a \$15 million SUNY 2020 grant award to provide laboratories in support of revitalization of the regional manufacturing community as part of the SUNY Manufacturing Alliance for Research and Technology Transfer (SMARTT). Architects have been retained and are proceeding with a formal design. A formal bid on the construction of the laboratory facility is scheduled for spring 2016. Renovations are expected to begin in June 2016.

In support of SUNY Poly's mission, specifically, to "Serve as a leader for innovation and education in the interdisciplinary traditional and emerging disciplines of science, engineering, and technology, from theoretical principles and practical applications," the Fort Schuyler Management Corporation (FSMC) a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation affiliated with SUNY Polytechnic Institute to advance high-tech research, development, and commercialization opportunities, has recently completed the construction of the Computer Chip Commercialization Center (now called QUAD-C), a 250,000 square foot clean room facility at the SUNY Poly Utica site. This facility will provide greater educational and research opportunities. As this facility will also demand more of other campus resources in terms of traffic, audio-visual, scheduling, maintenance, etc... SUNY Poly has directly partnered with FSMC to leverage mutual resources to advance the facilities master plan of the campus. For example, the construction of the QUAD-C facility by FSMC has necessitated an upgrade to the electrical substation serving our Utica site, ensuring adequate power needs for future academic buildings and facilities.

### **SUNY Poly Foundation**

The SUNY Poly Foundation, SUNY Poly's fundraising and development organization (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation) has recently formulated its own strategic plan. The major goal driving the Foundation strategic plan is generation of revenue for merit scholarships. Several strategies have been adopted to identify, track, solicit and grow financial resources for the scholarship fund. Plans are also in place to increase alumni engagement and outreach. Alumni giving was at a peak in fiscal year 2001, reaching a high of nearly \$114,000. However, it waned in subsequent years to a low of \$30,000 in fiscal year 2006. In response to this drop, the

development office created strategies to establish an alumni culture of support through a systematic, sustained approach to alumni outreach in 2012. As a result, alumni giving is once again on the rise. Fiscal year 2013 saw alumni donations of \$87,548, fiscal year 2014 a total of \$108,327, and 2015 yielded \$100,674. Total giving to the Foundation has steadily increased from \$462,775 in fiscal year 2013 to \$500,595 in fiscal year 2014, and again in fiscal year 2015 to \$546,907. As of June 30, 2014 the endowment value of the Foundation was \$3.72 million. The endowment value increased to \$6.29 million in 2015 and \$7.07 million in 2015. A significant transfer from UAlbany to SUNY Poly of endowed funds took place during the merger. The full SUNY Poly Foundation strategic plan is contained in [Appendix 2.4](#) but is presently being revised.

### **Enrollment Management and Enrollment Services**

Enrollment management and enrollment services have both a strategic plan and an assessment plan ([Appendix 2.5](#)) that serves to direct the unit's activities. The unit's mission is to attract, admit, support and retain qualified students. Benchmarks have been set that reflect both SUNY-wide trends and internal projections. Several strategies are in place to monitor progress and achieve objectives. The assessment plan is aligned with the strategic plans for graduate and undergraduate admissions. [Appendix 2.6](#) provides a copy of these assessment plans. Major initiatives include responsibility for the Albany site, maintaining an enrollment growth trajectory (according to the financial plan), and building a Ph.D. population sufficient to exceed 20 doctoral degrees awarded per year.

The undergraduate admissions office has a strategic plan ([Appendix 2.6](#)); beginning with the conclusion of the 2010-2011 recruitment cycles, the Office of Admissions began to map the institution's mission to an office mission and vision.

Yearly activities are tracked and assessed in accordance with the value and extent of support of the institutional mission. There have been changes in programs and program formats to align with the college's strategic plan. For example, the M.S. Information Design and Technology and M.S. Nursing Education programs are now available in online formats to accommodate the needs of the market for these programs. In addition, a Nanobioscience M.S. program, a Nanobioscience Ph.D. program, a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program, and a M.S. in Systems Engineering program are in development. In the coming years, the DNP will be the minimum requirement in NYS to practice as a nurse practitioner. The M.S. in Systems Engineering is directly in line with the college's mission.

In March 2008, the institution made the decision to open a graduate admissions office as a pilot project with one part-time professional position and one full-time support staff position. At the time, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the deans of the (then) four schools had decided that they wanted to raise the prominence of graduate admission at the institution and focus on increasing enrollment in the college's graduate programs. Growth in graduate

enrollment has been steady and staff has developed a strategic plan that identifies current graduate program growth and projects new program growth consistent with the institute's strategic plan. A copy of the graduate office strategic plan is provided in [Appendix 2.6](#). The addition of M.S. degrees in Nanoscale Science and Nanoscale Engineering as well as Ph.D. degrees in both areas is expected to result in significant enrollment growth.

### **Information Technology Services**

There is no formal strategic plan for Information Technology Services (ITS) at present. In 2011, a consultant was hired to audit the ITS system and identify strengths and weaknesses. Those results were not disseminated to the campus community due in part to security issues. ITS has a new director as of July 2013, and strategic planning began in the summer of 2014. Its responsibilities now extend to the Albany site as well as Utica and supports academics, business, and research activities.

### **Business Office**

The Business Office has developed seven-year plans for tuition revenue and applicable state aid disbursements, with the most recent seven year plan submitted to SUNY System Administration taking us through 2021-22. These plans are generated on the basis of data obtained from institutional research, and copies of the plans are available in the Institutional Research resource room. Five-year plans also exist for IFR funds pertaining to technology, health and wellness, and athletics. These plans are prepared by their respective department heads in conjunction with the business office and forwarded to SUNY System Administration for final approval. These plans are also available in the Institutional Research resource room. The Business Office also has an assessment plan which is provided in [Appendix 2.7](#).

### **Continuing Professional Education and Sponsored Research**

The Office of Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) facilitates external interactions with SUNY Polytechnic Institute resources for life-long learning in the Mohawk Valley. A strategic plan ([Appendix 2.8](#)) was created and updated in 2015 that focuses on the development of strategic partnerships with national and local organizations, SUNY Poly's NSF-funded Advanced Technological Education Center, as well as over 30 school districts to achieve its strategic plan. The mission and vision of the CPE unit map directly to the institute-wide strategic mission to foster economic development and create educational opportunities.

### **Fiscal Needs, Resources and Allocations**

#### **Budget Needs**

The core academic operating budget for SUNY Poly is approximately \$31 million as shown in Figure 2.2. This value excludes sponsored research which exceeded \$258 million in fiscal year 2015 (<http://www.rfsuny.org/media/RFSUNY/Documents/KPI/Sponsored-Programs-Expenditures-Alternate-Format-10-13-2015---Final.pdf>) driven primarily by private sector research funding at

SUNY Poly’s Albany site. Eighty percent of the institutional academic operating budget is committed to personal services and 16.3% to operational costs. Personal services represent a relatively fixed cost for the institution because of the high levels of tenured faculty and professional staff with permanent appointments. Figure 2.3 presents the institution’s core academic operating budget over the previous five years. The significant increase in the core academic operating budget between 2013-14 and 2014-15 reflects the addition of the operating budget associated with SUNY Poly’s Albany site.

*Figure 2.2 – Core Operating Budget*

	2014-15
Personal Service	\$ 24,113,736
Temporary Service	\$ 2,154,487
Supplies	\$ 473,607
Travel	\$ 207,855
Contractual	\$ 2,429,361
Equipment	\$ 1,077,461
Utilities	\$ 786,633
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 31,243,141</b>

*Figure 2.3 – Core Operating Budget 2011-2015*

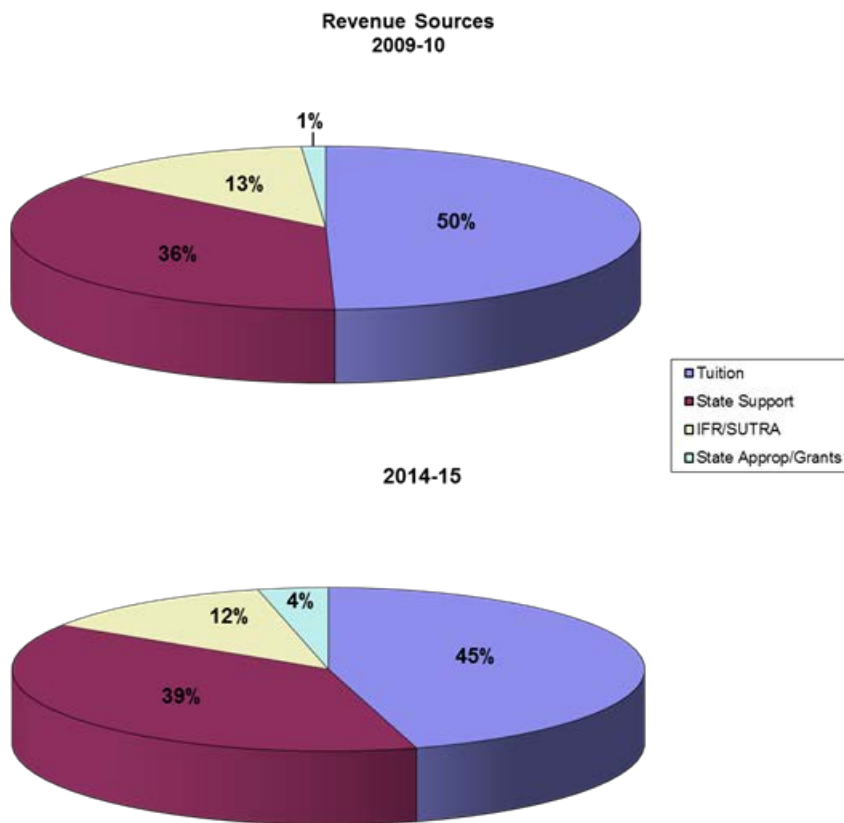
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Total Budget	\$ 19,546,362	\$ 18,615,793	\$ 18,874,051	\$ 19,210,990	\$ 31,243,141

### Revenue Sources

The core academic operating budget consists of monies obtained from state aid and projected tuition revenue. Additional sources include Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR), which is revenue received from sources other than tuition or state aid; e.g., the technology fee, health and wellness fee and the athletic fee; and State University Tuition Reimbursable Account (SUTRA) funds, which include tuition that exceeds enrollment projections and tuition revenue received from summer enrollment that is not part of the academic year revenue projections. State legislative appropriations and grants (e.g., SUNY2020) represent a fourth academic operating revenue source. These funds reduce the costs associated with the core academic operating budget thereby freeing money for other institute-wide uses. Figure 2.4 provides a table of the major academic operating budget revenue sources.

Figure 2.4 – Major Sources of Academic Operating Revenue

Revenue Sources	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Tuition	\$ 11,068,900	\$ 11,835,400	\$ 12,030,000	\$ 12,467,200	\$ 14,219,400
State Support	\$ 7,423,400	\$ 6,553,000	\$ 6,609,900	\$ 6,609,900	\$ 12,045,900
IFR/SUTRA	\$ 3,857,285	\$ 3,608,969	\$ 4,232,679	\$ 4,167,473	\$ 3,859,341
Other	\$ 256,600	\$ 245,000	\$ 845,000	\$ 1,004,200	\$ 1,118,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 22,606,185</b>	<b>\$ 22,242,369</b>	<b>\$ 23,717,579</b>	<b>\$ 24,248,773</b>	<b>\$ 31,243,141</b>



### Resource Allocation Process

Prior to the establishment of five distinct colleges at SUNY Poly the academic budgeting process at the former SUNY IT (SUNY Poly’s Utica site) was managed primarily by the Provost, the academic department chairs and the Associate Vice President of Business Affairs. Following the



establishment of the five colleges (three at the Utica site and two at the Albany site) the revised academic operations budgeting process is as follows:

1. All colleges and their constituent departments are given an initial budget based on the previous academic year's budget.
2. The department chairs then complete the budget worksheets in consultation with the Associate Vice President of Business Affairs and forward to the deans of their respective colleges.
3. The college deans, in consultation with the chairs of the constituent departments and the Associate Vice President of Business Affairs, determines the full-time and part-time faculty needs along with other budgetary needs including travel funds and equipment funds.
4. The Associate Vice President of Business Affairs then brings the deans' collective budget requests to the Provost and President for final resource allocation.
5. Computer and software needs are now managed solely by ITS (Information Technology Services) rather than by individual departments, and include a small amount of additional state support.
6. Some of the OTPS (Other Than Personal Service) are now negotiated through the state at reduced costs. The SUNY-wide Annual Budget Manual identifies costs negotiated or provided by the SUNY System Administration, and the associated costs that will be assessed in conjunction with those services. This manual is kept in the Institutional Research resource room.

### **Assessment and Resource Allocation**

New positions and resource allocations are based on the institutional strategic plan and assessment results. For academic programs, resources for new positions and replacement positions have been allocated in line with the strategic plan. All new requests for faculty positions must include a rationale based on how the position relates to the strategic plan.

Recruitment for a Director of Online Learning is presently underway and the Director of Libraries position has been filled. Both positions align with Goal VII Objective 6 and Goal V Objective 2 of the 2012-2015 strategic plan. Likewise, a part-time director of student success position was created to address Objective 5 for Goal III and to address assessment results from the SOS (Student Opinion Survey). A Vice President for Enrollment Management has been successfully searched and filled based on assessment results and consultant recommendations. Likewise, additional funds were made available for student affairs based on SOS and focus group feedback.

Faculty recruitment is ongoing and has been very successful. Table 2b indicates the number of full-time faculty members recruited in each of the three most recent years.

*Table 2b – Faculty Recruitment*

<b>2013-2014</b>	2014-2015	2015-16
<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>

**Recommendations**

- Continue to keep academic unit heads informed at all steps of the budget process
- Promote intercollege and interdepartmental planning as a way to coordinate resource requests
- Implement a budget process that requires resource request to include strategic planning and the impact of that request on other areas

## Standard 3: Institutional Resources

*“The human, financial, technical, physical facilities and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 3.

### **Budget Allocation Process**

SUNY Poly has a rational allocation process in place within the constraints imposed by the state and SUNY System budgeting processes. Historically, this has included reductions in funding due to state financial challenges. Recently, state allocations have remained essentially constant. Tuition, under state control, has risen slowly but consistently over the last five years.

Almost all college employees are represented by one of several different collective bargaining agents, but neither SUNY Poly nor the SUNY System directly engages in collective bargaining; this is done by the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER). Contracts have been negotiated that prioritize continued employment for members of the collective bargaining units, even in times of financial exigency. With approximately 80% of the SUNY Poly academic operations budget committed to personal service, such contracts, combined with high levels of tenured faculty, have limited the available degrees of freedom on the personal services side of the budget.

At the Utica site three opportunities to redirect funds have occurred over the past decade. First, a major reorganization occurred in 2011 when the former SUNY IT was faced with a deficit well in excess of \$1M. In the four academic schools, each headed by a dean, three leadership positions were vacant or filled by interim appointments. Upon recommendation of the college's Planning and Budgeting Committee, the four deans were replaced by seven department chairs, at a total savings of close to \$400,000 annually. Both the decision to re-organize and the new departmental structure were the result of a broadly consultative process. There was fairly widespread skepticism that this reorganization would be successful. The loss of those positions caused new problems to emerge with regard to communication, advocacy, and department chair workload. Consequently, the college began discussion about restructuring to bring the dean structure back, but with fewer units in order to realize cost efficiencies. The merger with CNSE accelerated this process.

A second opportunity to redirect funds stems from normal faculty and staff turnover due to resignation or retirement. In Utica numerous faculty and staff were hired in the 1970s and 1980s, and many of these individuals are reaching retirement. Though vacancies occur in an ad-hoc fashion, they do provide limited opportunities to redirect funds. With respect to faculty positions, the President reviews requests for new (or replacement positions) based on collective feedback from the executive leadership including the Provost and decanal levels so that each of the deans is cognizant of the needs of the other departments. Positions are then authorized and prioritized by the President based upon strategic plan, assessment results, and appropriate consultation with campus governance.

The final major opportunity to redirect funds stems from special allocations or opportunities. These are typically short-term funds available to SUNY Poly as a result of a special legislative appropriation directly to the college or directed funds made available to SUNY and designated to SUNY Poly. Examples here include a \$500,000 appropriation to SUNY Poly in support of STEM areas \$1.7 million in competitive high-needs state grant funding for a three-year period in nursing, network and computer science, engineering, renewable and clean energy programs. Potential opportunities for special allocations are reviewed by executive leadership to ensure congruence with the institute's mission and priorities. Some opportunities involve broad consultation with appropriate constituencies including campus governance; for example, the successful high needs proposal in nursing was developed by faculty in that discipline.

### Other than Personal Service

Other than Personal Service (OTPS) funds represent less than 20% of SUNY Poly's academic operating budget (Figure 3.1). OTPS funds cover the cost of supplies, equipment, travel, recruitment, legal, and other non-personnel expenditures. For most unit managers and deans, OTPS is the portion of the budget that requires the most planning due to the inflexible nature of personnel expenditures.

Figure 3.1 – OTPS Budget

Category	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-2015
OTPS	\$2,521,954	\$1,904,122	\$1,885,190	\$2,281,720	\$1,907,241	\$ 4,978,481
Total Core Operating Budget	\$20,582,731	\$19,546,362	\$18,615,793	\$18,874,051	\$19,210,990	\$ 31,243,141
<i>Budget Percent to Total:</i>	12.0%	10.0%	13.0%	15.0%	20.0%	16.3%
<i>Actual Percent to Total:</i>	12.3%	9.7%	10.0%	12.1%	9.9%	14.2%

Discrepancies are due to using funding sources outside core operations

As noted previously, academic operating budget allocations focused strongly on personnel costs, especially, faculty recruiting. Consequently, funds for supplies, travel, immigration, and equipment have repeatedly been reduced. However, an intentional plan to increase enrollment has been successful so that greater OTPS funding is becoming available. The budget starting in 2014 is in a nearly balanced state eliminating the use of discretionary funds.

The allocation process historically failed to make provisions for certain extraordinary expenses. For example, academic departments are expected to bear a portion of the travel expenses incurred by faculty candidates, without extra allocations for that purpose. While being able to hire is beneficial to the department, the expenses incurred in the search can have a significant impact on the department's budget. Likewise, if a department hired a foreign national, resulting in the need for the institute to engage the services of an immigration attorney, those costs fell to the department. In extreme cases, legal expenses occurring three years after an initial hire resulted in a claim of 50% of that department's OTPS allocation for that year. Following the merger with the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, recruitment and hiring costs are borne at the institutional level to reduce impact on individual departments and colleges.

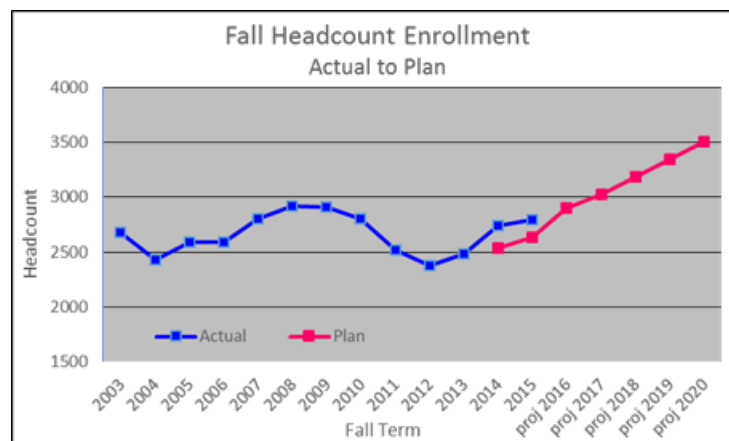
### **Accountability Metrics**

At the request of then-SUNY IT President Yeigh, in 2009 the institute-wide Planning and Budgeting Committee investigated the direct cost of instruction by major and level. For many years SUNY System had provided this data comparatively by campus, program, and level, but ceased to do so around 2002. Per credit hour cost of instruction by level and discipline was determined. The study revealed that differences in cost among and between majors were not as pronounced as conventional wisdom suggested. The major differentiator between high cost programs and low cost programs was not differences in salary by discipline as many suspected, but enrollment. Thus high enrollment disciplines tended to be somewhat more expensive while new programs or low-enrolled disciplines tended to be somewhat less expensive. The findings of this assessment study framed the decision not to focus on increasing enrollment in programs traditionally thought of as inexpensive as a way to increase revenue.

Another assessment study by the Planning and Budgeting committee in 2010 was also a factor in the decision to raise the profile of the entering class. Using multifactor classification software, it was determined that while the institution's overall retention rate from freshman to sophomore year was about 70% (compared with 78% at SUNY comprehensive colleges), the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate for students entering with a high school average of less than 81 was only about 25%. This assessment study served to frame the campus discussion about the main causes of attrition (academic performance vs. issues surrounding student life). It was hoped that raising the profile of the entering class would help lower the attrition rate and thereby cause an increase in overall enrollment at the upper division levels. For the past three years, freshmen to sophomore retention has been 85%, 75%, and 74% respectively.

In 2012, then-SUNY IT exhausted its financial reserves and developed a financial plan predicated upon increasing enrollment to balance the academic operating budget by 2018. Basically, the plan is to spread fixed costs over a larger number of tuition-paying students. The model has a target of 3,184 students by 2018 at which time the ratio of instruction costs to non-instructional costs would reach an acceptable level. Figure 3.2 shows the targeted enrollment and the predicted enrollment to the year 2020. It is clearly apparent that the institution is on track to achieve this goal. The merger with the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering has improved the financial position of the institute providing more flexibility in the academic operating budget. However, it is expected that the institute will keep to the enrollment predictions shown in Figure 3.2 simultaneous with raising the incoming student profile – a challenging proposition, but one that has been achieved in each of the last 3 years.

*Figure 3.2 – SUNY Poly Enrollment Predictions through 2020*



The Planning and Budgeting Committee also undertook an assessment study of section sizes comparing SUNY Poly to campuses in the comprehensive sector. Based on fall 2012 enrollment, the study was limited to face-to-face sections with an enrollment of between 5 and 50. Key findings were that across all disciplines and levels, section sizes at SUNY Poly Utica site with a mean of 16.2 are substantially below mean section sizes at comparable SUNY campuses with a mean of 23.5. This finding is consistent across all levels (lower division, upper division, and graduate), and is generally consistent across all disciplines. The sole significant discipline/level combination to exceed the section size at comparable institutions is lower division computer science. In two other combinations SUNY Poly exceeded comparable section sizes but both were in areas in which SUNY Poly offered a total of only one section. This study made a substantial contribution to the campus-wide discussion of section sizes. The small section size has also been used as a key recruitment point by the Admissions office.

### **Facilities Master Plan – Utica Site**

In late 2011, Phases IV and V of the Facilities Master Plan for the Utica site were delivered by the contractor, JMZ Architects and Planners, PC. The plan grew out of a year-long highly consultative process including a steering committee composed of senior executives and an advisory committee with representatives from all major constituencies. An important element in this plan aligns campus buildings and outdoor spaces in an “arc and spine” pattern, with the arc extending from the Field House to the Quad-C building and the spine running from the plaza between Kunsela and Donovan Halls across the pedestrian bridge to the Campus Center.

### **Facilities Master Plan – Albany Site**

As part of the merger of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering with SUNY IT (now SUNY Polytechnic Institute) the academic space at SUNY Poly’s Albany site is being included with those of the Utica site in the SUNY Construction Fund’s inventory of academic facilities as the first phase of the drafting of a new SUNY Poly-wide Facilities Master Plan (FMP). SUNY Poly administrators and the SUNY Construction Fund (SUCF) have met throughout the spring and summer of 2015 in this regard to help craft an outline of an Albany site FMP with which to engage SUNY Poly stakeholder groups. Key priorities include current needs for student residence and activity facilities in addition to near-term expansions of academic classroom and laboratory space to accommodate degree program growth and faculty-based lab facilities. This includes substantial telepresence capabilities to match those available at the Utica site to promote distance learning as an option for students to leverage faculty at both Utica and Albany sites.

### **Instructional Technology – Overview**

SUNY Poly has embraced changes in instructional technology and in pedagogy. This is not to suggest that changes are uniform or have been adopted by all faculty, but they are widespread.

At present Blackboard, adopted during the summer of 2015, is SUNY Poly’s course management system for both sites. Technical support and hosting of Blackboard is outsourced to SUNY’s ITEC center in Buffalo, with local support provided by an instructional designer and an IT specialist. Course management systems have the ability to capture huge volumes of user data and SUNY is just beginning to explore the field of analytics. SUNY Poly expects that in the near future tools and training will be available to faculty to customize online delivery to individual learning styles.

SUNY Poly has installed, operates and maintains a robust fiber optic network which spans its sites, connecting over 130 fiber optic-attached Ethernet segments supporting more than 19,000 ports or connections. The campus network consists of a collapsed backbone router with a combination of 100 and 1000 Megabit (Mbps) links to buildings. Distribution to the desktop is a combination of switched 10/100/1000-Mbps Ethernet. The network includes interconnections with several local, regional and national networks including NYSERNet, SUNYNet, Commodity Internet and Internet 2 via a NYSERNet connection to Abilene. The campus Internet (I1) is composed of two

diverse paths; the primary at 200 Mbps and the secondary link at 100 Mbps. The Internet2 (I2) link is 250 Mbps. Remote access to off-campus users via a VPN appliance and SSL VPN client.

