COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

Institutional Self-Study

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Submitted to:

New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Commission on Institutes of Higher Education

2007

2004-2007 SELF-STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE

Ken Hill	Academic dean, co-chair; faculty member
Karen Waldron	Associate and former academic dean, co-chair; faculty member
Judy Allen	Director of information technology and institutional research
Sarah Baker	Dean of admission
David Baldwin	Registrar
Andrew Campbell	Former associate dean of student life
Barbara Carter	Faculty assistant
Brett Ciccotelli	Student
Nikhit d'Sa	Student
Dave Feldman	Former associate dean of academic affairs; faculty member
Amy Hoffmaster	Student
Juan Hoffmaister	Student
Nick Jenei	Student
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2004-2007 SELF-STUDY CONTRIBUTORS

Standard One:	Dave Feldman, Anna Murphy, David Hales
Standard Two:	Ken Hill, David Hales
Standard Three:	Bonnie Tai, Andrew Campbell, John Anderson, Steve Milliken, Sam Hamill, Karen Waldron, Ken Hill, David Hales
Standard Four:	Dave Feldman, Karen Waldron
Standard Five:	Karen Waldron, Faculty Personnel Committee
Standard Six:	Sarah Luke, Andrew Campbell
Standard Seven:	Judy Allen, Jane Hultberg, Karen Waldron
Standard Eight:	Millard Dority, Andy Griffiths, Steve Milliken, Ken Hill
Standard Nine:	Andy Griffiths
Standard Ten:	Sarah Baker, Ken Hill
Standard Eleven:	Ken Hill
Editors:	Karen Waldron, Ken Hill, David Hales
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In addition, under the oversight of Chairman Sam Hamill, members of the board provided input and board perspective for designated standards. Special thanks to Sam Hamill Lissa Hodder, Steve Milliken, and Sarah McDaniel for their contributions.

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Institutional Characteristics

This form is to be completed and placed at the beginning of the self-study report:

Date: July 27, 2007

1. Corporate name of institution: College of the Atlantic
2. Address (city, state, zip code): 105 Eden Street, Bar Harbor, ME 04609

   Phone: (207) 288-5015 URL of institutional webpage: www.coa.edu
3. Date institution was chartered or authorized: 1969
4. Date institution enrolled first students in degree programs: 1972
5. Date institution awarded first degrees: 1976
6. Type of control: (check)

Public	Private
☐ State	☒ Independent, not-for-profit
☐ City	☐ Religious Group
☐ Other	(Name of Church) _____
(Specify) _____	☐ Proprietary
	☐ Other:
	(Specify) _____

7. By what agency is the institution legally authorized to provide a program of education beyond high school, and what degrees is it authorized to grant? NEASC Bachelor of Arts in Human Ecology and Masters of Philosophy

(Attach a copy of the by-laws, enabling legislation, and/or other appropriate documentation to establish the legal authority of the institution to award degrees in accordance with applicable requirements.)

8. Level of postsecondary offering (check all that apply)

☐ Less than one year of work	☐ First professional degree
☐ At least one but less than two years	☒ Master's and/or work beyond the first professional degree
☐ Diploma or certificate programs of at least two but less than four years	☐ Work beyond the master's level but not at the doctoral level (e.g., Specialist in Education)
☐ Associate degree granting program of at least two years	☐ A doctor of philosophy or equivalent degree
☒ Four or five-year baccalaureate degree granting program	☐ Other _____ Specify _____

9. Type of undergraduate programs (check all that apply)

- ☐ Occupational training at the crafts/clerical level (certificate or diploma)
- ☐ Occupational training at the technical or semi-professional level (degree)
- ☐ Two-year programs designed for full transfer to a baccalaureate degree
- ☒ Liberal arts and general
- ☒ Teacher preparatory
- ☐ Professional
- ☐ Other _____

10. The calendar system at the institution is:

☐ Semester ☐ Quarter ☒ Trimester ☐ Other _____

11. What constitutes the credit hour load for a full-time equivalent (FTE) student each semester?

a) Undergraduate 3 credit hours

b) Graduate 3 credit hours

c) Professional _____ credit hours

12. Student population:

a) Degree-seeking students:

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Full-time student headcount	313	3	316
Part-time student headcount	7	1	8
FTE	317.63	3.33	320.96

b) Number of students (headcount) in non-credit, short-term courses: 0

13. List all programs accredited by a nationally recognized, specialized accrediting agency. List the name of the appropriate agency for each accredited program:

Teaching Certification - Maine State Board of Education

14. Off-campus Locations. List all instructional locations other than the main campus. For each site, indicate whether the location offers full-degree programs, 50% or more of one or more degree programs, or courses only. Record the FTE enrollment for the most recent fall semester. Add more rows as needed.