SUNY Poly deploys and manages over 200 servers in two data centers located in CS-9 and the Management Services Center. These servers run a variety of operating systems (IBM AIX, Sun Solaris, Microsoft Windows Server and Linux) and house all University-wide development and production applications used by students, faculty and staff. The majority of these servers run in a virtualized VMWare server environment and all servers make use of a centralized NetApp disk storage system.

### **Instructional Technology – Utica Site**

All faculty are offered standardized Blackboard course shells, and some departments require their use by their faculty. Additionally, all of SUNY Poly's online offerings are conducted using Blackboard. For the spring semester 2015, 21% of the institution's offerings were delivered entirely online using ANGEL (the previous learning management system), and an additional 15% are offered in a hybrid with online sessions replacing some face-to-face sessions.

The computing environment at the Utica site is for the most part adequate. A recent upgrade in excess of \$3 million has provided a computing environment that meets SUNY Poly needs. Access to needed software is provided through many on-campus laboratories supporting both PC and Macintosh environments. Specialized software required for courses is accessible in the appropriate laboratories and remotely where licensing permits. Laboratory equipment is replaced on a regular schedule monitored and maintained by the ITS department. Wireless access for students in dormitories has been problematic with students experiencing poor services. Due to these issues SUNY Poly has allocated funds and begun the process to completely upgrade the dorm wireless infrastructure. This project is slated for completion prior to resumption of classes in January, 2016. At the same time the campus internet backbone will be upgraded to a 1 GB connection from its existing 300mb connection to support additional video and student services on the site.

All classrooms are equipped for electronic presentation with an instructor's console and large screen projection. Instructors can connect personal computing devices to the projection system and to the campus network from any classroom. One long-term problem was that the SUNY Poly Utica site holds a large number of evening classes, but the IT staff did not work in the evenings to provide classroom technology assistance. This was addressed in 2010, when IT services moved to the library to increase overall accessibility and received a budget increase to hire evening workers. SUNY Poly has one internet and satellite accessible smart classroom featuring multiple cameras, a smart board, and multiple display options. This room can be used to deliver face-to-face classes, seminars, or meetings to remote locations using two-way audio and video. As an example, this facility has been used to share a computer science course between SUNY Poly and SUNY Fredonia where neither institution had sufficient enrollment to justify the advanced class. A second smart classroom is currently under construction and scheduled to be operational in January 2016.



The Computer Science department is a recent recipient of a SUNY Innovative Instructional Technology grant that was used to implement a low-cost student-mediated lecture video capture system. Using ClassX software developed at Stanford and modified by students at the SUNY Poly Utica site, half of the department's faculty (and some in other departments) use the system to capture class sessions. A unique feature of this system is that it provides the opportunity for the viewer to dynamically zoom in on any portion of the image (for example a projected computer image or an equation written on the board). Captured lectures are typically available for viewing within one business day. In fall 2013 a total of seventeen course sections were captured using the Class X system. Pre- and post-evaluation of the system indicates that students are using it, particularly for exam review, and are pleased with it. Research is ongoing to see whether there is any statistical relationship between viewing these captured lectures and student learning outcomes. However, even if no relationship is established, the cost of capture and archiving is so low that it can be justified solely on the basis of student satisfaction.

SUNY Poly's IT services are led by the Chief Information Officer who has overall responsibility for both the Utica and Albany sites. Integration of network services is presently the top priority. Many capabilities such as Banner and Blackboard are now fully operational as are online library resources. Some capabilities such as a common email system and common websites are being addressed and are expected to be fully integrated within a year.

### **Instructional Technology – Albany Site**

SUNY Poly faculty and students located on the Albany site use the same Blackboard infrastructure and support systems that are currently in place in Utica. As many of the faculty still teach UAlbany legacy students, a process was implemented to grant SITNET IDs to UAlbany students in order to give them access to the same Blackboard resources under a single umbrella.

The four classrooms and two auditoriums on the Albany site include full multimedia capabilities with either full projection or LCD screen support. Additionally, the Albany site has plans to implement a full smart classroom to expand teaching capabilities similar to the Utica site. The planned smart classroom should be operational in the spring 2016 Semester. In addition, CNSE students have access to the unique 3D SIMM laboratory/classroom, a first-of-its-kind facility with technological capabilities that fundamentally redesign the undergraduate learning experience. 3D SIMM, which stands for Digital Dimension: Design, Simulation, Imaging and Modeling Media, provides CNSE's undergraduate nanoscale science and engineering students with a one-of-a-kind digital simulation, design and data visualization environment that parallels CNSE's physical laboratory infrastructure. This state-of-the-art facility is equipped with wireless HP Tablet PCs, wide-format HP DesignJet printers, and remote access to high-power HP Blade Workstations from anywhere on campus. CNSE was selected in May 2009 as one of 10 two- and four-year colleges and universities in the United States to receive a highly competitive HP Innovations in Education

grant, through which CNSE received an award package of HP technology, cash, and professional services valued at more than \$286,000 to assist in equipping the 3D SIMM laboratory/classroom.

For support of laboratory, classroom and personal computers, CNSE is equipped with an internal TCP/IP network through a high-bandwidth connection and server space for backup and transfer of files. Wireless is available in most rooms in the building, including the laboratories and offices.

### **Recommendations**

- Provide regular training on the access and use of the state accounts systems and the data warehouse resources provided by SUNY to unit heads to facilitate budget development monitoring of expenditures
- Centrally fund legal costs associated with the hiring of foreign nationals
- Update the college's IT plan
- Document policies and processes for appropriate consultation regarding the outsourcing of services
- Ensure consultation between administration and committees, as appropriate, in actions that impact academic affairs.

## Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

*“The institution’s system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision making. The governance structure includes an active governing body and sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 4.

SUNY Poly is a young institution where many employees who were integral members of the foundation of SUNY IT (Utica site) in the 1960s and of CNSE (Albany site) in the late 1990s and early part of the new millennium are still active on campus. As SUNY IT (Utica site) was initially constituted, the employees formed the character of the campus as one of shared responsibility and full participation with an emphasis on the importance of the culture of shared governance. The CNSE (Albany site) faculty and staff bring a strong culture of participating in governance to the merged institution, having been members and leaders in the governance bodies at the University at Albany.

Governance at SUNY Poly has been designed to respect the different strengths, cultures, and service obligations at each site while ensuring that both groups work together for institute-wide issues. After the merger, a working group consisting of the heads of each local governing body, previous governance leaders, and the University Faculty Senator developed bylaws for the institute-wide governing body. These were ratified and went into effect in the fall of 2015, and the body began operating before the end of the 2015 fall semester. The system is a federated model similar to other multi-site SUNY campuses, with localized governance issues handled by the bodies at each site and a defined set of Poly-wide issues managed by the institute-wide body.

The Utica site has three separate governance bodies: the faculty assembly, the staff assembly, and the student association. The roles of governance are defined by both the SUNY Board of Trustees Policies ([Appendix 4.1](#)) and guided by policy documents of the SUNY University Faculty Senate ([Appendix 4.2](#)). The faculty and staff assemblies exchange information through their respective chairs and are in the process of developing regular liaison positions with each other and with the

student association to facilitate interaction. All three governance bodies meet regularly and interact with the administration on a regular basis.

The Albany site has three governance bodies: the Albany site Assembly, the undergraduate student association, and the graduate student association. The Albany site Assembly includes both teaching and professional staff, as well as students. This ensures both information sharing and cross-representation across all constituent groups. The Albany charter and bylaws are modeled after the University of Albany governance elements that were found to be relevant for the Albany site.

## **Governance Structures**

### College Council

The College Council is primarily an advisory board established for each state-operated SUNY campus according to rules of the SUNY Board of Trustees. There are ten members; nine are appointed directly by the governor, and the tenth is a student member chosen from the campus student body. Duties of the College Council are laid out in the New York State Education Law (Section 356) and are:

- a) Recommending candidates for appointment by the Trustees as Presidents of their institutions;
- b) Reviewing all major plans of the campus Presidents and making relevant recommendations before they are submitted to the Trustees for approval.
- c) making regulations regarding campus facilities;
- d) Reviewing and recommending institutional budgets;
- e) Fostering the development of advisory citizens' committees;
- f) Naming buildings and grounds;
- g) Making regulations regarding student conduct;
- h) Exercising supervision of student housing and safety;
- i) Reporting to the Trustees annually and at other times as needed;
- j) Making the regulations necessary for the performance of their other duties; and
- k) Performing other actions directed by the Trustees.

The subject matter for major plans includes but is not restricted to:

- 1) Appraisal or improvement of faculty;
- 2) Student admission policies;
- 3) Appraisal or change of academic programs;
- 4) Standards for earning degrees;
- 5) Expansion of institutional plans; and
- 6) Student advising and housing.

According to the Education Law, the Council meets four times per year with members of the campus administration, a faculty representative, and an alumni representative.

The Board of Trustees policy empowers the chief administrative officer, after seeking consultation, with the appointment and reappointment of employees consistent with the operating requirements of the college.

“Consultation” in this context means consideration by the chief administrative officer of a college of recommendations of academic or professional employees, including the committees, if any, of the appropriate department or professional area, and other appropriate sources in connection with appointment or reappointment of a specified employee; provided, however, that nothing contained herein shall prevent the chief administrative officer of a college from taking such actions as he or she may deem necessary to meet notice requirements in the event of nonrenewal of term appointments.<sup>1</sup>

### SUNY Poly-wide governance

The SUNY Poly governance Council (established as the institute’s overarching governance body in fall 2015 as noted above) has membership from faculty, professional staff, and students. There are five standing committees with equal representation from both sites, and an executive committee composed of the co-chairs of each standing committee plus at-large members from each site. This unit, in keeping with a federated campus governance structure, provides recommendations to the administration and sites regarding institution-wide issues defined in the bylaws. Regular self-evaluation is written into the bylaws and evaluation/reconsideration of any matter can also be triggered by a vote by any governance body at either site. A draft copy of the Bylaws of the SUNY Polytechnic Institute Governance Council are provided in [Appendix 4.3](#).

### Utica Site

Each of the three governance bodies (faculty, staff, and student) operates slightly differently. The faculty assembly is a body of the whole rather than a representative senate. Meetings are held once a month during the academic year. There are currently nine standing committees of the faculty assembly, covering both areas where faculty have primary responsibility (such as curriculum) and areas where faculty are advisory (such as planning and budgeting). Committees contain representatives elected from the constituent academic units, and specific committees have designated members of the administration as nonvoting members (see [Appendix 4.4](#) Utica faculty assembly laws). The faculty governance meetings are often attended by the Provost, and the assembly chair has a regularly scheduled separate meeting with the chair of the Utica staff assembly, the chair of the Albany governance body, the President, the Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer, the Provost, and other administrators who may seek advice from the faculty.

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<sup>1</sup> SUNY Board of Trustees Policies

The staff assembly is a body of the whole, comprised of staff in all of the bargaining units and management confidential employees. It meets bimonthly and additionally as needed during the academic year. The staff assembly has five committees with four to seven members each, selected to be representative across all bargaining units. Their committees cover areas such as communication, staff development, and campus construction and renovation. The staff assembly executive committee meets with the president as needed to discuss issues, and committees of the staff assembly interface directly with appropriate administrative officers. The committees then report back to the assembly on the results of their interactions.

The Student Association is a representative body with an executive board, an executive council, and senators from each class, and holds weekly meetings during the academic year. Representatives are elected by the student body annually, and the student association also has two voting positions on the SUNY Poly governance Council. They are also members of the state-wide SUNY Student Assembly. The body has standing committees dealing with issues such as food service, budget, technology, class gift, and academic affairs. The President of the Student Association meets regularly with the Associate Provost for Student Affairs and other college officials on an as needed/requested basis.

#### Albany Site

The Albany site Assemblies are comprised of thirty-two senators from across the teaching faculty, research faculty, and professional staff. Both undergraduate and graduate students serve on councils and committees of the Albany site Assemblies. Senators serve two-year terms, and are selected from their representative groups according to the charter ([Appendix 4.5](#) CNSE charter) and may be appointed by the executive committee. The senate meets four times per academic year. The senate has thirteen committees, called councils ([Appendix 4.5](#) CNSE charter), which cover areas including curriculum, assessment, ethics, student life, and educational outreach, among others. The membership of each council is proscribed by the charter ([Appendix 4.5](#)), and meetings are open. Council chairs are elected from within their membership and serve on the executive committee.

The executive committee contains council chairs, members from administrative positions (President and vice presidents), the presidents of the student governance bodies and specific senate positions (chair, vice chair, past chair, secretary, UFS senator, and secretary). Overlap in succession is built-in with the position of immediate past chair on the executive committee.

The students at the Albany site are represented by a graduate student association and an undergraduate student association that interface with the Utica site student association. Students in these three groups have been meeting regularly for the past year to determine how to develop a shared culture and share resources. The Albany site student governance groups represent both SUNY Poly and those CNSE students who are currently UAlbany students – the latter in an

informal, but participatory sense as those students are formally represented by the UAlbany student associations.

### *Evaluation of Governance Effectiveness*

The Utica faculty assembly structural composition is revised every time there is a change in the structure of the academic units located at the site, which has happened frequently in the last decade. The faculty assembly bylaws are updated when issues arise related to the effectiveness of committees and of the entire body. Recent updates, for example, include developing a mechanism to adjust committee quorum counts when necessary and clarifying who the contact representatives are during off-contract months.

The Utica site Staff Assembly has a committee that reviews bylaws, governance, and policy and is specifically charged with identifying and analyzing evolving issues regarding their structure. As the body itself is still new, they have not yet had enough data to fully evaluate their structure.

The Utica site Student Association has a standing committee to regularly review its policies, and the association keeps in contact with the state SUNY Student Association regarding models of effective student governance.

One shortcoming in all of the governance bodies at the Utica site has been the lack of policies to require regular self-evaluation regarding not only the structure of the bodies, but of the individuals holding positions within the body. There are evaluative tools used in other places on campus that may be able to be adapted for such evaluations.

The Albany site assemblies have a governance committee that is specifically charged with assessment of their structure. As the structure is new, it has not had the data to assess its structure, but the assessment is set into the CNSE charter ([Appendix 4.5](#)).

The SUNY Poly-wide governance Council has regular evaluation written into the bylaws, and can be triggered at other times by a request from any governance body at either site.

### **Recommendations**

- Governance bodies at Utica and Albany to create self-assessment processes and procedures to be used regularly in evaluating the efficiency of their structures and leadership, including the following:
  - Communication channels among governance bodies
  - Communication channels with the administration, both formal and informal
  - Access to governance policies and meeting documentation
- Audit location-specific and institution-wide committees across the sites to eliminate redundancies and ensure proper composition and governance representation

# Standard 5: Administration

*“The institution’s administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution’s organization and governance.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 5.

## **Current Administrative Structure**

SUNY Poly is one of 64 colleges and universities of the SUNY system. A Board of Trustees governs the entire system and promulgates high-level rules for campus operations. SUNY itself is led by a Chancellor who reports to the Board of Trustees. The leaders of the colleges and universities, whether presidents or chief executive officers, report to the Chancellor.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute has been recently reclassified within the SUNY System as a Doctoral Degree Granting Institution. Prior to the merger of SUNY Institute of Technology with the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (formerly a part of the University at Albany) SUNY IT was classified as a Technology College.

Figure 5.1 shows the organizational chart for SUNY Poly as it stands at the present time. The organizational chart reflects the decision by the SUNY Board of Trustees on March 19, 2014 at the recommendation and request of the SUNY IT College Council, to combine SUNY IT with the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE), formerly an academic unit of the University at Albany. As the Board of Trustees had, over the past decade, imbued CNSE with essentially autonomous operation as a UAlbany academic unit, the combination of the two campuses reflected a ‘merger’ of equals in most respects. This action was the subject of a separate, complex substantive change request reviewed and approved by MSCHE ([Appendix 5.1](#)).

In addition, and pursuant to the Board of Trustees March 19 and subsequent resolutions, the combined sites are named SUNY Polytechnic Institute, in large part due to SUNY IT’s efforts over the last five years to ascend to the role of New York State’s public polytechnic institution. Consequently, the organizational chart reflects the onset of the combined operations of the two campuses. Dr. Alain Kaloyeros has been appointed by the Board of Trustees as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Institution.



At the time of this self-study, academic programs associated with the former SUNY IT are largely unaffected. However, programs associated with the Albany site, those of CNSE, are transitioning from University at Albany to SUNY Polytechnic Institute. Students who were previously students at the University at Albany may remain so or transfer to SUNY Polytechnic Institute. The process of transferring programs to the merged institution, SUNY Polytechnic Institute, from UAlbany is complete. The first freshman class at SUNY Polytechnic Albany site matriculated in the fall semester 2015.

The principal administrative personnel of the Utica site are listed below and are referenced in the organizational chart (Fig. 5.1).

### **Administrative Officers of the SUNY Polytechnic Institute**

Dr. Alain Kaloyeros, Founding President and Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Robert Geer – Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Dr. William Durgin – Provost

Mr. Richard Fuller – Vice President for Enrollment Management

Dr. Michael Liehr – Vice President for Research

Dr. John Marsh – Associate Vice President for Research

TBA – Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Ms. Marybeth Lyons – Associate Provost for Student Affairs

Dr. Richard Collier – Director of Student Services

Dr. Daniel White – Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Professional and Corporate Recruitment and Outreach, Director of Academic Advisement

TBA – Associate Vice President for Communications and Public Relations

Ms. Rhonda Haines – Vice President for Human Resources and Special Projects

Mr. Scott Bateman – Associate Vice President for Finance

Ms. Valerie Fusco – Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research

TBA – Vice President for Advancement

Mr. Andrew Bellinger – Chief Information Officer

Mr. Matthew Putnam – Director of Facilities

Mr. Thomas Louis – Vice President for Security and Safety

Mr. Gerard Gretzinger – Vice President for Communication

Mr. Nick Grimmer – Assistant Vice President of Development

Ms. Christine Waller – Associate Vice President for Sponsored Programs

Mr. David Doyle – Vice President for Government Relations

Mr. Carl Kempf – Vice President for Regulatory Affairs

Mr. Michael Fancher – Vice President for Business Development

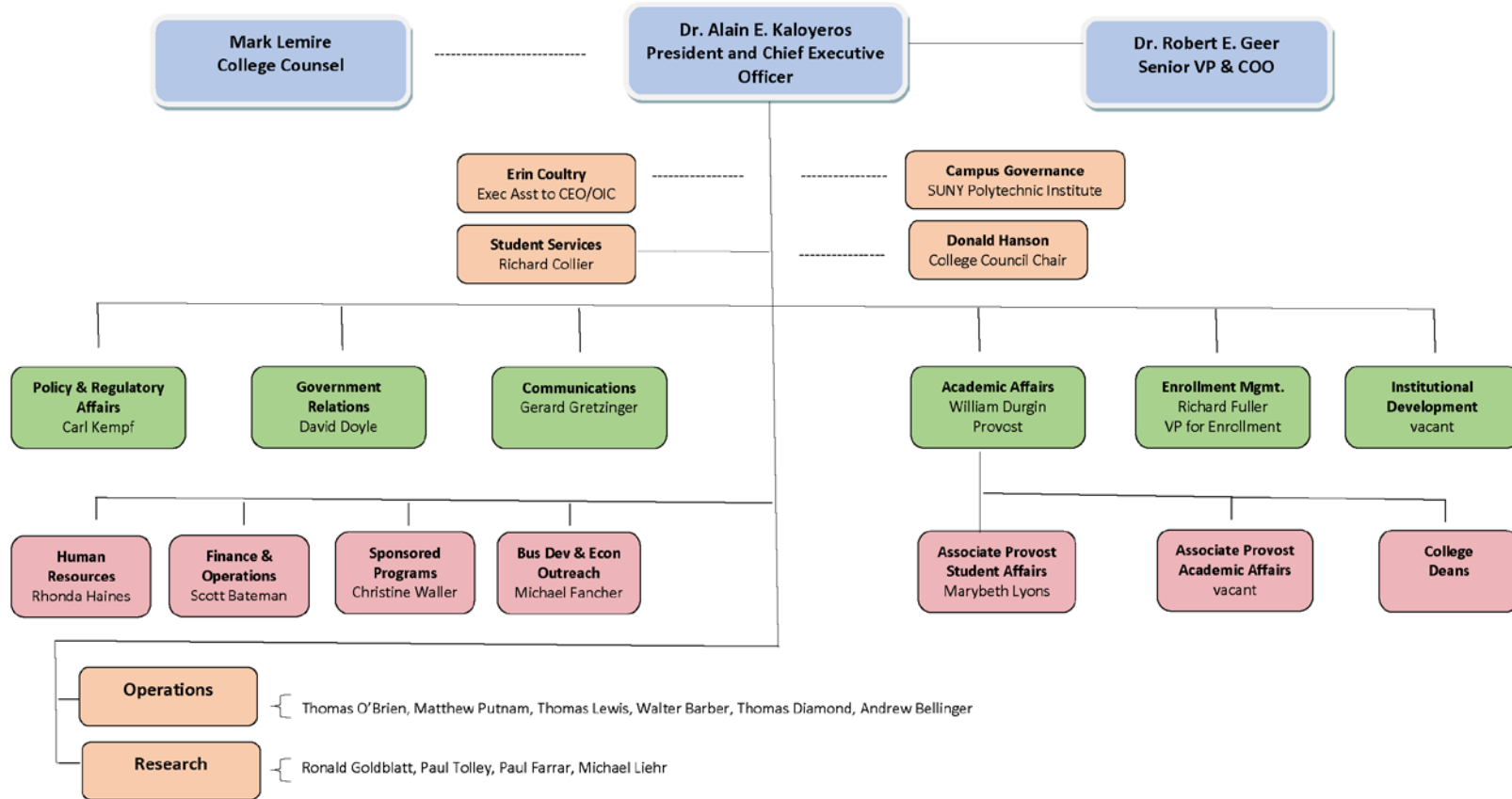
Mr. Ronald Goldblatt – Senior Vice President for SEMATECH

Mr. Paul Tolley – Vice President for Infotonics and Disruptive Technologies

Mr. Paul Farrar – General Manager for Global 450 Consortium

Mr. Thomas O'Brien – Associate Vice President for Innovation Infrastructure  
Mr. Walter Barber – President, Fuller Road Management  
Mr. Thomas Diamond – Vice President for Compliance

SUNY Polytechnic Institute



The Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer reports to the President, Chief Executive Officer and conducts weekly Cabinet Meetings at the Utica site. The membership includes:

- Provost
- Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Associate Provost for Student Affairs
- Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
- Associate Vice President for Business Affairs
- Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research
- Assistant Vice President for Advancement

The Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer and the Provost are members of the faculty and regularly attends meetings of the Faculty Assemblies<sup>2</sup> and, by invitation, its executive committee.

The Senior Vice President and the Provost often attend Student Assembly meetings and open forums at both sites, during which time they are open for questions. They also meet with the Staff Assembly executive committee as needed. Other information is expected to flow from the Provost through the deans and directors to the faculty and staff and from the President's Cabinet through directors to their offices and staff.

The Provost oversees all academic functions at all sites. All academic programs at the Utica site were carried over during the merger. Academic programs associated with the Albany site which were previously components of the University of Albany's academic programs associated with the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering have been formally approved for offering at the SUNY Polytechnic Institute. Structurally, there are now three colleges based in Utica and two colleges based in Albany. The five deans report directly to the Provost. Colleges at the Utica site have a departmental structure with department chairs. Colleges at the Albany site utilize a constellation structure with chairs.

The Provost conducts monthly Deans' Council meetings with the College Deans. Additionally, the Provost conducts monthly meetings with the Provost's Council. It consists of:

- Associate Provost for Student Affairs
- Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
- Associate Vice President for Student Affairs (Albany)
- Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research

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<sup>2</sup> SUNY Polytechnic Institute has two Faculty Assemblies – one in Utica and one in Albany. Their activities are coordinated through a Joint Governance Committee.

- Associate Vice President for Research
- Chief Information Officer
- Deans
- Registrar
- Director of Assessment
- Director of Student Success
- Director for Student Affairs (Albany)
- Director of Admissions
- Director of Graduate Admissions
- Director of Continuing and Professional Education
- Director of Library
- Director of Emerging Educational Collaboration
- Chair of Faculty Assembly

## Colleges

The Provost chairs the Deans' Council comprised of the five college deans.

Arts and Sciences (Social and Behavioral Sciences, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Communication and Humanities) – Utica

*Interim Dean – Dr. Zora Thomova*

Engineering (Engineering, Engineering Technology, Computer Science) – Utica

*Interim Dean – Dr. Andrew Wolfe*

Health Sciences and Management (Nursing, Business Administration, Accounting, Community and Behavioral Health) – Utica

*Interim Dean – Dr. Robert Yeh*

Nanoscale Engineering and Technology Innovation (Nanoengineering, Nanoeconomics, Technology Innovation) – Albany

*Interim Dean – Dr. Pradeep Haldar*

Nanoscale Science (Nanoscience, Nanobioscience) – Albany

*Interim Dean – Dr. Alain Diebold*

As noted, the first three colleges are located at the Utica site with the remaining two colleges located at the Albany site. Other academic programs offered through the Albany site colleges are in “teach-out” mode through an agreement with the University of Albany. Four undergraduate students did transfer from the University at Albany to SUNY Polytechnic Institute and received degrees in May 2015. It is expected that many students will transfer. However, all presently enrolled students at UAlbany can receive UAlbany degrees.

## Assessment of Administrative Structure

Assessment of the administrative structure has utilized standing committee work, external survey data, small-group interviews, and office reviews.

In fall 2011, the institute used an external survey from the Harvard Graduate School of Education Collaborative On Academic Careers In Higher Education survey (COACHE) to survey faculty satisfaction. The survey was administered through SUNY System Administration. Summary results were returned to the then SUNY IT during the summer of 2013. The results were presented to the faculty in the spring of 2014.

The general areas of lowest satisfaction noted in the COACHE survey ([Appendix 5.2](#)) that also had the greatest difference from the SUNY-wide averages were in senior leadership and tenure policies. All of the senior leadership personnel at the time of the survey had already left those positions when the results were received. With regard to tenure policies, the faculty governance personnel adjusted the tenure process and created a set of standardized guidelines to support faculty progress. Timelines for deadlines within the tenure process are clearly published by Human Resources and include more lead time for each step of the process.

Representative groups of faculty and staff at different organizational levels were interviewed by the chair of the faculty evaluation committee and the faculty governance chair in the winter of 2013 in the context of the (then) nascent discussion on administrative reorganization. The greatest concern from all areas was that numerous institutional changes have resulted in communication channels operating at less than optimum levels.

The strongest sentiment across all of the interviewed groups, however, was an overwhelming sense of pride in the campus, pride in the students, and respect for their colleagues. The complaints that were expressed regarding the structure and how it operates were all within the framework of wanting to serve students better, and every employee in the groups had examples of working overtime, and going beyond their job description to ensure that things got done properly even if the structure made it difficult.

Administrators had expressed dissatisfaction with the pre-existing departmental structure. Formation of the dean structure was a direct result of that dissatisfaction. The problems included difficulties getting administrative follow-through from department chairs (such as programs of study, recruitment plans), poor communication between upper levels of administration and faculty and staff, and little to no interdisciplinary collaboration. Discussions among the academic leadership resulted in the establishment of a college structure including the Albany site. (This structure is referenced above under the section describing Provost's responsibilities) The new model utilizing five colleges has been vetted with faculty on both sites and endorsed by the faculty and administrators. The institution-wide assessment committee is charged with the

responsibility for formally evaluating the effectiveness of the new administrative structure over next three years.

Another area of assessment of administration originates from governance. The Faculty Assembly, at the Utica site, has a standing committee charged with evaluation of academic administrators. When the committee was established in 2008, it was envisioned to cover deans, the VPAA (later Provost), and President. Due to the combination of changes within those positions and committee's guideline to not evaluate anyone until after they had served in the job for a full year, few evaluations have been carried out. The first evaluation covered the Library Director, the VPAA, and three of the deans. The second, recently completed, covered only the Provost. The Joint Governance Council has provision for assessment of leadership performance but has not conducted any assessments yet.

Several recent changes have been implemented to address the more global issues raised in the evaluations. One has been to increase the number of administrators and stabilize office responsibilities. Positions added include a Vice President for Enrollment Management, a Library Director, Deans, a Director of Student Success, and a Director of Online Learning. In particular, the Vice President for Enrollment Management position is focused on increasing admissions and retention rate and returning campus enrollment and overall student quality to levels prior to 2009, thereby easing some of the academic budgetary shortfalls.

The Human Resources office has begun an audit and the updating of job descriptions. Within the job descriptions, functional and working relationships are outlined. This includes supervisory relationships. Additionally, organizational charts exist for all divisions, units, and departments which outline reporting relationships.

The Human Resources office also developed a two-day orientation program for professional and classified staff, which has been implemented for all new employees. In addition, required training programs for all faculty and staff have been implemented to insure compliance with all state and federal policies. A president's blog was developed to allow the president to easily convey information to the campus community. There has also been an increase in parallel lines of communication; for instance, some notifications come through directors/department chairs and also through faculty and staff governance to facilitate transmission.

## **Recommendations**

- Review and reorganize administrative structure as necessary
- Review and improve communication and transparency
- Institute a regular cycle for assessment of administrative structure

## Standard 6: Integrity

*“In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with standard 6.

SUNY Poly adheres to high ethical standards to ensure integrity, as described in one of the institution’s core values: “Integrity by celebrating academic freedom, sustaining academic responsibility and developing ethical citizenry.” From the onset of a student or employee’s engagement with SUNY Poly, standards of integrity and ethical behavior are emphasized in orientation programs, handbooks, policies, contractual agreements, and ongoing training/professional development programs.

### **Policies Regarding Ethical Standards**

Faculty and staff of the State University of New York are encouraged to foster an atmosphere of academic freedom by promoting the open and timely exchange of scholarly knowledge independent of personal interests and are required to avoid conflicts of interest. In instances where potential or actual conflicts exist, faculty and staff are expected to consult with appropriate University officers and abide by this University policy. It is the responsibility of campus officials charged with implementing this policy to identify potential or actual conflicts of interest and take appropriate steps to manage, reduce, or eliminate them. Faculty and staff above a certain salary threshold and/or in the position of policymaker or advisor to a policymaker are also subject to the New York State Joint Committee on Public Ethics (JCOPE). JCOPE provides training and reporting vehicles to maintain ethical standards of professional conduct including the identification and resolution of conflicts of interest and/or the appearance of such conflicts.

Faculty and staff who engage in research and programs funded through the Research Foundation of SUNY (the nonprofit corporation charged with administering externally funded grants and contracts on behalf of SUNY state-operated campuses) are required to annually disclose in writing any behavior or relationships that might constitute a conflict of interest. The SUNY Poly conflict of interest policy is published in the Faculty Handbook, and represents a restatement of existing University policy and pertinent state and federal law and regulations.



Research involving human subjects is controlled by the Institutional Review Board. It is chaired by SUNY Poly faculty Prof. William Thistleton and includes representation from both the Utica and Albany sites. Mr. Marvin Meissner serves as the IRB coordinator. SUNY Poly holds a Federal Wide Assurance.

### **Accessibility and Accuracy of Materials**

The contents of undergraduate and graduate catalogs are reviewed annually in the course of their preparation for publication by staff, faculty and administration; the catalog includes program information and academic policies. Contents of catalogs are available online and are archived in the library. The *Student Handbook* contains non-academic policies and is available online and archived in the library. Computer labs are available in the academic buildings on campus for student use if needed.

Many academic programs utilize external advisory boards to gain insight from business and industry when considering program revisions. From the department, updates are presented to the undergraduate Curriculum Committee for undergraduate programs or to the Graduate Council for graduate programs. Once endorsed by the appropriate body, the revisions are submitted to the Provost for sign-off and then onto the Registrar for posting. Catalog revisions are posted immediately so that students always have access to the most current information.

### **Communication**

SUNY Poly provides information to external and internal audiences via multiple media platforms, including print, email, video, the institutional website (SUNYPoly.edu), social media websites, and radio. Student recruitment marketing strategies and tactics are within the purview of the Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Director of Admissions and the Director of Marketing; the initiation, monitoring, assessment and updating of student recruitment materials, especially electronic and online vehicles, is continual. Public Relations staff are responsible for preparation of news releases and a variety of other informational material published and disseminated via the institutional website and other means, both internal and external. News releases are published and archived on the institutional website. Internal announcements displayed on a multiple-screen campus-wide monitor system are also archived online.

At this time, two websites exist: SUNYPoly.edu and SUNYCNSE.com The work necessary to consolidate those sites is underway at this time.

### **Grievances**

The formal grievance procedure for SUNY Poly employees is mandated by SUNY, and can be found on the Human Resources website. Bargaining unit-related grievance procedures appear in the union contracts that each member receives, and union chapters are responsible for notifying

their members of the proper individuals to contact with questions. Other complaints can be addressed with the Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Special Projects. Separate grievance procedures exist regarding Sexual Harassment (Title IX) complaints as identified in the SUNY Poly Policy on Sexual Harassment and can be found on the Human Resources webpage and in the HR office; there is an entire webpage devoted to Title IX with links to further information. All faculty, staff and administrators have been required to attend formal training in sexual abuse reporting including the new “Enough is Enough” legislation now signed into law in New York State. Policies and procedures related to Title IX and general campus safety are created and annually reviewed jointly by a Title IX committee, the Personal Safety Committee, and the Health & Wellness Center, Residential Life, Student Affairs, University Police, Campus Life, and Human Resources, with recommended actions for the next year. Annual reports are also sent to the SUNY General Counsel.

Student academic grievance procedures are found in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, as well as the *Student Handbook* which are available online. If a student believes that the issue has not been resolved, the student has the right to appeal to the department dean or administrative supervisor. If further deliberation is necessary, the student may appeal to the President. Policies dealing with academic petitions are developed through standing committees of the faculty governance.

### **Privacy**

Acceptable Use and Information Security policies have been drafted by a working group consisting of administrative, faculty, staff and student representatives. These policies describe the proper use of campus equipment and internet access as well as identify requirements for protecting campus data. The policies are expected to be approved and implemented shortly. The nearly final draft is incorporated as [Appendix 6.1](#).

### **Digital Millennium Copyright Violation Processing Procedure**

The campus has developed a procedure for addressing violations of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, published on the library’s webpage. These procedures include requirements for notification to the offending individual along with response documentation and timelines for addressing the violation. General guidelines are also posted on the site. All documentation concerning Digital Millennium Copyright Act violations is retained by the DMCA Officer.

### **Faculty and Intellectual Freedom / Research and Creative Endeavors**

SUNY Poly policies on academic freedom, copyright, and research conduct are in the *Faculty Handbook*, available on the SUNY Poly website presently in draft form. The *Handbook* is being revised in light of the merger.

## **Renewal, Promotion and Tenure**

The Policies of the SUNY Board of Trustees are used for renewal, promotion, and continuing appointment (tenure) of individual faculty members and the professional staff. Specific schedules have been developed to ensure required notification dates are met.

### Utica Site

Recommendations regarding individual faculty members originate in the academic departments and are forwarded to the Academic Personnel Committee of the Faculty Assembly. The Academic Personnel Committee created guidelines and recommendations for candidate portfolios in 2012. The Provost considers the recommendations of the Academic Personnel Committee and separate recommendations from the department chair and college dean in making a decision regarding renewal, promotion, or continuing appointment and sends a recommendation to the President, who is the final authority in decisions regarding renewal and promotion. In the case of continuing appointment, the President's recommendation is sent to the SUNY Chancellor for a final decision.

### Albany Site

Recommendations regarding individual faculty members originate in the Constellation, and are forwarded to the Council on Promotions and Continuing Appointments (CPCA) of the CNSE Senate. Prior to the merger, this college-level review was limited to ensuring adherence to procedures, with cases transmitted to the U Albany's university-wide CPCA for second-level academic review. Since the formation of SUNY Poly, the Albany site CPCA has taken on this charge, and created guidelines and recommendations for candidate portfolios consistent with the *Policies of the Board of Trustees*. The Constellation, dean and CPCA recommendations are transmitted to the Provost, who forwards his or her recommendation to the President of SUNY Poly for decision. In the case of continuing appointment, the President's recommendation is sent to the SUNY Chancellor for a final decision.

## **Course and Curriculum Review**

Every degree program reviews courses for updates and relevance as part of continual review. Many of the programs engage advisory boards to routinely review and discuss the nature of courses offered in the programs for state of the art content and relevance, and recommendations are kept in the meeting minutes for reference. General Education areas undergo a more extensive review on a three-year rotation, and programs undergo a more extensive review every five years.

## **Student Academic Integrity**

Student integrity is taken seriously at SUNY Poly. There are separate judicial processes for academic and personal conduct, and student input is an integral part of each system through participation on the relevant judicial or appellate boards. The academic conduct code contained with the *Student Handbook*, provides a summary of the policies, procedures and rights of

individual student. Relevant revisions to the code are developed by the Student Affairs office in conjunction with the SUNY General Counsel and student governance, and must be approved by the College Council. The academic conduct policy was developed by a standing faculty governance committee with student representation and approved through the President's office. When students register each semester, they must confirm that they have reviewed the handbook and its policies. There is also a session at the annual freshman orientation dedicated to the code of conduct and academic integrity policy. For transfer students, the transfer student orientation specifically refers students to the conduct policies, as does the online orientation for entirely online students.

Faculty are encouraged to include clear definitions of academic misconduct and course-based consequences in their syllabi. The academic conduct policy details the steps in the policy and provides for timely notification to the student of every step in the process when an academic misconduct charge is made. Students are encouraged to request a conduct board hearing if they wish to refute the charge, and the conduct board contains student as well as faculty members. Students are also informed of their ability and timeline by which to appeal a conduct board decision to the President.

### **Student Personal Conduct**

The Student Code of Personal Conduct requires that students who are accused of violating the Code meet with the judicial officer for an educational conference. During this conference, allegations and accusations are reviewed as well as the judicial process. Based on the educational conference, the student may be referred to the judicial board which is composed of faculty, staff and students to hear the case, deliberate, determine responsibility and recommend sanctions to the Provost or designee. Students found responsible through the Board have the opportunity to appeal through a separate process.

### **Athletics and Student Behavior**

SUNY Poly, by virtue of its membership in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III Conference, is responsible for compliance with all NCAA rules and regulations.

### **Criminal Conduct**

Activities of a criminal nature are covered by the SUNY Rules for the Maintenance of Public Order, the Student Code of Personal Conduct, and the Penal Law of the State of New York. The SUNY Board of Trustees Rules for the Maintenance of Public Order and the Student Code of Personal Conduct are found in the *Student Handbook* and on the SUNY Poly website.

### **Recommendations**

- Recurrent training for students regarding academic misconduct
- Insure policies at SUNY Poly's two sites are in alignment

- Insure compliance with all SUNY, state and federal requirements

# Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

*“The Institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 7.

To assess overall effectiveness, SUNY Poly has adopted a comprehensive Institutional Assessment Model directed at evaluating both institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. [Appendix 7.1](#) provides a visual summary of the model. The Institutional Assessment Model comprises seven major areas: Innovations and Economic Growth, Campus Life, Environment and Culture, Administrative Effectiveness, Academic Quality, Community Engagement, Institutional Sustainability and Reputation and Research. The areas within the model comprise all of SUNY Poly's services and activities.

The Institutional Assessment Model was initially developed in response to a need to both assess institutional effectiveness and ensure assessment comprehensiveness in 2007 for what was then SUNY IT. It was endorsed by the Faculty Assembly of SUNY IT in April 2008. At that time the Academic Quality area in the model became a regular committee of the Faculty Assembly. The model was revised in the spring semester of 2015 to reflect the institutional merger with CNSE. Each of the other areas in the model has an ad hoc committee; and the chairs of each area in the model constitute the membership of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The directorship for this institution-wide committee was created in the fall of 2009 as a part-time position assigned to a full-time faculty member. The director reports to the Provost and collaborates closely with Institutional Research (IR) to coordinate assessment activities across the campus.

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee meets quarterly and the chairs of the area committees meet periodically with their constituent representatives. The assistant vice president for institutional research and the director of institutional assessment meet regularly with the area committees. Committee assessment activities, results and recommendations are shared at the quarterly Institutional Assessment meetings. In addition, a new budget line was created for this committee to support its activities, host workshops and seminars for faculty, and provide stipends for external reviewers.

The effectiveness of the SUNY Poly Assessment Model can be measured by:

1. How well it has promoted assessment activities, including the generation of assessment plans across the campus community, implementation of assessment plans, evidence for closing the loop, and promotion of assessment workshops and culture.
2. Evidence that assessment is planned and embedded in the strategic plan and activities of the various sectors of the institution.
3. Evidence that assessment issues and results are communicated to institutional stakeholders.
4. Evidence that assessment results are used to inform institutional resource allocation.
5. Evidence that assessment policies and procedures are consistent with the fundamental principles for all accreditations sought by the institution.
6. Evidence that assessment results provide an accurate and comprehensive evaluation of SUNY Poly programs, policies and procedures.
7. Evidence that assessment results reflect student learning outcomes including student learning experiences.
8. Evidence that assessment activities are sustainable and systematic.
9. Evidence that the Assessment model was used effectively to address the two major institutional concerns: Enrollment/Retention and Community Engagement.

## Analysis

*1. “How well it has promoted assessment activities, including the generation of assessment plans across the campus community, implementation of assessment plans, evidence for closing the loop, and promotion of assessment workshops and culture:”*

SUNY Poly has made steady progress promoting the full gamut of assessment activities for each of its components. [Appendix 7.2](#) provides a summary of the assessment status of the major components of the institution. Most of these components have assessment plans, and some plans that have been in place for quite some time have been revised. Academic assessment components have revised plans for majors that now include curriculum mapping. Several of the other non-academic components have also implemented their plans and are using the information gathered by the assessments to “close the loop.” For example, assessment results for recruitment and retention at SUNY Poly resulted in a number of interventions designed to address the problems underscored by the assessment. Those interventions included hiring an enrollment management consultant, the formation of an enrollment management group, hiring a vice president for enrollment management and the institution of an early warning system and a First Year Experience seminar. The interventions have been successful; enrollment was up between fall 2013 to fall 2014 by 10% (2484 to 2738) and remained relatively steady with a 2% (2738 to 2793) increase between fall 2014 to fall 2015. Most of the academic programs are implementing

their assessment plans and closing the loop on a course and program level. The details of how the components are using the assessment information to close the loop are provided in numerous standards, tables and the appendices of this report (see standards 2, 3, 8, 9, 12 and 14). Overall, this represents a major improvement since the last accreditation review. However, there are areas that still need plans and need to implement and use their assessment results. Those areas include IT services, international student services, faculty governance, facilities, environmental health and safety, learning center, the library, and the academic programs at the Albany site.

Since fall 2011 at the Utica site, assessment workshops have been provided for the faculty and staff to build a cadre of professionals knowledgeable about assessment. The first workshop provided faculty with methods to develop assessment-ready course objectives and goals. They were provided with a template for syllabi that has been made readily available on the Provost's webpage. In spring 2012, a brown-bag lunch series was initiated with a focus on assessment and improving student learning outcomes. These sessions offered an open forum for faculty to discuss questions, concerns, and topics of interest to them related to student learning outcomes. Evaluation of the impact of the brown-bag series (10% of the faculty attended) resulted in a change in methodology to better disseminate the message. In fall of 2013, the Provost hosted a series of luncheons for then SUNY IT faculty. The purpose of the luncheons was twofold: 1) to disseminate information on assessment and 2) to promote discussion about best pedagogical practices. The luncheons were well attended, with 60% (56/90) of the faculty in attendance. Workshops for faculty at the Albany site were offered during July and August of 2014 and during January of 2015. These workshops are continuing in order to ensure the culture of assessment. Additionally, a twice-yearly newsletter and an annual poster seminar celebrating assessment activities of both faculty and staff are currently being planned.

2. *“Evidence that assessment is planned and embedded in the strategic plan and activities of the various sectors of the institution.”*

Assessment had been embedded into the draft of the proposed strategic plan. The 2012 Strategic Plan for what was then SUNY IT specified the assessment measures being used to evaluate progress on each of the goals and their corresponding objectives. The assessment progress and measures were reviewed during the spring 2014 semester. [Appendix 1.2](#) provides a summary of the assessment results gathered on each of the strategic goals and their corresponding objectives. Progress was made on a majority of the objectives.

In spring 2015, SUNY initiated a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for all 64 campuses. Campuses were asked to specify their progress and plans for 5 strategic goals: Access, Completion, Success, Inquiry, and Engagement. [Appendix 7.3](#) contains SUNY Poly's PIP plan and progress to date on each of the five strategic goals. The PIP goals are aligned with SUNY Poly's strategic goals and the PIP initiative mandates continuous improvement, reinforcing



SUNY Poly's efforts to use assessment to drive institutional effectiveness.

3. *“Evidence that assessment issues and results are communicated to the various members of the institution:”*

At the Utica site, assessment activities and reports are regularly discussed in the Faculty Assembly Academic Quality committee, the Institutional Assessment Committee, the Campus Life/Culture and Environment Committee, the Community Engagement group and the Provost's Council meetings. The Faculty Assembly Academic Quality Committee meets on a monthly basis during the academic year and reviews student learning outcomes and assessment activities in each of the academic programs and in general education; reviews can be found in meeting minutes in the resource room. The Institutional Assessment Committee consists of representatives from each of the seven areas identified in the model; this group meets quarterly to review assessment activity happening in each of the areas of the institution and communicate these activities to the other areas of the institution. Further detail can be found in their meeting minutes. The director of assessment sits on the Provost's Council. This allows the director of assessment to report assessment activities and findings to members from all units of the institution on a monthly basis, and ensures that assessment related information is communicated to the campus at large. These communications are also recorded in the meeting minutes.

The SUNY Poly-wide governance body also has a committee for assessment. The charge to this committee is to coordinate assessment activities across both sites, as well as conducting self-assessment for the governing body and coordinating evaluation of academic administrative functions. The director of assessment is a member of that committee.

Communication of assessment results has promoted inter departmental cooperation on actions designed to close the loop. For example, the Enrollment Steering Committee assessed the nonpayment deregistration policy and determined that the policy and procedures were negatively impacting retention. The vice president for enrollment management worked with the bursar and registrar's offices to modify the procedure. The new procedure was recently re-evaluated and found to be much more effective without negatively impacting retention. Another success has been a key initiative for freshmen at the SUNY Poly Utica site, the First Year Seminar. Similar to successful First Year Experience (FYE) programs around the country, this credit-bearing class serves as an extension of Freshman Orientation. The focus of the FYS course and associated activities is to connect students to the college community and professional staff, assist students in adjusting to collegiate life, enhance student engagement and help students develop strategies to achieve academic success. The creation of the class was an action designed to improve retention rates for freshmen. Staff and faculty worked collaboratively to design and then refine the First Year Seminar class. Assessment data, both direct and indirect, was used by the freshman seminar committee and the Institutional Assessment Committee to refine the nature of the class. Student

participants were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the value and satisfaction for the course. Survey results indicated that freshmen who participated enjoyed the class and found it helpful for their transition to college experience.

4. *“Evidence that assessment informs resource allocation:”*

Assessment results have informed resource allocation in some key areas in the past five years at SUNY Poly. Establishing the Student Success Center, strengthening of the existing Learning Center, and implementing the new Banner degree advising and auditing system (Degree Works) are all results of resource allocation decisions based on the analysis of assessment data. Standards 2 and 3 provide further evidence for how assessment has informed resource allocation. While these examples illustrate institutional use of assessment data, a more widespread use of the data for planning and budgeting is warranted. This is an issue that will be addressed by the Institutional Assessment committee in the next year.

5. *“Evidence that assessment procedures and policies are consistent with the fundamental principles for all accreditations sought by the institution:”*

The assessment practices and procedures at SUNY Poly comply with the requirements for CCNE (Nursing), AACSB (Business), and ABET (Engineering) programs. All of the accreditation programs require an assessment of student learning outcomes at both a program and curriculum level; all require a mapping of the courses to the articulated goals of the program and the institutional mission and vision statement, all look for evidence of a continuous improvement plan and activity and all want evidence that assessment processes are useful, cost effective, reasonable, accurate, organized, systematic and sustainable. The former SUNY IT has been successful in securing accreditation in all of the professional areas offered at the Institute. SUNY Poly received notification in September 2015 of initial accreditation in computer and electrical engineering. Accreditation is now being sought in nanoscale engineering, computer science, mechanical engineering and civil engineering, all new programs.

6. *“Evidence that assessment results are providing an accurate and comprehensive evaluation of SUNY Poly programs, policies and procedures:”*

The SUNY Poly Utica site has generated assessment plans for most academic and non-academic areas ([Appendix 7.4](#) – Administrative Units, [Appendix 2.3](#) Student Affairs, [Appendix 7.5](#) – Academic Units). The assessment plans are designed to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional programs, policies and procedures. Plans and results are mapped to the goals stated in the strategic plan, indicating that assessment is providing a comprehensive evaluation of SUNY Poly. Additionally, assessment results are gathered systematically and used to revise policies, programs and procedures. This process has been successful at the Utica site, and the

Albany site is developing a similar set of assessment plans. In addition to the examples already described, other evidence for the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the evaluation process comes from feedback received from outside accrediting agencies. The health & wellness center received a positive review from the New York State Health Department (and is rated #1 among all SUNY institutions), the business office received favorable results from its regular financial audits, nursing programs were re-accredited for a ten-year period, and AACSB accreditation of business programs was extended for six years. Similarly, engineering technology departments (4) have been reaccredited, as has electrical and computer engineering and health information management.

7. *“Evidence that assessment results reflect student learning outcomes including student learning experiences:”*

Assessment plans for student learning outcomes are in place and have been implemented for the academic programs and for General Education for the last several years at the Utica site. Chapters 12 and 14 of this self-study details the plans, the outcomes, and actions taken to “close the loop.” Assessment plans for student learning outcomes are also being implemented at the Albany site – the latter detailed in the complex substantive change request regarding the combination of CNSE and SUNY IT approved in March 2015.