	Full degrees?	50% or more?	Courses only?	FTE Enrollment
A. In-state Locations				
NA				
B. Out-of-state Locations				
NA				
C. International Locations				
NA				

15. Degrees and certificates offered 50% or more electronically: For each degree or certificate, indicate the level (certificate, associate's, baccalaureate, master's, professional, doctoral), the percent that may be completed on-line, and the number of matriculated students for the most recent fall semester. Enter more rows as needed.

Name of program	Degree level	% on-line	Students
NA			

16. Instruction offered through contractual relationships: For each contractual relationship through which instruction is offered, indicate the name of the contractor, the location of instruction, the program name and degree level, and the percent of the degree that may be completed through the contractual relationship. Enter more rows as needed.

Name of contractor	Location	Name of progarm	Degree level	% of degree
NA				

17. List by name and title the chief administrative officers of the institution. (Use the table provided on the next page.)

18. Supply a table of organization for the institution. While the organization of any institution will depend on its purpose, size and scope of operation, institutional organization usually includes four areas. Although every institution may not have a major administrative division for these areas, the following outline may be helpful in charting and describing the overall administrative organization:

    a) Organization of academic affairs, showing a line of responsibility to president for each department, school division, library, admissions office, and other units assigned to this area;

    b) Organization of student affairs, including health services, student government, intercollegiate activities, and other units assigned to this area;

    c) Organization of finances and business management, including plant operations and maintenance, non-academic personnel administration, auxiliary enterprises, and other units assigned to this area;

    d) Organization of institutional advancement, including fund development, public relations, alumni office and other units assigned to this area.

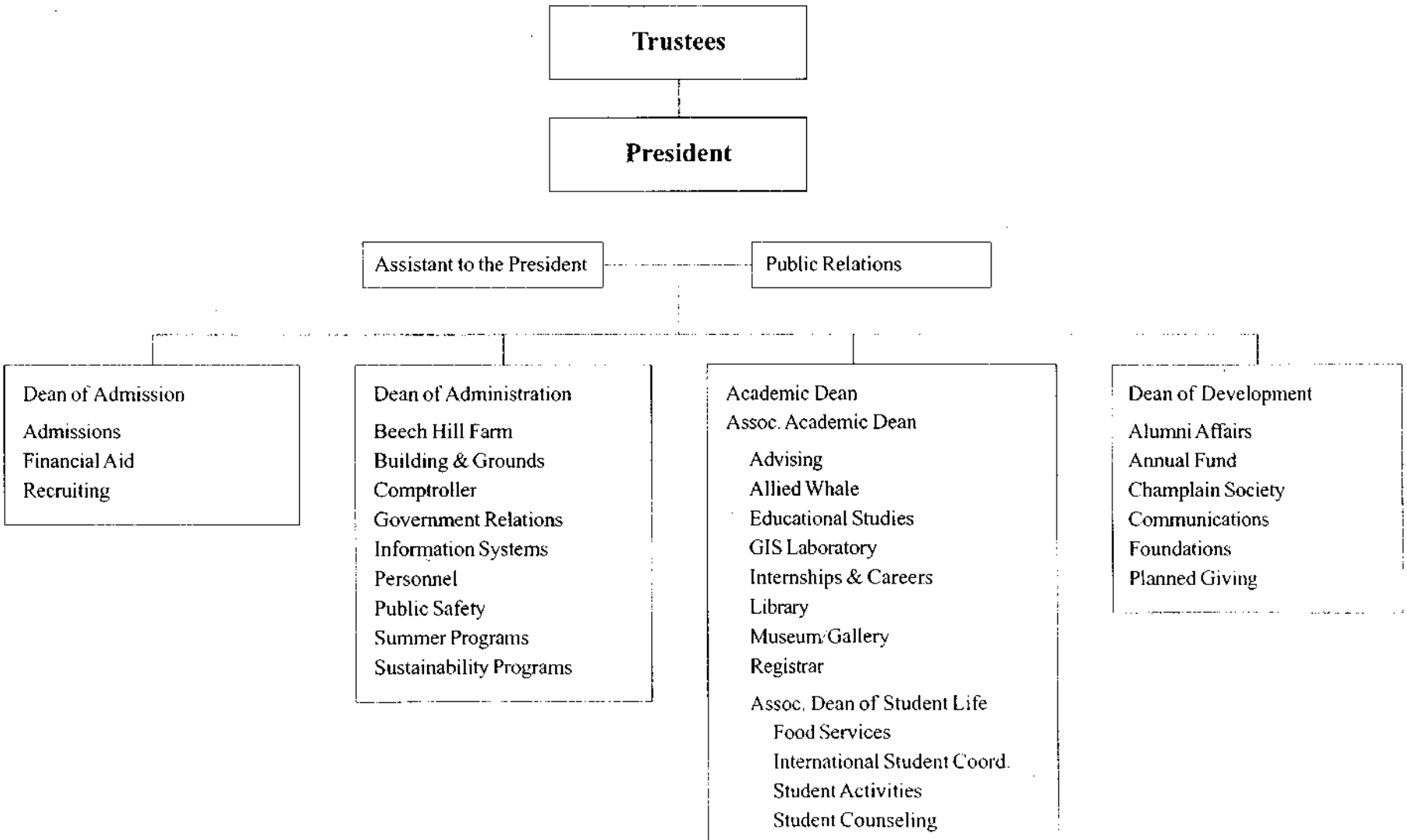
19. Record briefly the central elements in the history of the institution:

CHIEF INSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Function Or Office	Name	Exact Title
Chair Board of Trustees	Sam Hamill	Chairman of the Board
President/Director	David Hales	President
Executive Vice President	Kenneth Hill	Academic Dean
Chief Academic Officer	Kenneth Hill	Academic Dean
Deans of Schools and Colleges (insert rows as needed)		
Chief Financial Officer	Andrew Griffiths	Administrative Dean
Chief Student Services Officer	Sarah Luke	Associate Dean of Student Life
Planning	David Hales	President
Institutional Research	Judith Allen	Director of Information Servic
Development	Lynn Boulger	Dean of Development
Library	Jane Hultberg	Director of Thorndike Library
Chief Information Officer	Donna Gold	Director of Public Relations
Continuing Education	Ted Koffman	Director of Summer Programs
Grants/Research	Carla Ganiel	Grant Writer
Admissions	Sarah Baker	Dean of Admission
Registrar	David Baldwin	Registrar
Financial Aid	Bruce Hazam	Director of Financial Aid
Public Relations	Donna Gold	Director of Public Relations
Alumni Association	Michael Staggs	President of Alumni Associatio
Other		

College of the Atlantic

COA Organizational Chart



College of the Atlantic

COA Committee Chart

President

Standing Committees

- Academic Affairs
  - Review and Appeals
  - Library
  - International Studies
  - Internship
  - Educational Studies
  - Museum
- Faculty Meeting
- Publication and Communications
- Campus Planning and Building
- Personnel
  - Faculty Personnel
- Student Meeting
- Student Life
  - Student Activities

All College Meeting

- Steering

Administrative Advisory Committees

- Admission
- Graduate Studies
- Scholarship

PREFACE

College of the Atlantic's self-study for reaccreditation has been timely and strategic, helping the college to maintain focus during a period of presidential transition. Begun in Fall 2004 for a projected team visit in 2006–2007, the process continued smoothly and without interruption through the departure of a president and modifications to the academic leadership. President Steven Katona appointed Karen Waldron (then academic dean) and Ken Hill (associate dean) as team co-chairs in Fall 2004 in full knowledge of his upcoming retirement and the fact that in Winter 2006 Ken Hill would become academic dean and Karen Waldron associate dean. As a result, the self-study benefited from the leadership and insight of the president of 13 years before his departure, the presidential search process and strategic planning of 2004–2006, and the first full-year tenure of its current president, David Hales. In campus committees, at the board level, at the all-college meeting (ACM), among faculty, and in self-study steering committee meetings, the self-study anchored the college's focus on its human ecology mission at all levels of institutional operations.