Assessment of student experiences has also been applied to service-based learning and extracurricular activities. For example, one of the capstone courses in psychology and the capstone courses in community and behavioral health employed a service-based learning component. Students were surveyed at the end of the course and asked to comment on how much the service-based learning activity helped them with academic aspects of the course as well as with their own personal growth. Ninety-five percent of the students felt that the service learning component helped them better understand the theoretical principles presented in class, 90% of the students believed the quality of their writing definitely improved because of the “real-world experience,” and 98% felt that experience helped them personally in some way (e.g., decide on a career path, develop leadership skills, etc.). One other example, involving a refugee resilience cultural experience, illustrates how assessment results reflect student learning outcomes. Refugees from Burma and Somalia came to meet students and share their stories. Students were surveyed and asked to rate how much the event improved their understanding of the refugee culture and experience. Ninety-five percent of the students reported gaining cultural competence as a result of the event.

8. *“Evidence that assessment activities are sustainable and systematic:”*

Assessment has become part of SUNY Poly culture. Most of the components of the institution have assessment plans and are using assessment results to close the loop, and those that do not

are in the process of developing them. Many of the academic assessment tools are embedded in tests and assignments, ensuring sustainability. Other assessment plans, are tied directly to tangible outcomes; for example, the plan for the development office uses alumni donations as a measurement. Additionally, assessment practices at the institution now require that all departments include course level reviews on a yearly basis and carry out program and general education reviews yearly. SUNY Poly is also assessing its administrative structure and administrators in several ways. Faculty Assembly (Utica site) maintains a standing committee on academic administrator evaluation. Focus groups have been held with the various stakeholders to assess administrators, and the Utica site participated in the COACHE (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) survey to determine faculty satisfaction with various aspects of the campus academic operations. The new governance structure includes a SUNY Poly assessment committee charged with the responsibility for enhancing the culture of assessment and assessment activities at the Institution.

In general, SUNY Poly is embedding assessment into the institutional operations and using the data from assessment to inform decisions. All assessment related materials are collected by the IR office and kept in the IR resource room for accessibility.

9. *“Evidence that the Assessment model was used effectively to address the two major institutional concerns: Enrollment/Retention and Community Engagement:”*

The assessment of community engagement at SUNY Poly has evolved over time beginning in September 2008 at Utica with a committee charged with exploring the meaning of community engagement to present data collection; the committee was guided by the “2008 Carnegie Foundation Elective Classification: Community Engagement.” This committee was formulated by the associate provost for sponsored research and continuing and professional education with membership consisting of staff from the continuing and professional education office. The committee chose to focus on defining the meaning of community engagement and on collecting data about activities that were relevant to the initial framework. That framework loosely described as “public service” featured a broad range of topics, such as service-based learning, community-based research, alumni relationships, corporate relations and student placement, consulting, and professional outreach. The breadth of topics covered by the initial committee led to a rather diffused effort lacking direction and structure. Committee members identified possible sources of information about the topic areas and concluded that a more narrow focus was required. In 2010, the committee identified the Carnegie survey to be a suitable comprehensive examination of community engagement. The 2010-11 Community Engagement Committee chose to examine how closely practices mapped to the Carnegie survey. This proved to be inspirational for committee members, but not a proper fit for present practices. After consideration, the committee selected a subset of indicators from the full survey to guide the assessment of (then) SUNY IT activities. A set of 17 indicators were chosen and committee members were tasked to

determine whether or not the college engaged in the activities, how the activities might be assessed and what next steps might be taken to strengthen the college's efforts in that area. It became clear to the committee that the institution does not collect data about faculty, staff and student community engagement in a consistent and meaningful way. In response, the committee developed an online survey to collect and measure community engagement with a particular emphasis on service-based learning. The surveys have been conducted annually since 2011, and show an increase in faculty and student participation over time.

Additionally, in 2012 the committee asked the K-12 outreach director to examine the perceptions of the parents and guardians of middle school program participants about the effect the programs had on their children. Parents reported that the programs stimulated their children's interests in science and technology.

Professional education staff members develop and coordinate engagement activities for community members of all ages. CPE programs range from workshops and camps for school children to leadership and entrepreneurial training for working adults to peer-taught courses for retired adults. The new committee focused on cataloging the community engagement activities of faculty, staff and students as well as evaluating the outcomes of CPE activities.

Engagement activities at SUNY Poly have been significantly enhanced with the merger of SUNY IT and CNSE. The Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering have a long tradition of community and educational engagement. Each year an outreach report is published on the SUNY Poly CNSE website delineating the types and scope of community engagement activities led by the students, staff, and faculty at the Albany site. For example, SUNY Poly CNSE hosts and co-sponsors the only Girls Inc. Eureka! Program in nanotechnology. Each summer the Albany site hosts 60 girls for four weeks from urban and ethnically diverse communities in the region to provide fun, hands-on introductions to science and technology. Girls are mentored from the beginning of 8<sup>th</sup> grade until they graduate from high school. SUNY Poly hosts several NanoCareer days for middle school and high students at its Albany CNSE site – more than 5,000 K-12 students visited CNSE at SUNY Poly's Albany site in 2015. It also hosts a statewide Nano Community Day each fall that invites community members from around the state to visit our sites, take tours, listen to experts speak, and engage with our students. In yet another example, Tech Valley High School, a partnership with two Boards of Cooperative education, is co-located at the SUNY Poly Albany site with direct ties between teachers, students and professors at SUNY Poly CNSE. The goal of these efforts is to build a pipeline of students interested in science and technology and a community that understands and appreciates the positive impact that SUNY Poly makes in several regions across the state.

## Freshman Retention

The overall goal of the Institutional Sustainability and Reputation category in the assessment model is to provide an infrastructure for achieving and sustaining institutional viability. One important aspect of that viability is to retain students and to have them successfully complete their degrees in a timely fashion (Figures 7.1 and 7.2). Concerns about retention were raised in fall 2004, one year after SUNY IT's first cohort of freshmen was admitted, when the attrition rate for freshmen appeared to be above the SUNY four-year baccalaureate average. Admission standards had shifted to meet enrollment goals, resulting in a higher proportion of tier two and three students being admitted and enrolled. Attrition rates for these students were measured at approximately 30% (49/159) for 2005 and forward, above the SUNY four-year baccalaureate average of 20%. Retention of freshmen was therefore identified as a problem needing assessment and intervention. Several interventions were systematically attempted, evaluated and either adopted or discarded, in accordance with assessment results. The interventions included an early warning system, a mentoring system, expansion of freshman orientation and a first-year seminar course. The early warning system underwent a number of modifications as did the first-year seminar course. The mentoring system was eliminated as students, despite the best efforts of their assigned mentors, did not respond to the program. The early warning system and the first-year seminar course have been adopted and adjusted based on assessment results. All of these activities were discussed by the Institutional Assessment Committee.

Figure 7.1 – Freshmen Headcount Retention

Cohort Year	Head Count	Headcount Continuing to:								
		2nd yr	3rd yr	4th yr	5th yr	6th yr	7th yr	8th yr	9th yr	10th yr
200309	105	80	63	58	17	11	7	3	5	4
200409	81	67	52	51	20	12	4	3	0	1
200509	159	110	100	94	35	12	4	5	0	1
200609	132	88	69	61	27	8	3	2	1	0
200709	204	142	121	115	45	12	3	3	1	
200809	207	143	116	99	57	13	7	3		
200909	203	148	116	109	52	13	1			
201009	206	146	110	103	39	8				
201109	198	138	120	110	39					
201209	198	166	129	123						
201309	274	206	175							
201409	347	258								

Figure 7.2 – Freshmen Percent Retention

Cohort Year	Head Count	Percent Continuing to:								
		2nd yr	3rd yr	4th yr	5th yr	6th yr	7th yr	8th yr	9th yr	10th yr
2003	105	76%	60%	55%	16%	10%	7%	3%	5%	4%
2004	81	83%	64%	63%	25%	15%	5%	4%	0%	1%
2005	159	69%	63%	59%	22%	8%	3%	3%	0%	1%
2006	132	67%	52%	46%	20%	6%	2%	2%	1%	0%
2007	204	70%	59%	56%	22%	6%	1%	1%	0%	
2008	207	69%	56%	48%	28%	6%	3%	1%		
2009	203	73%	57%	54%	26%	6%	0%			
2010	206	71%	53%	50%	19%	4%				
2011	198	70%	61%	56%	20%					
2012	198	84%	65%	62%						
2013	274	75%	64%							
2014	347	74%								
Overall Average:		73%	62%	55%	22%	8%	3%	2%	1%	1%
3 yr Average:		78%	63%	56%	21%	6%	2%	1%		

### Institutional Research

The mission of Institutional Research (IR) is to provide an official source of institutional data and information to support institutional planning, assessment, enrollment and accreditation. Information provided by IR is available in several formats to internal constituents. [Appendix 7.6](#) includes the IR website information, sample presentations and Middle State Institutional Profiles.

### Conclusion

Based on the above analysis the Institutional Assessment Model appears to be working and there is evidence of institutional effectiveness; but there is room for improvement. While the culture of assessment has certainly improved over time, there are still areas that have not closed the loop completely. Assessment measures and processes are being modified to include more outcome (as opposed to output) and more direct (as opposed to indirect) measures. Finally, assessment practices are being expanded to incorporate programs at the Albany site.

### Recommendations

- Continue to build on a culture of assessment by:
  - Completing an assessment manual to guide the assessment activities related to student learning outcomes
  - Developing an on-boarding orientation process on assessment for new faculty, adjuncts and staff.
  - Continue to provide assessment workshops to staff and faculty

# Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

*“The Institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of students’ educational goal.”*

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is in compliance with Standard 8.

To support SUNY Poly’s mission and commitment to attract the quality of students who will benefit from and succeed in an intellectually stimulating learning environment, and who will be fully engaged in the challenges, complexities, and opportunities of living in a modern technological society, the institution has undergone extensive reviews of enrollment processes, strategies, and plans.

## **Recruitment**

Undergraduate admissions participates in a wide range of recruitment activities ranging from the traditional, such as high school visits, direct mail, on-campus programming, and targeted communications to high-quality prospective students (“college search”), to more technologically current initiatives such as electronic newsletters, personalized e-mails, and social media campaigns. There has been a direct and notable increase in recruitment activities over the past few years that ultimately contributed to significant student enrollment growth during the last three years (2015, 2014, and 2013). In 2010, SUNY Poly engaged in a partnership with the educational consulting firm Noel-Levitz to perform a self-assessment and assist with enrollment planning and best practice recommendations. Noel-Levitz recommended the implementation of twelve specific recruitment strategies ([Appendix 8.1](#)). Due to budgetary limitations, SUNY Poly chose to focus on several that were achievable and affordable. One of the primary recommendations that was implemented was the hiring of a coordinator of marketing and communication within the admissions office. Efforts to enhance enrollment using Noel-Levitz proved to be limited in success, which resulted in not renewing the Noel-Levitz contract beyond the 2011-2012 recruitment cycle.

## **Undergraduate Admissions (Freshmen and Transfer)**

From 2010 through 2012, new student enrollment at SUNY Poly declined slightly. While there were modest increases in selectivity, there were slight declines in transfer enrollment while



freshmen enrollment remained flat. During the years of declining new student enrollment (2010-2012), a strategic decision was made to focus on the overall image and reputation of the institution by enrolling higher quality entering classes. This decision was made with the understanding that it would have an impact on enrollment and tuition revenue.

At the same time, August 2012, the President brought in a private enrollment consultant to make recommendations of an appropriate enrollment management structure for the institution and to initiate best practice strategies. Ultimately a recommendation to create an Enrollment Management Division was approved to be led by a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to the President. This position was filled in October 2013.

Entering freshmen classes that had averaged 201 the previous three years increased to 274, 347 and 347<sup>3</sup>. Among the new strategies were:

- expanded use of College Board student search products
- earlier and more frequent communication with prospective students
- improving the campus visit experience and increasing the numbers who visit
- creation of a ‘welcome center’ for our visitors
- expanded use of the SUNY recruitment center in New York City
- promotion of our admission marketing person to a director which reports to the vice president, and working with undergraduate and graduate admissions
- creation of a campus-wide marketing committee
- full-immersion into marketing via social media

SUNY Poly also dedicated significant resources toward new student academic merit scholarships to be more competitive and yield a higher profile student ([Appendix 8.2](#)). Significant increases in quality were realized using the SUNY System required tier-defined admission criteria for regular admits. Comparing the percentage of the class that was Tier I and II, in 2010, SUNY Poly enrolled 56%; in 2013 it was 62%; and for 2015 it jumped to 70%. SUNY Poly was also re-established as a SUNY Tier II institution during this time.

New in 2015 was the Progressive Achievement Award, an institutional scholarship that actually **increases** in value as the student progresses through the institution. A 2.75 gpa is required to maintain the award.

New transfer enrollment declined from 2010 through 2012, with the following efforts made to overcome this decrease: additional staff travel to two-year colleges including ‘instant admit days’, on-campus housing incentives, and engaging our faculty to interact more with prospective students and their peers at community colleges. We have enrolled over 300 transfer students for each of the past three years. It should be noted that for fall 2015 applications from transfers to

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<sup>3</sup> Includes Albany site

SUNY institutions were down an average of 5.0% across the system. We will monitor this trend moving forward.

### **Albany Site**

The Utica site admissions office assumed primary responsibility for recruiting undergraduate students to all SUNY Poly degree programs including the degree programs offered in the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Nanoscale Engineering in the fall of 2014. The Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and Student Recruitment, located at the Albany site, reports to the Vice President for Enrollment Management (located, primarily, in Utica). She shares responsibility for outreach specific to the Albany site, the campus visit experience for prospective students and parents at Albany, open house programs, individual phone calls and e-mails, etc. Working with Albany site faculty and the President, she also coordinates the application review process for degree programs offered in the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and coordinates with her counterparts in Utica what decision letter and scholarship offer should be sent.

Students could not apply to degree programs offered exclusively at the SUNY Poly Albany site as a transfer or freshman until the week of Thanksgiving 2014, due to late approval of the merger from the State Education Department. Given the caliber of students looking at the SUNY Poly Albany site, this proved a great hindrance to achieving our undergraduate enrollment objectives. New freshmen and transfers totaled 44, in comparison to 73 in the fall of 2014. A variety of late outreach efforts along with significant scholarship incentives positively impacted yield. Confusion over the merger, name change, and student life options were issues, but the late application date provided the biggest challenge.

Approval to take over the processing of master's-level applications from University at Albany was late in the admission cycle for fall 2015. Because of the timing, SUNY Poly was not able to market these programs in the fashion we will for fall 2016 enrollment and beyond. Applications fell by nearly half, while new student enrollment in the master's programs dropped to 7 from 32 in fall 2014.

### **Graduate Admissions**

In March 2008, the institution created the graduate recruitment office as a pilot project with one 0.8 FTE professional and a full-time support staff. At the time, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the deans of the four schools had decided that they wanted to raise the prominence of graduate admission and increase enrollment in graduate programs. By 2010 it was decided that the initiative was successful and the coordinator's position was increased to full-time.

Graduate enrollment has seen significant growth over the past five years (Figure 8a). Part-time matriculated enrollment has also experienced significant increases during this same period of time. Key enrollment strategies that have been used since the creation of the graduate recruitment office to increase enrollment include:

- Development of a targeted marketing plan for specific graduate programs
- Targeted, timely, and sustained communication with prospective students
- Development of graduate admission webpages, including a “Request for Information” form to collect inquiries, and creation of an online application for admission
- Creation of graduate focused publications, including brochures for all graduate programs
- Creation of an online orientation/registration program for graduate students
- Conversion to the electronic receipt of GRE and GMAT score reports allowing for improved communication
- Development and implementation of a marketing plan focused on SUNY Poly undergraduates
- Creation of an admissions counselor position devoted exclusively to international recruitment
- Overhaul of the graduate assistantship award process
- Increase in resources for additional graduate assistantships for full-time degree-seeking students. This new strategy has allowed SUNY Poly to increase enrollment as well as increase the support faculty receive in the classroom through assistantship obligations.

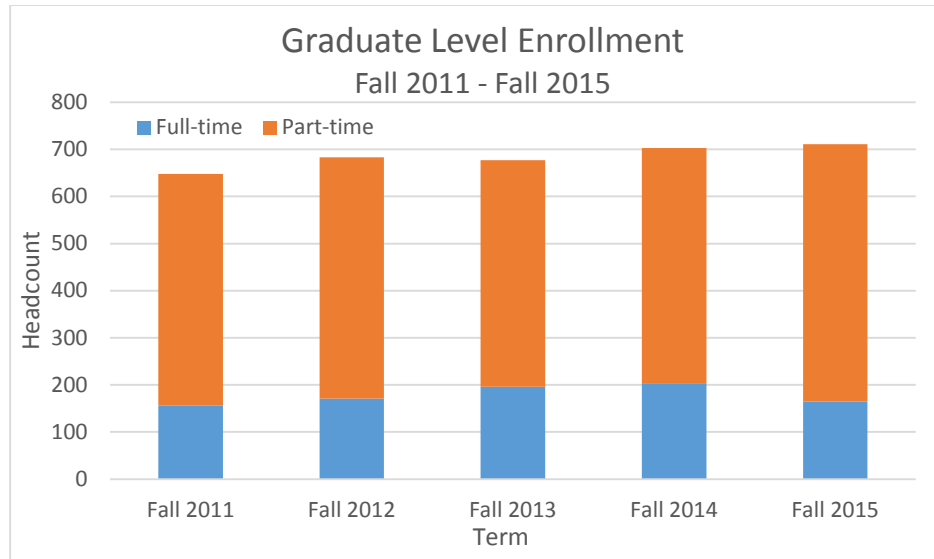
The name of the office was recently changed from the Graduate Center to the Graduate Admissions Office and the professional staff member’s title was changed from coordinator to director. This change was made to both eliminate confusion by students regarding the focus of the office and to elevate public perception of graduate admissions to the same level as undergraduate admissions. The director of the graduate admissions office reports to the Vice President for Enrollment Management. The office has identified opportunities for future enrollment growth which can be found in the strategic plan.

*Figure 8a – Graduate Level Enrollment*

**SUNY Polytechnic Institute**  
**Graduate Level Enrollment**  
*Fall 2011 - Fall 2015*

*Graduate Level Enrollment*

Status	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	% to Total
Full-time	156	171	196	202	165	23.2%
Part-time	492	512	481	501	546	76.8%
<b>Total Graduate</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### Online Enrollment

Approximately 45% of SUNY Poly students take at least one course online in an academic year. This is up from 36% (1016/2800) in fall 2010. The increase reflects additional courses being available in an online format as well as increased interest from the student body. SUNY Poly currently has six undergraduate and graduate programs available entirely online. Even with the increasing number of online learners, undergraduate and graduate level student distribution has remained the same at 54% undergraduate (657/1223) and 46% graduate (566/1223).

### International Enrollment

International enrollment has increased steadily since 2010 with the majority of them in graduate level programs. (See [Appendix 8.3](#)) SUNY Poly’s international students are primarily from India and are enrolled primarily in three programs: Computer Science, Telecommunications, and Network and Computer Security.

Five years ago, the institution made a commitment to international admissions by allocating a part-time position (0.5 FTE) to this initiative. Previously, international admissions was handled by an undergraduate admissions counselor who spent only 20% of their time working on international admissions. Based on assessment, it was determined that a dedicated counselor was needed if increasing this population was an institutional priority.

The timing was ideal as SUNY Poly had just decided to participate in a SUNY-wide international recruitment initiative, “SUNY Select,” spearheaded by the SUNY Office of Global Affairs. The counselor spent two years immersed in the SUNY Select initiative, which included a trip to China, Skype training sessions with international consultants, development of international recruitment materials, updating of webpages, and a comprehensive communication plan. International enrollment started to increase as a result of these efforts, and in 2012 the

position was moved to 100%. Since that time we have steadily increased our international travel and the scope of the position to include undergraduate recruitment.

### **Summary**

At SUNY Poly, much of our undergraduate enrollment growth in the past five years has been in STEM-focused programs, in particular engineering, science and computer science. We have been able to achieve record enrollment for freshmen in programs at our Utica site while improving quality metrics significantly, and our goal is to continue in this direction. The transfer market is increasingly competitive as two-year college enrollments drop amid increasing job opportunities and declining demographics. We anticipate maintaining transfer enrollment which will require an even greater recruitment effort. Graduate enrollment is projected to increase as we offer more online opportunities, expand our academic offerings, and continue to strengthen our marketing program.

Fall 2015 undergraduate and graduate enrollment at SUNY Poly Albany site was an aberration caused directly by timing issues, name confusion, and student life questions. Moving forward, we expect to maintain the outstanding quality of SUNY Poly Albany site students while increasing new student enrollment at the B.S., M.S. and PhD levels.

### **Financial Aid**

SUNY Poly strives to offer aid that meets 100% of a student/family's need. This means that the amount of financial aid offered is equal to the estimated Cost of Attendance minus the Expected Family Contribution. The Cost of Attendance (COA) includes consideration for tuition, fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and personal expenses. The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is derived from the FAFSA and is a combination of the student and parental contributions. Financial aid offered to a dependent undergraduate student can comprise any or all of the following: scholarship, grant, work-study, student loan, and/or parent loan. Over the last five years, approximately 92% of entering freshmen received some type of financial aid. Financial aid offered to a graduate student can consist of loans, assistantships, and fellowships. The sources of the financial aid offered could be institutional, federal, or state.

For the first time, financial aid applications and related information for undergraduate students admitted to CNSE for fall 2015 were processed in and mailed from Utica.

To better inform students and increase consistent communication with prospective students, a formal financial aid marketing and communications plan was developed and implemented by the Admissions (undergraduate and graduate) and Financial Aid Offices in 2011. The plan includes print publications, e-mail communications, and website notifications and will be reviewed every year.

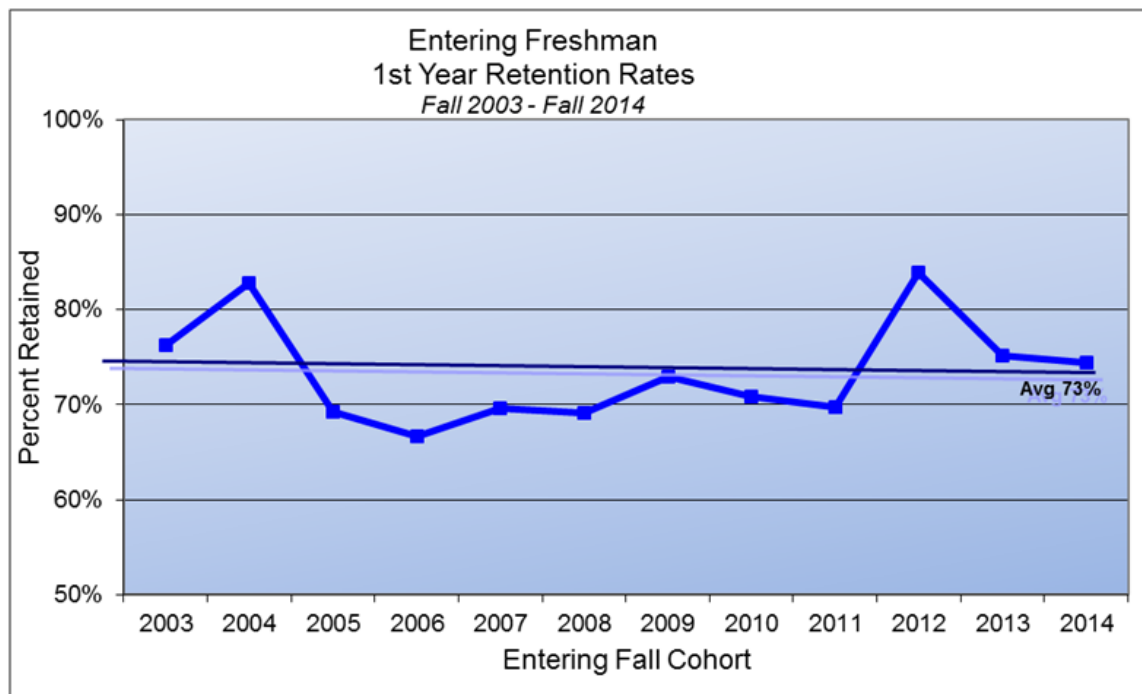
The Net Price Calculator is available on the SUNY Poly website, allowing a prospective student to view their “Estimated Cost of 1st Year of Attendance” as well as their estimated four-year cost of attendance. It also provides a mechanism for students and parents to compare the cost of attendance at other institutions they are considering.

The financial aid award letter details a student’s financial obligation to SUNY Poly. The financial aid staff is available as a resource to counsel students and families and for outreach to the community.

### Retention Initiatives

As SUNY Poly strives to attract a more select population of high-achieving students, institutional persistence to graduation is increasingly important; retention can play a critical role in the college decision process for these students. Over the past decade, first-year retention rates have not met the institution’s expectations. First-year retention has a ten-year average of 73%, with a low of 66.7% (88/132) in 2006 and a high of 84% (166/198) in 2012. The SUNY Poly Strategic Plan sets a goal for first-year retention of 80% (372/465) for 2018-19, and 85% (459/540) for 2020. A number of initiatives have been put in place to support improved retention. First-year retention of 84% for the fall 2012 class exceeded the strategic plan goal of 80% (figure 8.1). Additional retention efforts are described in the response to Standard 9.

*Figure 8.1 – SUNY Poly Entering Freshman First-Year Retention Rates*



## **Early Warning System**

SUNY Poly utilizes an Early Warning System (EWS) to identify freshmen who are at risk academically. The EWS was first implemented when the institution began admitting freshmen in 2003 and was initially a paper-based process. In fall 2009, the paper-based process was moved to an electronic alternative, which eliminated part of the paper flow but still required some degree of manual input for faculty.

In fall 2012, at the request of the Academic Affairs committee, academic progress for EOP and student athletes was added into the EWS. Previously, separate requests for feedback occurred concurrently, resulting in multiple notifications from faculty. Merging the three special populations increased faculty participation by 17%.

Continued refinement occurred in fall 2013 as communication to the at-risk students was automated. Automation did not, however, eliminate or decrease the required faculty input and proved problematic for faculty with large numbers of freshmen in their classes.

With the addition of a part-time director of academic advisement (now part-time director of student success), the process shifted in fall 2014 to the newly created Student Success Office and a new software solution was developed. In fall 2014, a pilot was run for 12 sections of freshman classes. Nine faculty members were encouraged to participate, 8 participated and 11 sections were addressed. The software made the input more faculty friendly because it was easier to complete and generated instant e-mails to the student, the faculty member, and the Academic Advisement Office for each student flagged. Faculty members who participated in the pilot shared positive anecdotal information and the response they received from the students. The software went live for the full campus in spring 2015; 62 faculty members participated, resulting in 1431 students flagged as manifesting some negative class performance behavior. Of that number, 126 students found themselves on Academic Warning at spring 2015 semester's end.

Assessment of the program occurs annually and outreach to faculty regarding the merits of early intervention is ongoing. The Learning Center continues to play a key role in providing services and support to these groups; however, its utilization has been difficult to measure because an inefficient paper-based system was used for record keeping. In fall 2015, the campus began implementing TutorTrac which will facilitate student and tutor login and logout, data about courses for which help was sought, online scheduling of tutoring, and better alignment with the academic support services available. It will also complement the Early Warning System because students flagged as "in need of tutorial assistance" will be tracked. TutorTrac will also make it possible to identify for an inquiring faculty member whether a student has been to the Center. We are optimistic that this new system will make a measurable difference in our retention results.

## **Degree Works**

Another retention initiative is the recent SUNY-wide implementation of an interactive degree audit system (Degree Works). Degree Works is an online tool that combines the functions of

degree audit, degree planning, substitution/waiver requests, GPA calculation, course demand estimation, and prospective transfer student evaluation. Implementation occurred in fall 2014.

### **President's Opportunity Fund for Student Success Scholarship**

The President's Opportunity Fund was established in 2008 to support returning students who have demonstrated academic aptitude, contributed to the campus, and have proven unmet financial need. The funds have been specifically set aside as a retention initiative with the priority of supporting students nearing graduation. This one-time, non-renewable award allows SUNY Poly to assist a greater population of students in need, and approximately 144 students have received POF scholarship awards totaling approximately \$122,000 since 2009-10.

### **First Year Seminar**

As widely documented by other institutions, first year seminar (FYS) is a contributor to student success and persistence across the country. In 2009 a one-credit hour FYS course was developed at SUNY Poly, designed to augment freshman orientation and enhance student engagement. SUNY Poly's sections are small to maximize interaction between students and the instructor. Since its inception, FYS has been dependent upon staff volunteer instructors to teach. As enrollment increases, discussions on how to attract additional instructors to meet growing enrollment demands will need to occur.

Assessment is ongoing, with FYS instructors meeting weekly during the fall semester. Information from student evaluation forms is discussed and used to make modifications to improve the course for upcoming semesters.

### **Pull for Non-Payment Process**

Over the last several years, SUNY Poly students have indicated decreasing satisfaction with the billing and payment process. Results of the Student Opinion Survey (SOS) showed a decrease in the average score on this item in the last three administrations from 3.54/5 in 2006 to 3.40/5 in 2012. To address this issue, the Enrollment Services Team (EST) designed a more comprehensive communication plan for the billing and payment process, to include e-mail, print, and phone calls. Communication media were reviewed and revised to give them a more student-centered perspective. The outcome was that returning students were more aware of the billing and payment process, resulting in fewer students being pulled for non-payment. The billing and payment process satisfaction in 2015 was 3.58/5, noting an increase in satisfaction since the 2012 administration.



## **Recommendations**

- Create office of student success/academic advising with a full time director
- Develop additional online courses and create an office for distance learning with a full-time director
- Continue to increase admission standards the of incoming students at both undergraduate and graduate levels while growing enrollment
- Fully implement Early Warning System integrated with student record system (Banner)
- Provide support for an increased number of sections and staffing for First Year Seminar

# Standard 9: Student Support Services

*“The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution’s goals for students.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 9.

Student support is a critical feature for the success of an institution. That support is reflected in the campus culture, the residence halls and the activities and services provided to promote the academic, personal and social growth of students. Continuous improvement practices and assessment ensure the quality of the programs provided to the student population.

## **Utica Site**

Building a robust residential campus culture is a priority at SUNY Poly. A vibrant campus community is evolving as evidenced by an increase in programs and services offered to the college community.

## **Curricular and Co-curricular Activities**

SUNY Poly has more than 30 clubs and organizations (academic, social, cultural, interest) which influence the campus culture as well as the social and academic development of students. The number of active student groups has remained relatively constant over the last five years, even though enrollment has fluctuated. Student groups integrate community and civic responsibility through community service and outreach activities ([Appendix 9.1](#)). These activities reinforce a sense of civic responsibility, a key component in the mission of the institution, while providing students with opportunities to engage with each other. In addition to community service, several of SUNY Poly’s clubs also engage in cultural awareness, part of the institution’s mission of preparing students for a diverse world, while others are aligned with academic programs and interests, reinforcing for students the academic mission of the college and providing them opportunities to apply their academic skills.

## **Programming Opportunities**

Programs (workshops, lectures, special events, activities) are sponsored by academic departments, the Student Association and Student Affairs division, independently and collaboratively. This effort provides a multitude of diverse programs for the college community throughout the academic year.

In response to declining Student Opinion Survey (SOS) scores for residential and cultural programming, the President's Programming Initiative (PPI) was established in the fall of 2012. This initiative allocates funding and resources to build campus culture by bringing students, faculty and staff together for various activities. The programming team is made up of representatives from across campus; [Appendix 9.2](#) provides representative examples of additional programming resulting from the PPI initiative. The initial investment in fall 2012 was \$30,000; increased in fall 2013 to \$40,000; and was sustained in 2014 and 2015 at \$40, 000.

Additionally, events outside of PPI are also organized and assessed throughout the year. For example, a sponsored talk by a Holocaust survivor resulted in more than 80% of attendees reporting that the lecture enhanced their understanding of the historical context of World War II, and an event featuring local refugees resulted in 95% of student attendees reporting gains in cultural awareness.

### **Facility Additions**

In 2011, the evolving campus culture received a significant boost when three newly constructed buildings were opened. The Student Center was a direct response to an identified need for more student space. This building is the hub for student clubs and organizations, student activities, international student services, and student government and houses a non-denominational ecumenical center. A multi-purpose space allows for large and small group gatherings, and an open access dining facility supports casual dining. SUNY Poly's new Wildcat Field House is a state-of-the-art facility that allows for an increased number of athletic (both recreational and intercollegiate) and community events. Additionally, the Wildcat Fitness Center is available for student use and offers membership opportunities to faculty, staff and the local community. Oriskany Residence Hall, the third building to open in 2011, was designed specifically for traditional first-year students. Oriskany Hall is organized in small, communal-style "pods" that enhance interaction among residents; Resident Assistants are given extensive training in the specific needs of freshmen and provide special-topic programming and individualized assistance to residents.

### **Athletics and Recreation**

SUNY Poly competes in NCAA Division III athletics as a member of the North Eastern Athletic Conference (NEAC). SUNY Poly currently supports 12 intercollegiate teams consisting of over 200 student-athletes. Alignment with the NEAC in 2008-2009, following 16 years in the SUNYAC Conference, resulted in the advancement of 61 conference championships with four teams advancing to the NCAA championships for the first time in college history. In 2011, the addition of the new Wildcat Field House allowed for high-quality, accessible facilities and equipment for recreational, fitness and intercollegiate sports activities for all students. These changes have paved the way for increases in participation, recreational programming and team rosters.

There have been negative impacts. The growth of the NEAC has extended team travel, resulting in increased missed class time and expenses. The Director of Athletics is leading an initiative to address these concerns. An upcoming conference-wide referendum on divisional play to create more regional competition has been planned and endorsed by the President and other senior staff.

### **Residence Life**

Residence life plays a critical role in the development of campus culture and community. With more than 800 students currently living on campus, student satisfaction in relation to programs/services is an important component. In response to the SOS results of 2009 and 2012 indicating declining satisfaction with residence hall services/programs, the Residential Life office has responded with several changes. These changes have led to an increase in the overall student satisfaction (2009 – 3.33/5, 2012 – 3.8/5, 2015 – 3.47/5).

In 2014, the Residential Life office moved into the Campus Center to be more convenient for students and include extra programming, service, and confidential space. In an effort to establish and promote department purpose, the Resident Advisors were enlisted to establish departmental core values. Residential Life & Housing Core Values are prominently displayed and actively used for training, establishing staff performance expectations and for student recognition. Emphasis to central office staff on the Core Values of “Attention to Relationships” and “Go Beyond the Expected” contributed to 94% of respondents on the annual survey indicating a positive interaction with our central office in the fall 2014 semester.

The positions of Resident Advisor (RA) and Residence Director (RD) have also been modified to expand RD points of contact with students giving them greater ability to notice and respond quickly to student needs. The role of the Resident Advisor has changed from that of distanced enforcer to a more balanced educator and coach. Selection and training of RAs is now aligned with the goal of building an environment for resident students to grow emotionally, intellectually and socially. Resident Advisors meet one-on-one with every residential student within the first four weeks of the fall semester, a practice that 94% of survey respondents reported as meaningful to them. Regulations are also now consistent across all residential complexes, giving the students more continuity throughout their class year experience as they move from freshman to upper-class residence halls. Students complete an annual end of year satisfaction survey, and the results of the survey are used to modify operations (e.g., adding communication opportunities via the social media platforms).

### **Health Services and Health Education**

Student satisfaction with the SUNY Poly health services program has consistently been rated the highest on the Student Opinion Survey (SOS). In the spring 2014, a survey was completed by students who visited the Health & Wellness Center. Students again indicated a high level of

satisfaction with ancillary services, front reception area service, waiting times (reception area and exam room), check-in process, confidentiality as well as medical care services, level of service, professionalism, diagnosis and treatment (see [Appendix 9.3](#)).

The health education/health promotion office offers many programs and initiatives that enhance students' understanding of and bring attention to personal health and wellness needs. Current, relevant, health and wellness topics are delivered through multiple venues throughout the campus such as the annual health fair (with over 100 vendor booths), guest speakers, awareness events, and through print materials. Examples include:

1. Bathroom Buzz a health program initiative designed to raise awareness and educate the SUNY Poly community on issues related to both physical and mental health. Flyers detailing important facts and tips about health related issues are posted in the restrooms throughout the Utica site. Topics are rotated weekly throughout the academic year. Assessment of the initiative was conducted during the spring of 2013. One hundred and twenty members of the college community were surveyed. Ninety-three percent (93% [111/120]) regularly read the flyers and 62% (68/110) indicated that reading the Bathroom Buzz resulted in a change in behavior consistent with the message in the Bathroom Buzz. The Bathroom Buzz has been adopted and evaluated by local community organizations. Results from the community assessment were consistent with the results reported above.
2. Stress management program utilizing one-half-hour therapeutic massage session. Forty three students were surveyed and ninety-seven percent (97%) found some stress relief from the massage.

### **Counseling Services**

Two experienced licensed mental health counselors offer individual counseling sessions, supportive services and campus outreach for our students. Campus outreach programs include groups, informational sessions and interactive activities. The counselors are working with students on a wide range of issues and provide referrals as appropriate.

Program effectiveness for counseling services was assessed for the first time in the 2013-2014 academic year. The mental health counselors re-designed the student evaluation form and asked each student to complete a confidential and anonymous evaluation after the students' fourth counseling session. Ninety-eight percent of the student responses indicated that students felt comfortable and generally satisfied with the counseling services they received. Eighty percent reported the counseling services helped them reach their goals. The survey itself represented an indirect assessment measure of counseling services. The survey will be further refined and more direct assessment measures (e.g., goal attainment scaling) will be explored during the 2015-2016 academic year.

In response to identified student need, PEARLS (Personal Empowerment Assertiveness Relationships Listening and Sexuality), a six-week psycho-educational program, was also developed for female students focusing on empowerment and self-discovery.

The success of PEARLS was assessed by attendance and level and depth of the participation of group members. Additionally, the counselors updated and improved the Counseling Center webpage, to include a special document just for Faculty and Staff on “How to Identify/Help Students in Distress.” A report documented 1,486 page views from March 2013-March 2014.

### **Career Services**

Career Services offers students a wide range of career planning, including résumé writing and interviewing assistance, mock interview sessions, job search and internship guidance, workshops, and individualized career counseling. A nationwide student/employer job database provides students individualized information regarding internship and employment opportunities throughout the academic year. Information is also available regarding graduate school admissions procedures and graduate school standardized testing. Career Services lacked a director from 2011 to 2013, and SOS student satisfaction with the office decreased in 2009 (3.27/5) and 2012 (3.19/5). In response to that feedback, a full-time director was hired in 2013 resulting in program and participation increases. 2015 SOS results are higher (3.38/5) than in years past, although they remain low in relation to other SUNY campuses (3.63/5). Efforts are underway to increase exposure as well as integrate programming at the Albany site.

One of the premier programs offered through Career Services is the Annual Career and Graduate School Fair. In 2014, the program had a notable increase in employer/graduate school participation over previous years.

### **Support for Special Populations**

SUNY Poly recognizes that subsets of the student population have unique needs. Programming and special initiatives have been established to support their success.

### **First-Year Students**

Adjusting to college academically and socially is often difficult for first-year students. To assist freshmen with the transition to college life, and to help ensure academic success, two programs have been established. The freshman orientation program allows new first-year students to explore numerous areas of campus and academic life and learn about opportunities for involvement in co-curricular activities, student government and leadership. For international freshmen, a longer orientation program includes off-campus activities to acclimate and educate them to living in the U.S. and the region. Post-program surveys indicate that most students are pleased with the orientation program, and modifications based on feedback are being developed. In 2014, 80% (196/244) of orientation attendees rated the program as good (58.61% [143/244]) or excellent (21.72% [53/244]). Additionally, 78 of 244 referenced shortening the program.

Based on this recommendation as well as the challenge of hosting the entire first year class just prior to the start of the semester, first year orientation was moved to two independent sessions in June and July. This also allowed for additional first year educational and enrichment programming during opening weekend.

First Year Seminar (FYS) is a one-credit course that links first-year students with professional staff and peer mentors. The course includes instruction on academic success strategies, campus services, and personal growth. Institutional data indicates that students completing FYS are persisting at a slightly higher percentage than students who were not enrolled in the course. Although not required, FYS is strongly encouraged and most first-year students register for/complete the course. Student evaluations from 2012, 2013 and 2014 indicate that the learning outcomes established within the syllabus are being met or exceeded (2012 – 96.1% [147/153], 2013 - 96% [185/192], and 2014 - 93% [159/171]). Feedback from course evaluations has resulted in a number of modifications over the last three years. These changes have included shifting the course length, modifying the textbook, reducing large group sessions and added Angel/Blackboard assignments.

### **Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)**

SUNY Poly's commitment to its Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) is longstanding; EOP has been a part of the institution for more than 30 years. When SUNY Poly began to admit freshmen in 2003, and retention rates did not meet expectations (2006 – 36% [4/11], 2007 – 56% [14/25], 2008 – 50% [7/14]), a required summer program for all new EOP first-year students was developed. This extended orientation is an eight-day intensive program preceding freshman orientation; it expands on orientation themes and includes a community service component in an effort to reinforce community engagement and service themes. For fall 2015, the summer program was extended to ten days to include three STEM-focused days. SUNY Poly prides itself on the personal relationships and attention provided by EOP. In addition to summer orientation, EOP has increased tutorial support, outreach, and programming. A highlight for EOP students is an annual "Family Dinner" featuring traditional food from the students' home cultures and hosted by the EOP assistant. Thus far, these initiatives have contributed to increasing the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of EOP students to 94% (15/16) in 2012 and 86% (18/21) in 2013. A national student survey (Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory) is also now being administered to EOP first-year students, and the results will be used to determine additional needed support services. Fall 2015 was the third administration of the survey. Despite positive first-year retention rates, persistence to graduation is a concern (2008 cohort 6 years – 29% [4/14]). Discussions are currently underway to develop strategies to support upper-class completion.

## **Disability Services**

The Disability Services Office provides support to students living with a disability. It also provides faculty and staff with education, and collaborates with families and community agencies. Services include determination of accommodations, assistive technology training, problem-solving support (as needed) and informed decision advisement. The office is staffed by a full-time director, currently assisting 166 students, a position which has evolved from 50% in 2010 to 100% in 2012 based on increased need. Students using the office are asked to fill out an online survey at the end of the academic year. Results of surveys in fall 2012 indicate a high degree of satisfaction (94%; 16/17) rated the service good or excellent and an acknowledgement that the accommodations did assist them to achieve academically. As SUNY Poly continues to grow, an increased number of students with disabilities will require staff support. In particular, the number of students on the autism spectrum has grown notably in recent years requiring a significant amount of staff time not only in the disability services office, but also in the counseling center and residential life. Programs for students on the spectrum, such as the social skills support group and a presenter on the topic of “college life with Asperger’s,” have offered additional resources to our students living with a disability.

## **Academic Services**

In response to issues raised on the SOS regarding library use and other student support services, the Learning Center, the Student Success office, and the IT help desk were moved to the Cayan Library to situate student services in close proximity to one another. This co-location allows for one-stop student support.

The Learning Center provides tutoring services to students in some of the most commonly needed areas, particularly writing and math assistance. As STEM programs have grown, tutoring is now provided in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and some Engineering courses as well. The Learning Center was located in an academic building, but was moved to the library during the 2011-2012 academic year as part of a plan to consolidate student informational services in one location. Traffic is now higher than it was in the previous location because the Learning Center hours match the Cayan Library's open hours. Students who may previously have studied alone in a carrel are now working in the Learning Center in study groups with a peer mentor. This fall, the Learning Center is piloting a new software program called TutorTrac, which will provide the campus with data about peak usage hours and subject areas. It will allow the Learning Center staff to re-direct some peer tutor work hours to accommodate these needs. Finally, the Learning Center participates in two online tutoring services: STAR-NY (available for select courses/days/times) and NetTutor (available 24/7).



The Learning Center is now part of the Student Success Center with a director overseeing the operations of the Learning Center. An assessment plan including output and outcome measures is currently underway and will be implemented during the spring 2016 semester.

The Cayan Library serves students during its open hours and also via a library consortium. Through "Ask a Librarian," Cayan Library provides live online reference support 24/7. The interlibrary loan system filled more than 1,900 requests in 2013-2014, 1,800 requests in 2014-2015 and 3,134 requests between January 1, 2015, and September 1, 2015. Additionally, in spring 2014, the student government successfully petitioned to increase library hours to accommodate student requests.

### **Albany Site**

In anticipation of the arrival of SUNY Poly students at the Albany site for fall 2015, planning occurred throughout the 2014-2015 academic year. Below is a summary of student services, most of which continue to evolve.

### **Residence Life**

On August 24, 41 new first-year and transfer students moved into a dedicated third floor of a commercial suite hotel facility - CrestHill Suites - as SUNY Poly's first residential students in Albany. Two RDs were hired to manage the facility and work closely with, and report to, the Director of Residence Life and Housing. RDs serve as first-line staff in response to crisis situations within the residential complex; they are on duty and/or on call 24/7. Additionally, the Resident Directors plan social and enrichment programs with the students and also coordinate activities with campus staff. All residential students have a meal plan that allows them to dine either at SUNY Poly's Albany site (CNSE) or at CrestHill Suites.

Accommodating Albany site students at CrestHill Suites is a temporary arrangement. Plans are currently underway to build a residential facility at the Albany site; it is tentatively scheduled to open for the 2017-18 academic year.

Transportation arrangements have been made for new SUNY Poly Albany students through the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA). Students have the ability to utilize the bus service at no charge for class and recreational purposes.

### **Health Services**

Arrangements are in the final stages for health and counseling services to be provided at the Albany site. A temporary site has been identified and will be available for student health needs.

### **Disability Services**

Students with disabilities are accommodated by the Director of Disability Services, ensuring that needs are being met and that SUNY Poly meets its commitment to these students. Although the numbers are limited, regular contact with students is achieved through on-site meetings and interaction via Skype.

### **Orientation**

All new undergraduate students participated in a 1.5 day orientation program at SUNY Poly's Albany site that commenced following move-in. Staff from both sites participated in welcoming and training the new students in Albany. The program covered a wide range of areas: academics, learning support, health, financial aid, safety and security, computing, etc. Additionally, a half-day parent orientation program was also included.

### **Academic Support/Registration**

Students in need of academic support are directed to first meet with their instructors and attend office hours to ask questions. Faculty members for introductory sections often offer recitation sessions for additional support. Busy office hours are often a signal that extra support from recitation sessions is valuable. Students are directed to meet with the Director of Academic Advisement whenever they need extra support. All students are required to meet with the Director of Academic Advisement at least once per semester but most students take advantage of this opportunity more frequently. During advisement sessions, strategies are developed to cope with workload, students are coached on forming study groups and effective communication with faculty, and ad hoc tutoring is arranged.

During the summer prior to their first semester SUNY Poly Albany site students were registered for their courses by the Director of Academic Advisement in consultation with students and student records. Students will register themselves with guidance in subsequent semesters. During their first year at the Albany site all new students are advised by the Director of Academic Advisement and then are assigned to faculty advisement thereafter. Students receive basic training in the registration system and are in contact with the Director of Academic Advisement and the Registrar for technical registration questions.

### **Programming Opportunities**

Activities such as academic, cultural and social programming are planned throughout the year. The Office of Residential Life, Student Affairs/Campus Life, and Careers Services work in conjunction with the SUNY Poly Albany site Graduate and Undergraduate Student Associations to engage students in social, professional, and supplementary academic activities. As we build our SUNY Poly cohort of Albany site students, we are working with the student governance organizations to support clubs and activities that students have

requested. Albany site students, both graduate and undergraduate, have voting rights and participate actively in the shared governance process at the SUNY Poly Albany site.

### **Recreation**

Since the Albany site currently does not have recreational facilities or any sports related programs. Student services personnel are currently exploring recreational and sports related opportunities for the Albany site. Fitness center memberships have been provided to the Albany site students through an agreement that enables them to use facilities at the University of Albany.

To ensure that students at the Albany site have ample means of providing feedback as to their student experience, including the quality of programs and services provided, plans are underway to assess student services in a variety of ways. This includes formal assessment via surveys, as well as more informal focus group settings related to specific topical areas.

### **Recommendations**

- Develop a Student Affairs strategic plan by spring 2017 to include:
  - Campus programming and resources to promote student engagement on both the Utica and Albany sites.
  - Recreational, extracurricular clubs, and sports programming for the Albany site.

# Standard 10: Faculty

*“The institution’s instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 10.

## **Faculty Qualifications**

All departments and the administration adhere to the SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees Title A, Section 4, in all decisions of reappointment, promotion and tenure (continuing appointment). Section 4 lists five specific criteria to be considered: mastery of subject matter, effectiveness in teaching, scholarly ability, effectiveness of university service, and continuing growth. At the Utica site, departmental peer reports/ recommendations emphasize teaching, scholarly ability, and continuing growth; different departments place different weight on university service. External reviews are also used in continuing appointment decisions; at the Albany site, external reviews, amount of extramural funding, and scholarly ability are key criteria.

## **Institutional Support for Professional Development: Teaching, Scholarship, Service**

Institutional funds for faculty research are, necessarily, very limited. However, indirect cost recovery and legislative appropriations have enabled significant support of faculty start-up needs and equipment necessary for laboratories at the Utica site. At the Albany site, combined overhead from external funding allows for more expensive equipment costs to be purchased and shared by the faculty. This assists new faculty to quickly start up research upon arrival, and allows established faculty to expand their research options. Other resources are also available to support faculty development. Release time, mentoring and workshops support the continuing development of faculty as educators and scholars. New faculty receive orientation during the week prior to the academic year, which includes workshops on the criteria for promotion and tenure, priorities for new faculty, and tips related to teaching and scholarship to enable new faculty to succeed at SUNY Poly. Other workshops for all faculty cover topics such as proposal preparation, student privacy, college safety, online teaching, innovation and entrepreneurship, excellence in teaching and learning outcomes, and technology innovation. Data indicate that since 2008, the faculty participation rate has risen from about 20% to more than 40% of faculty participating in at least one workshop per year.

## **Teaching**

Faculty at the Utica site typically teach a 12 contact hour course load each semester; faculty at the Albany site typically teach a 6 contact hour course load per semester. As the calculation is by contact hour, laboratory courses are counted with the lab time incorporated into the workload calculation. SUNY Poly now employs an Instructional Designer to coordinate faculty development and training with the Open SUNY Education Services, SUNY Center for Professional Development (CPD), and SLOAN-C College Pass workshops, and also to provide additional training as needed. On-campus workshops and conferences for faculty have been periodically sponsored through CPD; however, funds for CPD events are limited.

Departments support the faculty's continuing development as educators in several ways. All departments perform peer reviews of tenure-track faculty. However, until recently, that process was rather inconsistent. To address that issue, the faculty governance at the Utica site adopted a classroom observation policy in 2014. Departments have also increased mentoring support for junior faculty. At the Utica site, senior faculty mentor junior faculty, the chair meets regularly with junior faculty members and, occasionally, senior faculty members co-teach courses with junior faculty members. At the Albany site, there is a strong tradition of peer to peer mentoring as well as classroom observation.

The Engineering Department has also received funding from the institution to send its junior civil engineering faculty to the ASCE Excellence in Civil Engineering Education conference during their first two years of employment. Faculty members in nursing, at the encouragement and when possible with the support of the chair, routinely attend online training sessions, and sent one coordinator to a national education symposium in 2013. Faculty attend professional organization conferences as funding allows.

For evaluation from the student perspective, each class taught by junior faculty members is assessed using the national IDEA form survey (implemented in Albany as of fall 2015). Results are included in reappointment and tenure files. Faculty are also encouraged to write their own surveys to more specifically evaluate their own teaching methods. After receiving continuing appointment, one class per year is evaluated with an IDEA form, although faculty can specifically request that other classes also be evaluated. Program coordinators and/or department chairs also conduct peer evaluations of junior faculty, ideally at least once per year and on request of the faculty member.

## **Scholarship**

While funding for faculty research on campus primarily comes from grants and contracts, other sources of funds also support research. Competitive awards of up to \$1,000 a year awarded to faculty and staff through the United University Professions (UUP) union, administered by a campus committee. The number of faculty awards varies from year to year.

Each department at the Utica site has historically received some annual funding from the Provost's office for faculty research, up to \$650 per faculty member but variable depending on availability of funds. Faculty members pursuing proposal preparation, laboratory development, and book preparation have at times been able to secure course load reductions, either through their department chair or directly from the Provost. This is more typically the case for junior faculty, but at times senior faculty have also been granted course load reductions, in particular if their research was at a critical juncture, to help enable them to publish their work. A percentage of the overhead is returned to the faculty member to assist in additional scholarly activity. A strong culture and tradition of extramural funding at the Albany site facilitates faculty there to obtain their own grant monies for research and travel.

The Office of Sponsored Research at SUNY Poly supports pre-award grant development and submission and offers post-award human resources administration and assistance in writing grant progress reports. This office also invites corporate and government research organizations to meet with SUNY Poly faculty to explore possibilities for collaboration. These efforts have led to the presence on our campus of several federal centers of excellence in reliability, computer science applications, and other technologies. To date, faculty and students have collaborated with these centers on more than ten research projects. The sponsored research director also serves as the operations manager of the SUNY Polytechnic Research Foundation, with oversight for federal regulation compliance, adherence to ethical standards, development of intellectual property agreements, financial forecasting and serves as the coordinator of the SUNY Poly Institutional Review Board.

Seven hundred and eighty grants were awarded to members of the campus between 2010 and 2015. Research activity is also measured by the institution's annual grant expenditures and affiliated indirect cost recovery. SUNY Poly expenditures over that time totaled \$1.37 billion while the indirect cost recovery totaled \$44.7 million. Grant activity is reported monthly and posted on the Sponsored Research webpage.

## **Service**

University service is one of the required criteria for faculty evaluation, and service has a strong history of importance at SUNY Poly. Although the faculty is relatively small, the diversity of programs, other educational offerings, and student services provides for many opportunities for university service. Approximately three-quarters of the faculty are active in university service at any given time. This service includes committees such as governance, administrative, and student affairs, advisors for student clubs and partial administrative positions (directors, program coordinators, department chairs). A few serve in dual (or more) service capacities, but departments try to minimize the number of committees any one faculty member is on and try not to have junior faculty serve on committees in their first year. Student advisement is also spread

among faculty in most programs, department chairs, program coordinators, directors, and the faculty governance chairperson receive extra service pay and/or course reductions for those duties; the other positions such as committee chairs, members, and student advisors do not. Although the service load is high, faculty value their ability to participate in the working of the institution and the openness of the administration to engage in shared governance, and general sentiment is that the problem is not that there are too many areas in which faculty participate, but rather too few faculty to appropriately spread and rotate the responsibilities. An audit of the committee structures at the Utica site to determine where possible streamlining could take place was begun in 2013, but was put on hold due to the merger with CNSE and the establishment of a campus-wide governance structure encompassing both the Albany and Utica sites.

## **Standards and Procedures**

### **Appointments**

All position requisitions for Assistant Professor or higher indicate that a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree is required or preferred, and those hired before their degrees are completed stipulate a date by which the degree must be obtained. In most cases, evidence of scholarship or research and/or professional level of activity is a pre-requisite. Most full-time faculty positions require teaching experience and some specified evidence of teaching excellence. All candidates are required to come to campus and give a research presentation, and some position searches now also require a candidate to present a lecture suitable for an introductory level course.

### **Tenure**

Although SUNY Polytechnic has fewer than 200 faculty, the institution offers 45 undergraduate and graduate programs across many fields. That means that faculty are very diverse in the type of scholarship in their areas of expertise, and as a result standardized numerical benchmarks across the institution for faculty for continuing appointment are not used. Instead, departments work with junior faculty to create individualized expectations for reappointment and continuing appointment. Department chairs at the Utica site meet at least annually with each junior faculty member to assess and advise them on their progress, and departments formally evaluate and make recommendations for reappointments at the 1, 3, and 5 year points pre-tenure. Reappointments and continuing appointments are handled differently at the Utica and Albany sites respectively, each designed to recognize and reinforce the strengths of each site.

The Utica faculty governance personnel committee has created a set of guidelines for junior faculty in preparing their tenure materials, and keeps candidates apprised of their progress through the process. There are two lines of recommendations that move forward for tenure candidates: one is administrative through the department chair, and one is peer-based through the department and a faculty governance personnel committee. Candidates may request that an advocate be present during the peer committee deliberations. Both recommendations go to the

Provost, who then sends a final recommendation to the President. As the faculty has grown, the increased evaluation load has begun to constrain the time frames for committees and administrators to conduct their evaluations. The Provost's office is currently working with the Utica faculty governance personnel committee to establish a modified timeline for candidate submissions that will provide better balance of the time requirements for each step of the process while remaining within state time guidelines.

### **Promotion**

Promotion from the assistant to the associate level is normally made at the time of the tenure decision, although in rare cases it may be delayed if one of the criteria is deemed adequate but not exemplary. Promotion from the associate to the full level is conducted in a similar manner as the continuing appointment process. Currently, faculty members may nominate themselves for promotion at any time. However, that can strain the peer review process; the faculty governance personnel committee has been asked to develop a standardized timeline for promotion requests.

### **Post-tenure Evaluation and Activity Summary**

All faculty are required to submit annual reports of their activities, sorted into the same criteria categories used for promotion and tenure. Department chairs then meet individually with faculty to discuss their performance, specific needs of support that the faculty have, and how the faculty member's activities support the department and the institution.

### **Grievances**

Faculty are all covered under the collective bargaining agreement with the United University Professions union, which handles workplace discrimination claims. Other complaints are handled by the Vice President of Human Resources and Special Projects.

### **Contingent Faculty**

SUNY Poly uses a small number of adjunct faculty for specialty needs in upper-level courses that require the expertise of someone currently working in private industry. The institution relies heavily, however, on adjuncts for lower-division courses at the Utica site, particularly in general education. Adjunct faculty absorb approximately 40% (12,907/32,630 student credit hours) of the teaching load on a full-time equivalent basis; in certain disciplines, adjuncts teach more than half of the sections offered. Coordinators of defined areas supervise adjuncts, and together with department chairs conduct one peer evaluation per year of each adjunct faculty member. Every class taught by an adjunct faculty member is also evaluated using the IDEA course survey. Adjunct faculty are eligible to apply for union-based Individual Development Awards. Contingent faculty are eligible and usually do participate in the new faculty orientation program. SUNY Poly has made progress in creating full-time contingent positions for adjuncts who regularly teach multiple courses. However, per-course adjuncts are not usually given specific support for development or college participation in their contracts.



Term lecturers are contingent faculty who teach a full course load, but without a research expectation and with a lowered service expectation. The number of lecturers has risen greatly in the last two years to reduce some of the load taught by adjunct faculty; full time lecturers hold office hours and their one to two-year contracts provide more long-term stability than adjuncts who are hired on a per-semester basis. Lecturers have been hired across programs and subject areas, but have been most heavily used in the service disciplines; the percentage of full-time faculty at lecturer status in departments ranges from zero to forty percent.

### **Academic Freedom**

SUNY Poly follows the SUNY Board of Trustees policies on academic freedom. Article IX, Title I, states that “It is the policy of the University to maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, teaching and research. In the exercise of this freedom faculty members may, without limitation, discuss their own subject in the classroom; they may not, however, claim as their right the privilege of discussing in their classroom controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. The principle of academic freedom shall be accompanied by a corresponding principle of responsibility. In their role as citizens, employees have the same freedoms as other citizens. However, in their extra mural utterances employees have an obligation to indicate that they are not institutional spokespersons.”

### **Assessment by Faculty**

One formal evaluation of faculty satisfaction at the Utica site was carried out in 2011, using the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) instrument. Results were obtained in the summer of 2013, and were communicated to the faculty in 2014. There was a 74% (51/69) response rate from faculty. In general, the faculty in the humanities and nursing were found to have the lowest levels of satisfaction. The faculty in engineering, computer science, mathematics, statistics and business were found to have higher levels of job satisfaction. The University of Albany did not engage in a COACHE or other faculty satisfaction survey while the then-CNSE was a part of it. However, it will be included when the next SUNY Poly survey takes place.

The lowest levels of satisfaction were in administration and tenure processes. Responses to the administrative results are detailed in Standard 5. Prior to the survey results becoming available the faculty governance personnel committee and departments had already made changes to their procedures based on informal requests; those are discussed in the tenure section above. The highest areas of satisfaction noted in the COACHE survey were in teaching, department collegiality, and health and retirement benefits. The level of satisfaction in health and retirement benefits is similarly high across the SUNY-wide averages and reflects both the high percentage of union membership and the positive negotiations that UUP has had with the state legislature.

In the fall of 2013, small-group interviews were conducted at the Utica site specifically with faculty who had extra administrative duties of program coordination and as department chairs. These reflected similar results to the COACHE survey with regard to areas of most satisfaction and dissatisfaction. One of the strongest threads in the interviews was satisfaction in teaching and department collegiality. The most consistent opinion was: “I love what I do and who I work with.” Faculty have a strong sense of responsibility to their students and to each other, which has helped sustain faculty morale through the challenges faced by problems in staffing and resource support.

## **Recommendations**

- Develop strategies to support faculty development and provide support at both sites for both tenure-line and contingent faculty with appropriate administrators and governance bodies
  - Include adjunct and other contingent faculty more fully and systematically in all areas of faculty support
  - Provide faculty with more opportunities to develop scholarship by looking for innovative ways of managing contractual obligations, including partnerships across both sites to take advantage of potential synergies and a formalized procedure for scholarship support requests including sabbatical leave
  - Assess currently used tools for faculty performance feedback and develop recommendations for increasing usefulness of feedback
  - Foster interaction between the sites in sharing strategies on faculty development through avenues such as the SUNY Poly governance body

# Standard 11: Educational Offerings

*“The institution’s educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 11.

SUNY Polytechnic’s educational offerings are developed with input from local, outside, and state entities. Since appointing a one-third time director of assessment in 2009 (then SUNY IT), significant progress has been made at the Utica site toward incorporating assessment activities into regular course and program review.

## **Program Design**

Curriculum design is handled separately at each site, and a SUNY Poly-wide governance committee with members from each site has been elected to address curricular opportunities and challenges that arise.

### Utica Site

When programs are initially proposed at the Utica site, they pass through the faculty governance curriculum committee, the institute-wide planning and budget committee and are evaluated by at least two evaluators from outside the institution who also write a supplementary report as part of the proposal. Program proposals then go to the New York State Education Department (SED), which reviews proposed programs for coherence, fit to institutional mission, and student learning outcomes. Programs are not allowed to begin until they are approved by the SED.

Beginning in the spring 2013 semester, the faculty governance Academic Quality Committee on the Utica site solicited information from all programs that mapped program goals to the then SUNY IT mission statement. These maps were reviewed, and in some cases, returned with requests for clarifications. All program goals on the Utica site are now clearly mapped to, and aligned with, the SUNY Poly mission. Plans are underway to do the same exercise at the Albany site.

All programs at the Utica site assess their course objectives (listed on the syllabi), and student learning outcomes as they fit to program goals once a year. These reports are reviewed by departments, the dean, and the Provost.

### Albany Site

Prior to the merger, the Curriculum Committee reviewed both undergraduate and graduate issues. Post-merger, the undergraduate academic council handles program review, curriculum and academic standing. A separate graduate council has a parallel structure for the M.S./Ph.D programs.

### **Experiential Learning**

SUNY Poly is committed to increasing experiential learning opportunities for its students; including practicum and internship placements, as well as service-based and project-based learning opportunities. This initiative has been reinforced this past year with a legislative directive from the State of New York and SUNY System Administration.

Experiential Learning opportunities for students vary by program. Efforts to increase the opportunities for other kinds of experiential learning have already begun. Many faculty express a desire to integrate these kinds of experiences into their classes, but do not know how to go about this in their particular fields. In response to the feedback received from faculty, the Provost hosted a workshop during spring 2013. Faculty with experience in this area shared what they have been doing in their courses to help others start thinking about what opportunities they could bring to their students. In April of 2014, the student research fair was expanded to include experiential learning projects. Presenting this work allows both faculty and students to see an expanded array of educational opportunities, and build awareness and momentum on campus for increasing experiential learning opportunities. SUNY Poly has also hosted an experiential learning workshop to connect faculty with community businesses, organizations, and research labs. A High Impact Learning and Teaching Center (HILT) has also been proposed to coordinate and evaluate the efficacy of experiential learning opportunities (see [Appendix 11.1](#))

*Table 11a – Experiential Learning Opportunities*

Examples of Experiential Learning Opportunities
<b>Project based learning</b>
<b>Service based learning</b>
<b>Practicums</b>
<b>Clinical placements</b>
<b>Research</b>
<b>Internships</b>
<b>Community based research projects</b>
<b>Community based volunteer services</b>

### **Program Assessment**

Program faculty across SUNY Poly relies on a wide range of resources to ensure that the curriculum meets disciplinary and accreditation standards, and is relevant to the job market. A

majority of programs are accredited by outside bodies or are seeking such accreditation. In addition, programs regularly survey relevant professional organizations, graduate and professional schools, and target employers to ensure that students are gaining the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful. Advisory boards, composed primarily of professionals and alumni, provide regular feedback on curriculum and recruitment in many programs, and in some cases, professional critique of soon-to-be graduates. For example, the advisory board for Communication and Information Design reviews and critiques portfolios for upcoming graduates. Some programs, such as Psychology, also bring in outside professionals to evaluate student capstone projects for skills, competency, and currency of topic. Advisory board minutes are available in the resource room.

Internally, programs are asked to review their catalog descriptions annually, and new assessment guidelines require student learning outcomes to be included in all course syllabi. In Utica, all faculty, including contingent faculty, are required to submit all syllabi to their department chairs each semester. Program chairs work with adjunct faculty on syllabi as needed. One example of oversight on adjunct-taught course outcomes is that of the introductory English course. Assessment data revealed a large amount of variation in goals and outcomes, prompting the department chair to work with adjuncts to develop a common syllabus. With the increase in enrollment and matching increase in adjunct-taught courses, oversight to ensure coverage and quality has become more difficult. This issue is being addressed internally by the affected departments. There are no contingent faculty at the Albany site.

Internships and practicums are evaluated with both direct and indirect measures. Direct measures include survey results from employers on student skills, and indirect measures include student surveys assessing the usefulness of course material and application of the material.

### **Accreditation**

A number of programs at SUNY Poly are currently operating under the accreditation of outside bodies or are seeking such accreditation:

- Accredited: all programs in the Nursing (CCNE and CAHIIM), Business (AACSB), Engineering Technology Departments (ETAC-ABET) and mechanical and electrical and Computer Engineering programs (ABET)
- Seeking accreditation: Civil Engineering programs (ABET); B.S. in Network and Computer Security, B.S. in Computer Information Systems, B.S. in Computer and Information Science (ABET), Nanoengineering (ABET)
- Exploring possibility of accreditation: M.S. in Network and Computer Security (through ABET via B.S. in Network and Computer Security)
- No external accrediting body: Telecommunications, Applied Mathematics, Biology, Community and Behavioral Health, Psychology, Sociology, Interdisciplinary Studies,

Information Design and Technology, Communication and Information Design,  
Nanoscience

Programs without external accrediting bodies rely on disciplinary standards as articulated by professional organizations, feedback from students, alumni, and advisory boards, and advice from professionals in the field to ensure that their program standards reflect the expectations of the discipline as well as relevant employers.

### **Library and Information Literacy**

As is the trend nationally, the library has shifted its acquisition budget almost entirely from physical holdings to database subscriptions. SUNY Poly continues to benefit from SUNY-wide library resources such as the interdisciplinary databases provided through SUNY Connect, as well as negotiated SUNY wide resources such as Elsevier's Science Direct and Scopus databases. In addition, SUNY Poly continues to maintain subscriptions to essential research resources for its majors, including IEEE resources, ACM Digital Library, and many others. In the past year, SUNY Poly has greatly increased its online subscriptions to bolster its support for both Utica site majors and Albany site research and curriculum needs. Major investments include subscriptions to American Chemical Society Journals, the ASTM Digital Library, and several other journal packages. Further resources are being added, and the Library is beginning to assess the best access methods to achieve institutional goals using usage data such as COUNTER reports to optimize access to research resources. The Library has also begun expanding E-book offerings using demand driven and patron driven purchase models. To meet individual faculty and student research needs, the library has begun purchasing on-demand programs for articles. In spring 2015, the Library implemented a web scale discovery service, Ebsco's EDS product, which now offers searching across all subscribed content and provides access to additional purchase on demand and demand driven resources. The library also extended its virtual reference service to include, in addition to consortial monitoring of reference services, local virtual reference by SUNY Poly librarians, provided over 80 hours per week, with 24/7 coverage by consortial librarians.

The Cayan Library is open 7 days a week during fall and spring semester with full staffing of all service points, including a reference librarian available during all hours. In fall 2013, the library extended its operating hours during the weeks surrounding finals week in response to assessment of student concerns, expanding to over 100 open hours per week with full staffing. One ongoing concern is library staffing; the library went three years without a director, hiring one in the fall of 2014, and there has been attrition without replacement resulting in a current staff of one full-time librarian and one part-time librarian, and two library staff to handle the library load.

All library resources are physically located at the Utica site, and Albany students can receive all online resources via login. Physical materials, either owned by SUNY Poly or received via Interlibrary Loan, are also shipped overnight to Albany site faculty, staff, and students. The Cayan Library building at the Utica site offers a variety of study and collaboration areas, including 227 seats

and 56 tables in quiet and group spaces. Students can use any of the library's 12 group study rooms for group work, work on projects, or group study.

In spring 2015, the Library, in coordination with the web services department, completely overhauled its website, expanding offerings and updating its web presence to take advantage of the Library's new web scale discovery tool. As part of this redesign, online help is persistently offered, and navigation is streamlined. Many more course and disciplinary specific library instructional pages have been created as part of the library website redesign. In coordination with Instructional Resources, a persistent library tab was created in the Learning Management System, with thorough integration for library discovery and online help available. The Library has also implemented an integrated Blackboard tool, Curriculum Builder that allows faculty to seamlessly import library resources into Blackboard courses. The Library is now in the process of assessing its website and online resource design using data gathered from Google Analytics and focus groups with faculty, staff, and students.

Two other space-related resources are housed within the library. First, a computer lab in the library can be used for formal group sessions, and there are both breakout rooms and small group spaces for students to work together in proximity to librarian assistance. Second, the Learning Center provides individual and group tutoring as well as special testing accommodations for those with disabilities. Collection of data concerning the use and effectiveness of the Learning Center is currently being collected as part of the responsibilities of a new part-time faculty position the Director of Student Success.

In addition to these efforts, the library is currently undergoing a strategic planning process consulting with a library advisory board, academic departments and deans and Student Association representatives to gather input on future directions for library services.

### **Special Populations**

Adult non-traditional learners were historically a large proportion of students at SUNY Poly Utica site, and still comprise 11% of the full-time and 11% of the part-time students at that site. Many of the classes at the Utica site are offered in the evening to accommodate students who have full-time day work schedules, and many of the classes are blocked in one or two days to minimize commute time for students. Faculty are cognizant of the outside commitments that nontraditional students face in addition to their coursework, and many faculty within programs check their syllabi with each other to try to avoid layering multiple tests onto a single cohort of students within a short timeframe. Policies on dropping courses, grade changes, re-matriculation, etc. are formulated with longer deadlines to account for the increased time that students often need when attending college part-time.

Students with learning disabilities and those who need other learning accommodations at both the Utica and Albany sites are served through the Office of Disability Services. The coordinator works with faculty on an individual basis to communicate student needs and, when needed, to

jointly develop alternate assignments that achieve the required learning outcomes in a manner that accommodates the student's needs. Faculty are required to include a statement about the Office of Disability Services in their syllabi.

### **Transfer Credit Evaluation**

Transfer credit evaluation is becoming more automated when courses are moved between SUNY campuses across the system. A concerted effort has been made to ensure that all classes now transferred in by students are entered into the Degree Works system so that fewer classes have to be manually evaluated. In the 2014-15 academic year, department chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences, evaluated more than 1700 transfer courses for coding into Degree Works. The campus has also hired an admissions counselor who works with transfer student evaluations full-time.

All General Education courses must meet standard learning outcomes and transfer intact; the first two years' worth of all program classes in several programs have been modified system-wide to have standardized outcomes (within a 70% equivalency) and be automatically transferred as well. This is part of a SUNY initiative for "seamless transfer paths". Articulation agreements exist with most of our feeder institutions and more are being developed and re-evaluated. For other courses, faculty in the subject area of expertise evaluate the courses the first time they are transferred in for equivalence and then place them on file for automatic transfer in the future.

### **Recommendations**

- Create a formal mechanism to track and promote experiential/applied learning placements and opportunities.
- Increase Library and Learning Center Support by:
  - Increasing library and journal resources commensurate with a Ph.D. granting institution
  - Identify and establish place a process to assess library needs



# Standard 12: General Education

*“The institution’s curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate College-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 12.

## **General Education and SUNY**

SUNY Poly, as a member of the SUNY system, has adopted the SUNY General Education Plan which requires that every student complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of approved General Education courses. SUNY mandates that at least one course each in mathematics and basic communication be included in those 30 hours; additionally, students must take at least one course in five of eight other General Education areas. ([Appendix 12.1](#))

In addition to the SUNY General Education requirement, the New York State Education Department (SED) requires that every college degree program include a specific number of credit hours in the Liberal Arts & Sciences as follows:

- 30 credit hours of Liberal Arts & Sciences for a Bachelor of Professional Studies (BPS)
- 60 credit hours of Liberal Arts & Sciences for a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) and Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
- 90 credit hours of Liberal Arts & Sciences for a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
- 30 of the SED required credits may be SUNY general education courses

With regard to transfer credit, SUNY campuses participate in an initiative called “seamless transfer,” which in part means that a course approved to meet a General Education requirement on one SUNY campus automatically meets that requirement on all SUNY campuses. To facilitate the proper transfer of General Education requirements, SUNY campuses provide a General Education Addendum as part of a student’s official transcript that specifies which General Education categories the student has met to their approval. For approval of non-SUNY courses to be transferred in to meet General Education requirements, an Admissions Office transfer coordinator, the student’s academic advisor, and the appropriate department chair work together to recommend transfer equivalencies. That recommendation is forwarded to SUNY Poly’s (Utica site) General Education Coordinator, and to the Director of Academic Advisement at the Albany site, who confers with faculty members in the appropriate discipline to make the final decision

for accepting the transfer equivalency. Once a course has been accepted and is in the system, the transfer of credit is automatic for future students bringing in the same course.

Students are able to track their own progress to their degree through the Degree Works audit system, which they can access at any time to see which of the categories have been met by their courses and which categories still require completion. Their program and general education courses are listed separately, so that they can easily see what is required for each area.

### **Diversity and Ethical Citizenship in General Education**

In line with its mission, SUNY Poly offers a range of courses within the General Education categories which addresses the concept of ethical citizenship by discussing various technologies and the influence they have upon human beings. Among those offerings are the following: *BIO 105 Introduction to Ecology*, *BIO 106 Solutions for Sustainable World*, *BIO 222 Nutrition and Health*, *BIO 351 Genetics*, *HIS 306 History of Science and Technology*, *IDS 103 Science, Technology and Human Values*, *IDS 204 Understanding Human Nature*, *IDS 304 Technology in American History*, *PHI 350 Technology and Ethics*, *POS 252 Politics of Life and Death*, *POS 342 Constitutional Law*, *PSY 100 Principles of Psychology*. In addition, SUNY Poly Utica site offers a range of courses within the General Education categories which address the concepts of globalism and diversity. Courses are offered in four foreign languages: Chinese, French, Japanese, and Spanish which not only teach basic language skills but also address culture. *COM 300 Oral Communication* class offers a unit wherein all students research, develop, and present speeches about countries other than the U.S. *IDS 102 Art and Culture* focuses either on Asian or Latino culture. Other General Education offerings addressing globalism and/or diversity are: *ENG 211 The Arts and the Cultural Revolution*, *ENG 331 Black Voices* (a survey of African American Literature), *HIS 240 Latin American Civilization*, *HIS 308 Latinos in American History*, *HIS 317 Topics in Black History*, *HIS 330 American Women's History*, *HIS 370 Western Civilization and the World*, *HIS 375 Gender Issues in World History*, *IDS 311 Humor and Comedy in Society*, *PHI 130 World Religions*, *SOC 100 Introduction to Sociology*, and *SOC 110 Social Problems*.

### **General Education – Utica Site**

SUNY Poly Utica site also has two local graduation requirements separate from the SUNY General Education plan; one of the General Education requirement courses must be in a natural science, and they must also take an upper-level writing course.

### **Assessment of General Education – Utica Site**

SUNY Poly Utica site General Education courses are evaluated once every three years on a cycle that began in the spring semester of 2003. The results and closing of the loop actions for the Utica site are reported below:

## **Mathematics**

The student learning outcomes for Mathematics are summarized in the General Education assessment plan. Previous assessment results from spring 2009 indicated that 66% of the students either met or exceeded the standards. Most of the General Education courses are taught by adjuncts. As a result of this assessment and in an attempt to “close the loop” the coordinator for Mathematics regularly meets with adjunct faculty including classroom visitation in order to ensure quality. Additionally, high school level prerequisites and levels of achievement have been specified at the SUNY Poly Utica site for placement in appropriate classes.

### Assessment Results

A 15-question multiple choice examination was developed to assess the learning outcomes for arithmetic, algebra, geometry, data analysis and quantitative reasoning. Fifty-eight percent of the students met or exceeded the standard while 42% did not meet the standard.

### Closing the Loop and Next Steps

The findings were reviewed by the math faculty. Several problems were identified. First, some adjunct faculty opted to make the assessment questions optional. Second, faculty felt that the assessment questions themselves were problematic and third, it is difficult for the mathematics coordinator to supervise the adjuncts in the light of the current faculty workload. Currently, more than 70% of students in math courses at SUNY Poly Utica site are taught by adjuncts; this percentage is higher for General Education classes. More full-time faculty in mathematics are clearly needed. To address the first two issues, a mathematics adjunct working in conjunction with mathematics faculty was hired to research and design a more appropriate set of questions to assess General Education goals, particularly for the most commonly taken courses. The assessment tool was piloted in spring 2014. All instructors in those courses were required to include the test questions as part of their final exams. Results showed that the assessment tool should contain a range of questions relevant to individual learning objectives rather than a single question spanning two or three objectives. Additionally, it was noted that some questions/problems can be improved and more variety in questions relevant to each objective is needed. The tool was expanded and used for a regular assessment cycle in spring 2015.

Additionally, for fall 2014, the Mathematical Association of America Maplesoft Placement Test Suite was used for placement of all students entering their initial math course at the SUNY Poly Utica site. A description of proper sequencing of courses as students make progress through their degree programs has also been developed. The General Education assessment will again be reassessed in 2016.

### Assessment Results

The spring 2015 assessment results indicated that 77% of the students either met or exceeded the benchmark for general education objectives one and two. On average 62% of the students either

met or exceeded the benchmarks for objectives three, four and five. While this does represent an improvement over the last assessment cycle, improvement is still warranted.

### *Closing the Loop and Next Steps*

Starting in spring of 2014, a Mathematics Placement exam designed to appropriately track students into mathematics courses for which they are capable of success was administered. The placement exam is currently only administered to freshmen starting fall 2014. The placement test will now be administered to all transfer students as they comprise a large component of the general education math population. Additionally, a Director of Student Success has been hired and is currently assessing and expanding upon the learning center math tutorial services. The Math General Education will be re-assessed in the spring of 2016.

### **Natural Science**

Twenty percent of the total number of students enrolled in courses approved for General Education Natural Science were assessed in spring 2014. The goals and benchmark criteria for natural science are summarized in the General Education assessment plan. Previous assessments included students from biology, chemistry, and physics. In this assessment, students were sampled from biology and a chemistry class. Students scored on average between “Approaches Standards” and “Meets Standards” for all assessment goals. Students performed best in course 1 on goals 1, 2, and 4, “Content knowledge,” “Methodology,” and “Critically evaluate the benefits and risks of utilizing scientific information.” On Goal 3, “Ability to discern what is scientific fact from what is not,” students failed to meet the standard for this course. Students performed fairly consistently in course 2 on all four goals; however the results suggest a failure to meet the benchmark standard on any of the goals. In addition, in course 1, data showed that students who had previously taken a Natural Science course performed higher than those who had not.

### *Closing the Loop and Next Steps*

The Director of Assessment met with the Natural Science Coordinator and the following interventions were put in place:

1. Pre- and post-testing for objectives related to General Education – Natural Science
2. Changes made to the syllabi that better reflect General Education – Natural Science goals
3. Test questions that better reflect General Education – Natural Science goals

Natural Science general education will be re-assessed in the spring of 2016.

### **Social Science**

Previous assessments for Sociology produced bi-modal results with students equally divided between meeting and exceeding the standard and approaching or failing to meet the standard. Both syllabi and course material were adjusted. Re-evaluation took place in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

### Assessment Results

Students were given a 20-item objective test on the first day of class and at the end of the semester to assess student learning outcomes designated for social science General Education. Consistently, 80% of the students met the criteria over the years assessed so the results for the Sociology course are considered robust. The difference between pre- and post-testing also provided significant evidence for “value added.”

### Closing the Loop and Next Steps

No further alterations will be made to this class. The intervention used since the last assessment was effective. Introductory Psychology courses and Anthropology are scheduled to be evaluated in the fall 2015 term.

### **American History**

Previous assessment results indicated that students enrolled in the American history courses had met only one of the two learning outcomes specified for General Education. In response to the assessment, faculty reviewed their course material and assessment techniques to emphasize the dynamic relationship between American institutions and society and the more global society. American history was reassessed in 2014.

### Assessment Results

The assessment results exceeded faculty expectations. 92% of students met or exceeded the American history general education standards

### Closing the Loop and Next Steps

No pedagogical action appears to be necessary as the standards were met.

### **Western Civilization**

Sixty-six percent of the students enrolled in Western Civilization courses met the benchmark for the general education learning outcomes in 2010. Adjustments were made to both the assessment questions and curriculum. These areas were reassessed in spring of 2014.

### Assessment Results

The adjustments made to the Western Civilization course were successful. Seventy-two percent of the students either met or exceeded the benchmark set for the course.

### Closing the Loop and Next Steps

No pedagogical action appears to be necessary as the standards were met.

## **Other World Civilization**

The previous cycle of assessment focused on students enrolled in “Science and Technology in World History.” Only 57% of the students met or exceeded the standard. History faculty met to discuss the findings; they attributed the poor performance on the standards to the fact that students view science as a western phenomenon only. Faculty reviewed their course syllabi and incorporated the global nature of science and technology into their lectures, discussions and assignments. The courses were reassessed in spring 2014.

### Assessment Results

The intervention designed for Other World Civilization was effective. Seventy-eight percent of the students exceeded or met the standard.

### Closing the Loop and Next Steps

No pedagogical action appears to be necessary as the standards were met.

## **Humanities**

General Education goals for the Humanities were assessed in spring of 2011. The assessment results fell short of the benchmarks set for the courses.

### Next Steps

The assessment results led to a lengthy discussion amongst faculty regarding General Education and general education courses. Faculty members reviewed their assignments for general education with special attention and focus on the objectives specified for Humanities in the General Education plan. The course was reassessed in the fall of 2012.

### Assessment Results

The results of this assessment were much more favorable, indicating that 80% of the students either met or exceeded the performance criteria.

### Closing the Loop and Next Steps

No pedagogical action appears to be necessary as the standards were met.

## **Foreign Language**

Prior assessments for foreign language denoted very positive results for student learning outcomes. Students seemed to enjoy and learn from adjunct professors teaching the course. The evaluations obtained in spring of 2011 were consistent with previous findings. In this round of evaluations, the Japanese course was chosen for review. The final exam provided measures to evaluate all of the four student learning outcomes. Eighty-two percent of students met or exceeded the performance criteria for all of the learning outcomes, thereby exceeding the benchmarks set for the course.

### Next Steps

No further actions were required. The instructor has been diligent about monitoring the quality of her course and often asks for student feedback.

### **The Arts**

Two courses were chosen for General Education Arts assessment (*ART 140 Painting* and *ART 135 Drawing*). Sixteen students from each of the two classes presented a portfolio of five or six of their best pieces and discussed what was being accomplished in each piece. Each student also prepared a written artist statement. Rubrics were used by the instructor and an outside reviewer to rate the students. A benchmark of 85% of the students either meeting or exceeding the standard was set as the evaluation outcome goal.

Overall 91% of the students are meeting or exceeding the benchmark goal. Using only the rating of the outside reviewer, 87% of the students are meeting or exceeding the standard. Though these are introductory classes for non-Art majors, it was noted that the students appeared engaged and very proud of their artistic accomplishments.

### Next Steps

No interventions are needed at this time. Art faculty members were asked to encourage their students to display work in the annual “SUNY Poly meets MVCC” art show and to select some student work for competition in a SUNY-wide juried art show.

### **Basic Communication**

Previous assessments of basic communication competencies indicated that students were not meeting the benchmarks set. Informal feedback from a number of the academic programs further corroborated the findings of the assessment. As a result and in an attempt to “close the loop,” the writing faculty adopted a common book and a common syllabus. Reassessment occurred in fall of 2013.

### Assessment Results

Thirty-six students representing a random sampling of all seven sections of ENG 101 taught fall 2013 were chosen. Their research papers were subject to review based upon a rubric. A campus benchmark of 80% either meeting or exceeding the standard was set. Seventy percent of the students either exceeded or met the standard. With the previous assessment, there was one section where the student outcomes were especially low. This time the results were uniformly distributed. There was no single instructor with extremely high scores, nor was there anyone with extremely low scores. Outcomes were balanced across the board for all sections. Also, grammar skills were similar across the board. Students in all sections were clear about the task assigned. Students in all sections made good use of electronic interventions: spell checker and bibliographic citation engines.

### Next Steps

#### Actions:

1. The then chair of the SUNY Utica Writing Task Force met with the *English 101* Instructors to share these results and to develop strategies for addressing the weaknesses. At that time, a common course shell was shared and instructors were allowed to modify it somewhat to suit their own teaching styles. In addition, the communication and humanities department chair, with the help of members from the department, recruited and hired three full-time lecturers who also spend 6-8 hours tutoring writing in the learning center.
2. Basic communication will be reassessed in fall 2015.

### **Information Management**

The student learning outcomes assessed in this area include: the ability to locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources. Skill level with regards to the basic operation of the personal computer and the ability to understand and use basic research techniques are integrated in other assignments and learning outcomes presented across the disciplines.

Previous assessments (2008) indicated much improvement in student competencies in this area as a result of bibliographic instruction provided by both instructor and librarian. The library bibliographic instruction has continued with survey results collected from fall 2009 to spring 2014. Two hundred and eighty-nine students were surveyed to determine the usefulness of the instruction with regards to the student learning outcomes for information management. Additionally, students enrolled in the senior level capstone courses in Psychology and Community and Behavioral Health were given assignments to more directly assess their information management skills. In the latter case, a rubric was used for the bibliographic assignment to determine if students could locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.

### Assessment Results

Consistent with the previous assessments, most of the themes emerging from the surveys were positive, indicating that the bibliographic instruction helps them identify and evaluate sources of information. The more direct measures gathered as part of the capstone courses in Psychology and Community and Behavioral Health were in line with the qualitative data obtained. Between 85 and 92% of the students enrolled in the Psychology capstone courses for fall 2009, 2011 and 2013 met the standard. The capstone course in Community and Behavioral Health was first offered in fall of 2013. Five of the six students (83%) enrolled met the standard.

### Closing the Loop and Next Steps

Bibliographic instruction clearly is helpful. Unfortunately, it is becoming more difficult to provide as the number of librarians has decreased due to retirements and budgetary constraints.



Also, information literacy assessment as a basic skill needs to be *systematically* assessed in capstone courses across the discipline. The newly hired library director met with the English 101 (Introduction to Freshmen Composition) lecturers in fall 2015 to initiate a discussion for bibliographic instruction and in fall 2015, all First Year Seminar students received instruction on identifying scholarly resources, an overview of scholarly communication, and critical analysis of sources. An information literacy assessment was then required as part of the course grade and course requirement in all courses, and the results are currently being analyzed to assess baseline information literacy competency in incoming freshmen. The results of this analysis will be used to inform future information literacy efforts for all SUNY Poly students.

### **Critical Thinking**

Much like information management, critical thinking is a skill that transverses the disciplines. For this area of basic skills, assessment of critical thinking was carried out across a number of areas of General Education and across the discipline. Goal 4 for Natural Science general education addresses critical thinking and critical thinking was also assessed in the Sociology General Education courses. Additionally critical thinking was assessed in the capstone course in Psychology in 2009, 2011 and 2013.

### Assessment Results

Benchmarks for critical thinking were met for one of the Science courses. Eighty-eight percent of the students enrolled in the Biology class were able to make an argument for the benefits and risks of utilizing scientific information for various purposes. The chemistry class did not meet the benchmark. A large part of this result is explained by the applied nature of the course. Although the syllabus is designed to meet the General Education guidelines set by the SUNY Board of Trustees, the chemistry course in particular is taken by students who have a need for specific knowledge for their major program field, and the course instructors have taught with the highest emphasis on addressing those needs. As assessment has brought out the deficit in meeting the General Education criteria, the courses are being modified to increase time spent on those criteria and also that the assessment properly evaluates those areas of learning.

Sociology classes were assessed from fall 2007 until spring 2013. Three assignments were used to assess the ability to apply the sociological perspective and make an argument by bringing together the relevant sociological facts. Two of the three assignments resulted in students meeting the benchmark. Interestingly, the students were better able to make arguments when the exercise involved experiential learning.

Assessment of critical thinking in Psychology was assessed in 2007. At that time students enrolled in the seminar approached but did not totally meet the standard bar of 80%. Alterations were made to the course and to the program. Students were reassessed in 2009, 2011 and 2013.

Performance improved significantly and students have consistently met the benchmark in the last five years.

### Next Steps

Competency in critical thinking is an essential skill for students and while, assessment data indicate an improvement in some of the classes, more emphasis on critical thinking needs to happen throughout General Education offerings. Additionally, critical thinking needs to be reinforced within the discipline and systematically assessed. Next steps to include:

1. Discuss with general education coordinator strategies for infusing critical thinking more consistently throughout the general education curriculum.
2. Continue to systematically embed and assess critical thinking assessments within the majors.

### **Conclusions**

Assessment of General Education continues to progress at the SUNY Poly Utica site and the courses dedicated to General Education continue to be revised based on assessment results at the SUNY Poly Utica site. One challenge to assessment of General Education is that a high percentage of General Education courses are taught by adjuncts, in some areas up to 100%. Supervision of adjuncts is not always clearly assigned to specific program coordinators (as in areas that do not have an associated program), and although the number of required General Education courses has grown with each new program and increased enrollment, all full-time tenure-track lines in the last decade have been given only for programmatic needs, not for General Education staffing. The recent reorganization of the institution back into colleges has re-consolidated all General Education areas into one college, which may improve advocacy for resources at the institutional level. Additionally, as of spring 2016, courses including courses in General Education will be reviewed on a yearly basis. This will allow for more timely feedback and revisions of courses as needed. Programmatic General Education review for each of the areas will still take place in a three year cycle but will have data from all of the classes offered in the area for three years to make decisions for a more global program review of General Education.

### **General Education – Albany Site**

The Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) were, until mid-2014, part of the University at Albany (UAlbany). CNSE as part of UAlbany participated in a full MSCHE reaccreditation visit in 2010. CNSE's faculty was active in UAlbany governance and was active participants on the campus committees that produced UAlbany's Self-Study Report.

At the time of the 2010 reaccreditation visit CNSE's new undergraduate programs had just begun with the first class of students admitted and enrolled for spring 2010. All students were UAlbany students, and followed SUNY/UAlbany General Education requirements. In August 2015, CNSE

welcomed its first class of undergraduates admitted as SUNY Polytechnic Institute students. Therefore, CNSE met the criteria for reaccreditation as part of UAlbany in 2010, which includes any courses for the General Education Program. Current second year through senior year students follow SUNY General Education through UAlbany.

The Basic Communication (written and oral discourse) and the Critical Thinking and Information Management competencies are embedded throughout the Nanoscale Engineering and Nanoscale science major curriculum and are specifically approved by SUNY for the three-semester Capstone Requirement.

In order to graduate with a Nanoscale Engineering major or Nanoscale Science major a student needs to complete three of the following general education categories: American History, Western Civilization, Other World Civilizations, Humanities, The Arts, or Foreign Languages. With one exception, the student may use a course that applies to more than one General Education category to meet all of the categories satisfied by that course. The one exception is no student may use one course to meet both the Arts and the Humanities requirements.

Since all mathematics requirements in the major, all nanoscale science (N SCI) and all nanoscale engineering (N ENG) courses except N ENG 405, 408, 411, and 444 are designated by SUNY as Liberal Arts and Sciences Courses, students will automatically meet the liberal arts requirement within the major.

Data from fall 2014 CNSE majors enrollments in General Education courses show a trend toward taking art history courses (n=22) to fulfill the arts requirement through UAlbany. Music performance classes were the next highest enrollment (also meeting The Arts, n=9), followed by Roman history (n=6), religious studies (n=5), English literature (n=3), philosophy (n=3), Spanish language (n=3), and Theatre (n=2). These data will inform SUNY Poly in the hiring of additional liberal arts faculty in the future. In addition, a senior faculty member at the Albany site created a course for students in Albany that SUNY approved as meeting Natural Science and either Arts or Humanities. The course **NNSE 239**, “Between Object and Image” is designed to integrate interests in science and the humanities or the arts. The course has been offered twice and was extremely popular in both offerings. It is the *only* course within SUNY to meet Natural Science, and The Arts or Humanities requirements. It was felt that students need to see where disciplines intersect, how those intersect and that studying the intersection can provide fruitful inquiry and new knowledge. This course will be available to students at the Utica site.

### **Assessment of General Education Courses – Albany Site**

The assessment of all of CNSE’s General Education courses is the embedded status of the courses in the engineering curriculum. Modes of learning, theoretical knowledge gained is used at every level, culminating in senior project course sequence which requires highly developed skills in

natural sciences, mathematics, and social sciences and also requires the student to demonstrate Critical Thinking skills gained for meeting the written and oral discourse and information management requirements.

### **Recommendations**

- Develop a standardized method for assessing general education learning outcomes at the Albany site.
- Provide additional resources for program and area coordinators to oversee assessment planning and data collection for General Education.

# Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

*“The institution’s programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.”*

SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 13.

The principal related educational activities utilized at SUNY Poly include:

- Online learning
- Clinical placements
- Educational Opportunity Program

## **Online Learning**

Currently, online learning is the main auxiliary educational method used at SUNY Poly but is not the primary mission of the Institution. In 2008-09, online and hybrid sections accounted for 10% (65/631, fall '08) of courses offered and approximately 12% (1186/9660 seats) of enrollment. By 2014-15, the corresponding figures were approximately 26% (169/631) of courses offered and 30% (3172/10643 seats) enrollment. In this self-study, SUNY Poly paid particular attention to online course offerings and the extent to which these are being assessed and, where applicable, compared to face-to-face courses. Currently, fully online programs are offered in Health Information Management, Nursing Education, Information Design and Technology, and Accountancy. The online offerings for these degree programs are consistent with the target audience and the mission and vision of the programs. Programs not offering any online courses include Civil Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Electrical Engineering Technology, Computer Engineering Technology, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and the M.S. in Network Computer Security. Remaining programs offer some online courses, not all of which are also offered in a face-to-face format. Whether to offer a course online in programs that are not totally online is sometimes the decision of the individual faculty member, and is sometimes driven by the needs of the department as decided by the department chair and program faculty.

Training in teaching online has been provided by “Open SUNY” (formerly the SUNY Learning Network) supplemented by workshops provided by institutional IT staff. [Appendix 13.1](#) provides a listing of the training workshops offered during the 2014-15 academic year. When the then SUNY IT began teaching online, SUNY required mandatory training, but that requirement was

dropped by SUNY and training then became voluntary. Online orientation has been developed especially for distance learning students. It has proved to be very effective and is being expanded to serve all students.

### **Assessment of Online Learning**

Student learning outcomes for online learning are assessed via measures such as case studies, research papers, discussion posts, reflection papers, exams that reflect the performance indicators, and pre- and post-tests, in the same way they are assessed for face-to-face classes. The results of the assessment are used to make necessary changes in the online curriculum and the program. For some programs (Business, Nursing and HIM) licensing exams and outside reviewers serve as further validation of program quality. For example, all HIM courses have an online component that includes didactic information as well as student assessment instruments, and students take a national certification exam upon program completion. The program faculty receive reports from the testing agency regarding the student success rate; the reports are broken down by the entry-level competency areas in the curriculum of the accredited program; and the program faculty use the reports as part of their course and program assessment process.

For those programs that offer the same course in both face-to-face and online formats, only the B.S. in Network and Computer Systems and Nursing have reported comparative outcomes. In the computer science area lectures in those classes use video capture to ensure that the content is comparable across both formats. Courses in the Computer and Information Science and Computer Information Systems programs taught both online and face-to-face also use common syllabi and common exams. Nursing 314 (Health Assessment) also compared online to face-to-face using the same syllabi. The results of these limited studies indicate that online instruction was comparable to face-to-face instruction. However, the self-study helped identify a gap in assessment, and the institution will, in future, include comparison of student learning outcomes across online and face-to-face formats for the same course. Faculty are currently exploring the possibility of using additional features of the IDEA course evaluation forms to make some of these comparisons.

The Utica-site faculty governance technology committee has been examining online learning for the last few years, and has made several recommendations to enhance the quality of online learning. For example, the committee recommended the creation of a standing Faculty Assembly committee for online learning to focus on online pedagogy, as the existing campus committee concerned with online learning on campus was constituted primarily to focus on technical support. This was established as the Distance Learning Committee in fall 2014. Also, the committee has recommended the creation of a new position for a Director of Distance Learning. This individual would provide the necessary oversight and academic leadership to ensure that online learning is aligned with the college's strategic mission and goals, that growth is strategic,

planned, and compliant with accreditation standards and federal law. The resulting search is presently in the final stage of selecting finalists for on-campus interviews.

### **Integrity of Online Learning Offerings**

SUNY Poly utilizes procedures both to limit access to only registered students and to insure identity for on-line exams when required. From a technological standpoint, SUNY Poly's online/distance courses are offered on the Blackboard learning management system operated by Open SUNY, formerly the SUNY Learning Network (SLN). The Banner student information system, LDAP authentication system and Blackboard learning management system control each student's access to their online courses in Blackboard. The process begins with the creation of the students' unique record in our Banner system when they apply.

Banner creates the student's unique computer/network account (SITNet ID). The SITNet ID must be activated before it can be used for authentication on any computer and network system including Blackboard. The first time the student logs in to Banner after the SITNet ID has been created, an activation process is invoked. It includes creation of a secure password, a security question and answer, acceptance of the Statement of Responsibility Agreement and acceptance of the Computer and Network Statement of Responsibility agreement. When the process has been completed, the student's SITNet ID is displayed on the screen and their account is enabled on the LDAP authentication system. The Registrar's office controls the overall process, which is managed by the Information Technology Systems department.

Banner contains all student information relevant to courses and enrollments. Blackboard is updated three times a day with Banner data for student accounts, courses and course enrollments (add, drops, withdraw). Students must log in to Blackboard with their SITNet ID to access their Blackboard course(s). User tracking is enabled in online courses, allowing student activity in the course to be identified by user name and IP address. In addition, some courses require students to use an online proctor service with web cams and proctors for online exams.

The policies for use of the SITNet ID are contained in the Acceptable Use Policy, Password Policy, Statement of Responsibility Agreement, and the Computer and Network Statement of Responsibility.

### **Faculty Governance of Online Learning**

SUNY Poly was an early participant in online learning, with online courses beginning in 1998. At that time SUNY System Administration tightly controlled course offerings and structure. Faculty members who wished to teach online were required to go through a SUNY-provided training course before they were given a course shell environment. The campus, therefore, used the SUNY learning system for faculty training. In 2007, that requirement was relaxed to a recommendation, and campus enforcement of the training was given to the deans to ensure that

their faculty went through SUNY training prior to teaching online. In that same year, the then SUNY IT also hired an online learning Instructional Designer whose main function was pedagogical and technical assistance for faculty teaching online courses. When that position became vacant in 2012, some of the technical duties associated with that position shifted to the campus LMS administrator, and many of the faculty training duties were transferred to a new position of Instructional Technologist. The campus has also hosted brief training sessions in the Quality Matters rubric. Currently, the increase in online offerings has resulted in the decision to search for a Director of Online Learning, who will report to the Provost.

The oversight of online courses is as similar to face-to-face courses as possible. Development of courses is handled through the governance curriculum committee(s), and the same IDEA evaluations are used for assessment as for face-to-face courses. Faculty loads are counted the same whether a class is face-to-face or online, and class sizes are kept small in keeping with best practices recommendations for online learning. There is a standing committee of the faculty governance body for technology issues including those related to online learning, and that committee constitutes part of the membership of a campus-wide technology group that also includes members of the instructional technology office such as the campus LMS administrator. This committee was the group that recommended that a Director of Online Learning position be created, and that recommendation was approved by the faculty governance as a whole before being sent to the administration.

Due to the increase in oversight needs that has accompanied online course growth, the Utica faculty governance group created a separate standing committee for online learning in the spring of 2014. One goal for this group is to develop policies and procedures for issues that are unique to online learning, such as how to conduct an evaluation “classroom visits” to maintain parity with the parameters of classroom visits in face-to-face courses.

### **Institutional Support for Online Learning**

The institution provides support for online instruction through a number of different venues offered through SUNY Learning Network (SLN). These venues include: an on-demand course for using the Learning Management System (LMS), recorded workshop webinars, online learning websites, online library resources, 24/7 online knowledge base of “how to” articles for instructors, and the LMS help desk. On-campus support for instructors is provided by the ITS/User Services department and includes workshops [Appendix 13.1](#)), assistance with instructional design, assistance incorporating technology in courses, assistance using network resources, and special instructor requests. During the past two years, a number of faculty members have been granted stipends for the purpose of developing online courses during the summers. In this way, for example, fully online nursing degree programs have been developed.



Support for online students is provided with an online readiness quiz, an on-demand online LMS orientation course to teach students how to use the LMS, online new student orientation to the college, 24/7 online access to reference librarians, online library resources, 24/7 online tutoring services, online learning website, LMS help desk that is open extended hours, and 24/7 online knowledge base of “how to” articles for students.

### **Clinical Placements and Practica**

The Nursing curriculum requires clinical experiences and, often, a practicum. SUNY Poly has employed a person whose main focus is arranging clinical experiences and practica. Monitoring of student performance has not been problematic, but is labor intensive on the part of faculty members.

### **Internships**

Many internships are arranged to provide senior project activity. The academic aspects of such activities are overseen by faculty members. These have proved to be exceptional learning experiences for students.

### **Articulated Joint Programs**

The nursing department has a dual degree partnership with the St. Elizabeth College of Nursing in Utica, N.Y. Students take coursework at SUNY Poly their first and last years. The program is jointly reviewed by both colleges ([Appendix 13.2](#)). Practica and clinical evaluations include feedback from the preceptor/employer, site visits by faculty, and taped scenarios. Courses in this program are assessed with other courses in the department, and are not treated differently from the other departmental offerings.

### **Courses at Other Locations**

The Nursing department has historically offered courses at alternate locations, in Watertown and Ulster. These were taught by the same nursing faculty as at the main campus, or were adjuncts hired by and supervised by those faculty. Courses used the same syllabi as those on the main campus. These programs have recently been discontinued.

### **Non-credit Remedial Courses**

SUNY Poly does not routinely admit students who are obviously unprepared for college study; the lowest allowed GPA for admittance is 2.0; the majority are 2.5, and many are moving towards 2.75. In the past, remedial courses have been offered in writing. Placement testing has recently been re-implemented in mathematics for the purpose of guiding student selection of mathematics courses. That testing indicated that several students were admitted who were unprepared for any currently offered mathematics courses, and there is one remedial mathematics course offered to bring those students to the level of preparation they need for the credit-bearing math courses. Going forward, admissions screening will be conducted to ensure all admitted

students are properly qualified. Other students, especially those who are “special admits,” such as some student athletes and some in the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), do not have remedial classes, but are assisted outside of class in several ways. These are described in more detail in the response to Standard 9.

### **Educational Opportunity Program**

SUNY Poly’s Educational Opportunity Program has a long standing history of supporting academically and economically disadvantaged students who show promise and ability. The program provides students with financial assistance, tutoring, counseling and enrichment programming. The program currently supports 58 students and offers a 10-day summer program for the first-year EOP students prior to the start of the semester. The summer program has been successful as demonstrated by first-year retention rates for EOP students which has exceeded 90% for the past two years.

### **CSTEP (Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program)**

SUNY Poly recently received funding to implement a CSTEP program at both sites. The program accommodates 40 under-represented students enrolled in the programs leading to professional licensure and/or programs in mathematics, science, technology and health-related fields.

### **Recommendations**

- Formalize training for faculty teaching online with regard to pedagogy and learning management system proficiency
- Consolidate assessment for online learning instructor and student support under the Director of Online Learning
- Develop policies through the appropriate governance committees that ensure that online and face-to-face courses are equivalent with regard to outcomes and assessment

# Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

*“Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution’s students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.”*

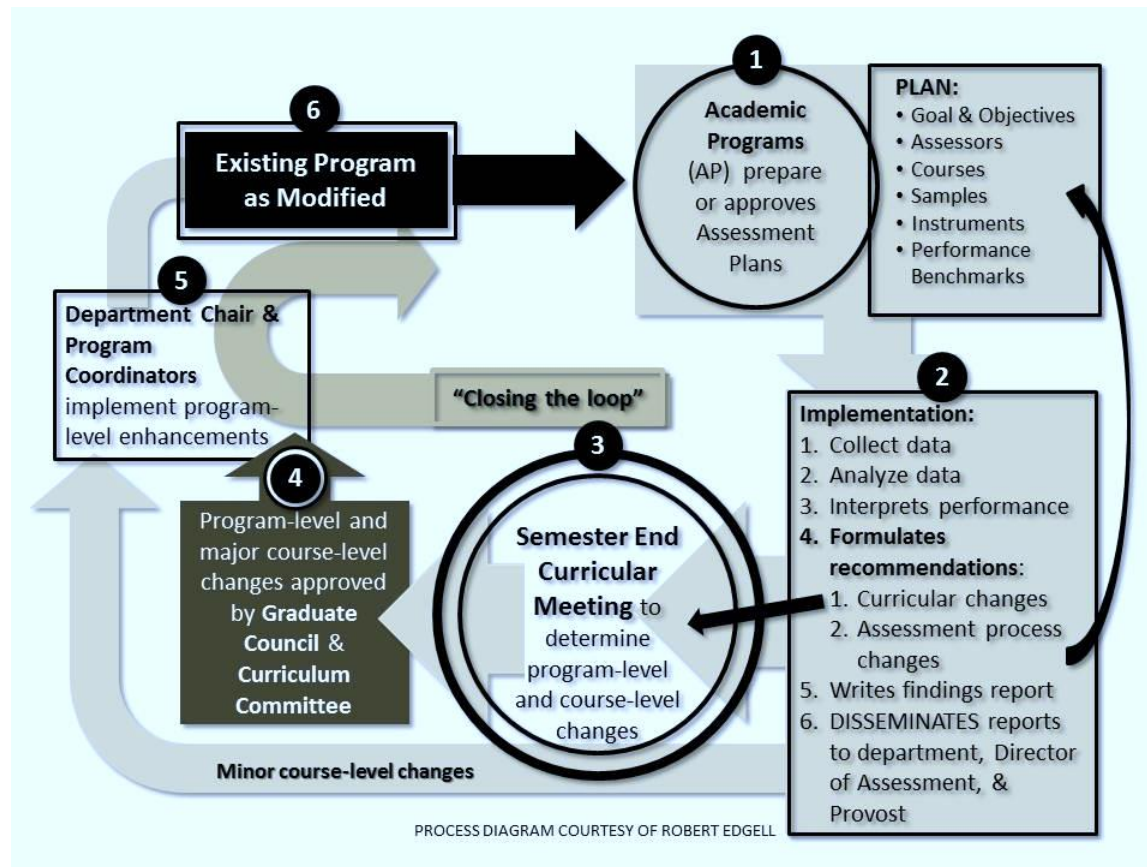
SUNY Poly is in compliance with Standard 14.

## **Background Information**

SUNY Polytechnic Institute came into existence in August 2014 with the merger of SUNY IT and CNSE. The former SUNY IT had been engaged in assessing student learning outcomes since 1991 as part of a broader SUNY-wide initiative to ensure the quality of undergraduate education. At that time, all academic programs were required to create assessment plans that included program goals, assessment measures and timeframes for assessment. Programs were then instructed to carry out the plans and use the data obtained to make changes to curriculum and courses, and an ad hoc assessment committee (the Academic Quality Committee) was charged with overseeing the assessment of student learning. In April 2008, that committee became a standing committee of the Faculty Assembly. It is always chaired by a teaching faculty member. This committee is charged with periodically reviewing all program and general education assessment plans and reports on the Utica site. The director of assessment is an *ex-officio* member of the committee and the chair serves on the Institutional Assessment Committee, thereby maintaining open channels of communication between the academic units and the other components of the institution.

The Albany site’s student learning outcomes activity was largely guided by the assessment standards and processes of SUNY Albany. Since the merger, faculty from the Utica and Albany sites have worked together to formulate a student learning outcome assessment process that meets the standards of both Middle States and ABET. The formal process from the Utica site has been adopted at the Albany site to better inform course-level as well as programmatic adjustments. Figure 14.1 provides a visual representation of the general assessment process employed at SUNY Poly.

Figure 14.1 – Continuous Improvement Model



### Current Assessment Process: Utica Site

SUNY Poly has a defined mission and strategic plan that guides the functioning of the academic and nonacademic units of the institution (see response to Standard 1). Academic programs have a set of goals defining the general learning outcomes expected of students at the time of graduation, and the goals are further described by a set of measureable objectives, which are mapped to the mission of the institution and to program courses. For ABET accredited programs, the assessment plans also include program educational objectives, which are broad statements of the educational expectations five years past graduation. Program assessment plans also include timelines and assessment measures. [Appendix 7.5](#) contains the assessment plans for the non-accredited majors offered at the Utica site. For programs that are accredited the full reports, including assessment methodology, are available in the resource room.

Academic assessment takes place on a course and program level. Individual courses are reviewed annually, and all non-accredited programs undergo full assessments on a five-year cycle. Accredited programs are reviewed on a schedule specified by the accrediting body. General education courses are assessed according to a separate set of criteria, and service courses that are

provided by one discipline solely as cognate courses for another are jointly assessed by both disciplines. At the institutional level, the Faculty Assembly Academic Quality Committee reviews all programs on a five-year cycle ([Appendix 14.1](#)).

To assess outcomes, multiple measures are employed including student perceptions of progress on outcomes measured by the IDEA Evaluations collected each semester, homework, quizzes, exams and papers graded with pre-designed rubrics, embedded measures contained in mid-term and final exams, practicum supervisor evaluations, focus group data, advisory board feedback and employer surveys. At the program level, faculty are responsible for ongoing assessment activities in their courses and programs. Each academic year, course syllabi are reviewed to ensure that they contain relevant course goals and student learning outcomes. Program faculty also meet to discuss the previous year’s course offerings to determine whether any modifications in scheduling, resource allocation, or course content are warranted. These assessments have led to modifications at both the course and program level. Table 14a contains a **sample** of course level or program level modifications made as a result of the assessment process. [Appendix 7.5](#) provides the full gamut of assessment results gathered from the non-accredited disciplines during this past academic year. The resource room houses the historical records for the program level and general education assessment conducted over the last ten years. The reports for accredited programs, which include assessment results and closing the loop plans, are available in the resource room.

*Table 14a – Closing the Loop: Recent Samples from Disciplines*

Program Area	Assessment Measure(s)	Assessment Results	Closing the loop intervention	Re-assessment results
<b>Psychology</b>	Final papers graded by a rubric for capstone course  Faculty feedback and observations  Course level reviews which include embedded measures	Weakness identified in (2005)writing, critical thinking and application skills	Writing expectations set for 100, 200, 300, and 400 level courses. Multiple drafts used and incorporated service-based learning into relevant courses	Major improvement noted since 2007in student learning outcomes for each of these three areas as measured in capstone course. However, writing and statistics are still a struggle for many of our students. COM 308 and statistics are under review presently. Adding APA

				module to Research Methods course. Re-assess in Spring 2016
<b>Sociology</b>	Program assessment tool involving responses to two essays. Conducted in Spring of 2015	Most students met the quantitative analysis section, expectation was set rather low and the average student just passed with a 3 out of 4.	Require college math in addition to statistics for the major.	Will re-assess intervention in Spring 2016. Curriculum prerequisite to include statistics as a requirement for SOC 332
<b>Community and Behavioral Health (CBH)</b>	Focus group held with students enrolled in capstone course Course level reviews of core courses Rubric graded final paper and project	Focus group Identified a number of areas for program improvement: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand access to NVIVO to facilitate qualitative data analysis</li> <li>2. Create mixed method projects using both quantitative and qualitative data</li> <li>3. Experiences with COM 308 did not prepare them well for writing in the social science disciplines.</li> <li>4. Begin interviews and data collection earlier</li> </ol> <p>Course level reviews and rubric result review of major projects corroborated the focus group feedback. Writing and quantitative methodology were identified as weaknesses. Faculty</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dr. Tichenor has contacted the director of IT, who is now working to expand the site license so the software will be available beyond the library lab room.</li> <li>2. Created a mixed method project for the 15-16 capstone course. The students will be using a mixed method approach to evaluate <i>Camp Abilities</i> for the Central Association for the Blind (service-based learning project).</li> <li>3. Faculty are looking for additional writing support. To that end a writing intensive component has been added to</li> </ol>	Will re-assess all of the interventions in Spring of 2016

		used opportunity to re-teach and strengthen writing skills and as a result final projects did meet the benchmark standards.	the new core course. 4. CBH 492 was revamped to allow for earlier interviews.	
<b>Communication and Information Design</b>	Course level reviews which included embedded measures involving papers, assignments and projects	Results reported as outcomes and outcomes mapped to course objectives. Results indicate that 50-75% the students are performing at a C or better level in each of the courses on each of the outcomes.	A number of course level recommendations were made. Some representative examples include: Increasing the number of critiques, include JavaScript and/or packages to allow students to understand and develop WordPress-based website.	Re-assess in Spring 2016.
<b>Interdisciplinary Studies</b>	Course level reviews which included embedded measures involving papers, assignments and projects. Faculty also met and reviewed curriculum and course level reviews. Capstone project course also evaluated although the number of students enrolled in the course (3) prohibits any major conclusions.	Course level results indicate a range from 39% of students meeting the benchmarks set for course objectives to 100%.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide fewer theorists for each unit and more depth rather than a survey approach.</li> <li>2. Mandating draft positions of the paper.</li> <li>3. Introducing interdisciplinary methodology into IDS 400.</li> <li>4. Increase the emphasis on the comparison and connections between theoretical perspectives.</li> </ol>	Re-assess in Spring 2016
<b>Computer Engineering Technology</b>	Used exam questions, projects and home works	In general students met the benchmarks set for each of the courses. In cases where they did not (eg. CET 416), the assessment or	Curriculum for CET 416 altered to increase time spent on ISO network 7 layers.	Reassess the next time course is offered.

		curriculum was addressed.		
<b>Mechanical Engineering Technology MTC 362</b>	Rubric graded final exam	Benchmarks met for some but not all of the benchmarks set for performance indicators.	Overall students do not draw effective FBDs, and this is consistent with the assessment in MTC 308, Mechanical Components, during the same semester. Enhance FBD lectures and emphasize the importance in homework and quizzes.	Re assess when course is offered again as part of continuous improvement and course level assessment.
<b>Electrical Engineering Technology ETC 102</b>	Rubric graded final exam question	Students failed to meet the benchmark	Changes were made to presentation notes and homework.	Re-assessed in 2013, marked improvement in performance due to these changes but benchmarks still not met. Other changes to the assignments were made and will be re-assessed the next time the course is offered.
<b>Computer Science</b>	Feedback obtained from advisory board members and industry supervisors for project based learning in senior capstone course.	Feedback obtained from both advisory board and project based supervisors was very positive.	Faculty are addressing the assessment measures used and working on measures that are more direct to assess senior level capstone course.	Re-assess in Spring 2016
<b>Nursing</b>	Nur 652 literature review graded with a rubric	Students failed to meet the benchmark	Faculty provided further instruction on appropriate literature reviews.	Re –evaluated after review and 90% of students met the benchmark. Faculty are currently discussing how to improve the writing in the graduate program.



<b>Business</b>	Bus 485 evaluated by standardized test	66% of the students met the standard.	Increase student practice of quantitative calculations and financial ratio proportions. Students will work more with GLO-bus simulation calculations.	Reassess the next time course is offered.
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### **Assessment – Albany Site**

Until the merger of the Albany and Utica sites of SUNY Poly, the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (now two SUNY Poly Colleges) followed the academic assessment procedures for courses, programs and general education of SUNY Albany. Graduate programs at the Albany site utilize written qualifying exams taken at the end of the first year of the program as one form of assessment. Qualifying exam results are analyzed and fed back into program and course improvement. The structure and content of qualifying exams has also been modified based on feedback from faculty and outside advisors and student participants. Similarly, the thesis/report structure provides assessment of student learning outcomes particularly with regard to research skills and the contribution of new knowledge to the science and engineering community. However, large scale data collection from these assessment points has not yet been undertaken; the Graduate Academic Council at the Albany site is currently reviewing best practices in preparation for establishing a formal assessment process.

The undergraduate Nanoscale Engineering program at the Albany site has begun the assessment process in preparation for seeking ABET accreditation. Courses integral to the Nanoscale Engineering degree have all identified student learning outcomes in their syllabi, and are being collated into the program learning objectives for the next stage of the assessment cycle. The remaining programs at the Albany site are in the process of developing assessment procedures and rubrics for regular assessment. Procedures are being developed in conjunction with best practices and procedures developed at the Utica site.

### **Evaluation of Assessment Process and Data**

Assessment on the SUNY Poly campus has been evolving, and student learning outcomes have been the focal point for assessment activities. Presently, most of the course syllabi include statements about student learning outcomes, and most programs, including the general education areas, have assessment plans. Many of the undergraduate academic programs and graduate courses offered in business and nursing have had at least one cycle of assessment and are closing the loop when deficits have been identified. SUNY Poly is now in the process of refining the assessment process by ensuring that all courses are being assessed on a yearly basis and that direct as well as indirect measures are being used in the process (see [Appendix 14.2](#)) for course level and program level review templates). Faculty are reviewing assessment measures for both validity and reliability, and are adjusting measures based on the data obtained from the assessment process. While changes in the curriculum have always been based on some form of

assessment, assessment is now formally driving decisions and changes. The goal to reach 100% participation from all programs. For this to happen, the culture of assessment needs to be deepened. Several strategies have been implemented to encourage formal, routine engagement in assessment. For example, faculty at the Utica site designated a specific time at the end of the 2014-2015 academic year dedicated to assessment activities. All academic units were asked to report on changes in program goals, course level changes and program level changes made as the result of assessment. Table 14b provides the end of the year template used for assessment reporting. [Appendix 7.5](#) contains the end of the year assessment reports received from each of the academic units. Other strategies include making assessment activities an academic expectation, continually highlighting assessment through regular faculty workshops and presentations and creating an assessment manual (currently in draft form awaiting review by the SUNY Poly assessment committee) available to faculty on both sites.

*Table 14b – End of Year Program Review Template*

<b>End of the Academic Year Review of Program: Template</b>
1. Review of program goals including goals and objectives related to student learning outcomes.
2. Review of curricular mapping. Curriculum mapping involves mapping individual course offerings to the goals and objectives related to student learning outcomes. This may include adding or dropping courses from the curriculum or changes in course prerequisites.
3. Review of course level outcomes for courses taught during the academic year. Report the changes made to individual courses based on course level assessments (closing the loop). If changes were made to a course during the previous academic year, report on assessment results involving those changes.
4. Review capstone courses and other program level assessments (i.e. advisory board feedback, student exit surveys, employer surveys, licensure pass rates, retention and recruitment statistics, first destination survey, alumni feedback). Report on findings and actions, including actions that are extracurricular to be taken by the program to improve program and student learning outcomes (closing the loop).

Similar efforts to establish a culture of assessment for all courses and programs at the Albany site are underway. An assessment coordinator was identified and several assessment workshops were provided for the faculty. The Colleges of Nanoscale Engineering and Technology Innovation and Nanoscale Science are in the process of creating assessment plans. The goal is for those plans to be completed by spring 2016 and the departments will collect assessment data in fall 2016. These data will be used to make changes in the following academic year.

To ensure the authenticity of the assessment, programs at the Utica site make use of advisory boards comprised of individuals actively working in the profession. They provide feedback on the content validity of both the curriculum and of the assessments. For example, the psychology department used both academicians and professionals in the field to review assignments in the capstone course. The inter-rater reliability of the reviewers (0.92) is acceptable and is evidence

that the assessment is reliable. The feedback on the content of the curriculum, as well as the nature of the assessment provides evidence that skills, competencies and knowledge base align.

### **Other Direct Assessment Measures**

Other direct measures of student learning outcomes include pass rates on licensure exams and supervisor ratings for practicums, clinical placements and internships. Licensure pass rates are provided to the Institution for Health Information Management (HIM). The national pass rate for the exam is 75%; SUNY Poly average pass rate is 79%. In 2014, the Nursing pass rates on the NCLEX licensing exam was 100% for the 1-2-1 program (national rate 85%); 98% of the Family Nurse Practitioners passed their licensing board exams (national pass rate 88%). Pass rates for 2015 are not yet available. The Business department does not receive licensure pass rates for any of their programs. They are currently investigating a mechanism to acquire the information.

Programs that involve practicum, clinical placements and credit bearing internships typically solicit the feedback of on-site supervisors regarding student competence, skills, and level of professionalism. The feedback is used by the program as part of their program reviews.

### **Indirect Assessment Measures**

Completion rates, student opinion survey results and alumni reports on job placements and graduate admittance are indirect measures of student learning outcomes. SUNY provides each of its constituent campuses with 6-year completion rates. [Appendix 14.3](#) represents a summary of SUNY Poly completion rates for the various cohort years and the most recent Student Opinion Survey (SOS). The average 6 year graduation rates for the entering 2009 freshmen cohort is 49% (100/203), the national average is 57.7 and SUNY comprehensive college sector average is 62%. These results along with the poor SOS findings for quality of instruction, difficulty financing college education, and access to computing have prompted the Institution to investigate further the reasons behind the poor completion rates and SOS results. To this end, a retention retreat is being planned for spring 2016 at which time, the campus community will address these issues and formulate strategies to deal with them. The Institutional Effectiveness committee and the Academic Quality Committee are also evaluating the findings and considering strategies to close the loop. The Albany site graduation rates are significantly higher than rates at the Utica site due to the specialized nature of the programs, high admissions criteria, and student-to-faculty ratios.

The issue of computing and wireless access is already being addressed. Wireless access for students in residence halls has been problematic with students experiencing poor services. Due to these issues, SUNY Poly has allocated funds and begun the process to completely upgrade the dorm wireless infrastructure. This project is due to be completed in January 2016. At the same time the campus internet backbone will be upgraded to a 1 GB connection from its existing 300mb connection to support additional video and student services on the site.

Research has established the efficacy of high impact learning strategies as a way of improving instruction and completion rates. SUNY Poly has proposed a High Impact Learning and Teaching Center to provide faculty with additional support inside and outside of the classroom. [Appendix 11.1](#) contains the white paper proposal for the Center. The Center will augment pedagogical practices.

The First Destination Survey is designed to assess job and graduate school placement. The survey is sent to the previous academic year graduates each year in September. Only 72 responses were received from the 2014 graduation cohort. Sixty-seven of the respondents were gainfully employed in a variety of areas including: health care (19), business administration (9), education (9), engineering (9), human service (4), manufacturing (4), retail (6), government (4), finance (1), and computer science (2). The First Destination Survey will be administered by the office of Career Services in the future and the SUNY Poly Utica site is also collecting career and placement data from graduates at commencement. These strategies will hopefully enhance the data collected on graduate placements. The resource room contains results of the First Destination Survey for the last few years.

### **Recommendations**

- Enhance the culture of assessment by:
  - Competing assessment manual by May of 2016
  - Incorporating assessment activities as part of the orientation for new faculty
  - Establishing an assessment activity day once per academic year
- Pursue ABET accreditation for mechanical engineering, civil engineering, computer science and nanoscale engineering as soon as eligible, and have in place an assessment plan along with a full cycle of assessment for nanoscale science and engineering by 2017
- Evaluate a data collection systems for assessment automation, and provide recommendations to the administration regarding acquisition of such as system