COA's self-study steering team began meeting in January 2005. It was made up of three faculty members of the academic administration (Ken Hill, Karen Waldron, Dave Feldman), Andy Griffiths (administrative dean), Andrew Campbell (associate dean of student life), Sarah Baker (dean of admission), several staff members (David Baldwin, registrar, Marie Stivers, manager of academic and administrative services, Anna Murphy, assistant to the president, Judy Allen, director of information technology and institutional research), and three students (Kipp Quinby, Amy Hoffmaster, Nikhit d'Sa). During the self-study period, many others participated in steering committee meetings when appropriate, including John Anderson, the associate dean of advanced studies, Sarah Luke, the new associate dean of student life, and Jane Hultberg, director of the Thorndike Library. Before the three students graduated, they replaced themselves with four new students (Brett Ciccotelli, Juan Pablo Hoffmaister, Nick Jenei, and Shezhia Valiulla). Both sets of students attended meetings for several months and participated in the self-study retreat. A fourth faculty member, Anne Kozak, joined the team for the self-study document production phase. The steering committee included both long-time and newer members of the institutional community and consulted where appropriate with members of the 1997 self-study team.

The self-study steering committee had several responsibilities: to develop and guide an effective self-study process, to keep the college as a whole involved and informed, to engage participation from all constituencies, to develop and maintain a timeline for all self-study activities, to produce a candid, clear, compelling document that fully articulated the college's strengths, limitations, and goals, and to prepare for and make the best use of the self-examination opportunity that reaccreditation presents. The committee also aimed to generate a self-study that would fully reflect the college's assessment of itself and be broadly supported. Recognizing that all members of the community would have an investment in the self-study but that few would wish to write the document, the steering committee embedded its work in campus committees, the faculty, and relevant offices and departments. All members of the community had multiple opportunities to read and comment on individual standards and overall self-study goals, process, and documentation.

The self-study committee brought information and questions to ACM, the faculty, the presidents, and the board from the beginning. In Winter 2005, the co-chairs sent out an overview of the process, timeline, and goals to the entire community. They described the reaccreditation process, highlighted key points from the 1997 self-study and five-year report, and invited community members to participate. Early meetings developed the themes of the self-study and its overarching question: How can College of the Atlantic be excellent, the best small college in the U.S.? Presentations and emails ensured that themes, timeline, and information as to how to get more involved were widely available. Winter 2005 also saw team leaders assigned to each standard and a number of standards linked to committees: Standard Three to the steering committee and committee on trustees, Standard Four to the academic affairs committee and the faculty, Standard Five to the faculty personnel committee and faculty, Standard Six to the student life committee, Standard Seven to the library committee. For those standards without a direct link to a campus committee, team leaders ensured that the self-study would occur in an appropriate office or department. For example, the associate dean for academic affairs and assistant to the president began the work on Standard One,

which later circulated to the president and academic dean; the administrative dean prepared Standard Nine; the admission office handled Standard Ten. By Spring 2005, the community had been informed not only of the self-study process and timeline but also of overarching questions, goals, and themes, team leaders, and a relevant committee or office for every standard. Committees and administrative areas began to identify their key themes and self-study tasks. With the college's culture of continuous improvement, the self-study quickly became a moving target as committees and offices identified and addressed perceived limitations during the process.

In Summer 2005, self-study contributors generated outline drafts for most of the standards to provide guidelines for refined and focused committee and community work during 2005–2006. In October 2005, three members of the team—the co-chairs and the director of information technology and institutional research—attended the CIHE Self-Study Workshop and benefited from the opportunity to consult directly with CIHE staff and commission members. Upon their return they provided additional guidelines to both the self-study steering committee and the ACM. As key items were discussed in campus committees and the process of composition and refinement continued, the steering committee used the college's website, email, frequent circulation of drafts, and library reserve shelves to provide points of information for those members of the community who did not attend meetings. Each standard also benefited from assigned readers: the faculty personnel committee first read Standard Five; the academic affairs committee first read Standard Four. Where appropriate, trustees were assigned to each standard and additional updates were given in the corresponding board committee. The chair and vice-chair persons of the board received updates on a regular basis.

In April 2006, the committee held a two-day off-campus working retreat with CIHE Associate Director Dr. Robert C. Froh. Dr. Froh read several of the standards in draft form and provided valuable guidance as to the level of detail and analysis required. By May 2006, the steering committee had developed a set of highlights for the final self-study document and presented these to the ACM to ensure that the bringing together of the work on individual standards made sense to the community as a whole. Appropriate committees and interested community members were reading second, full drafts of standards by Fall 2006. Feedback and commentary received in this fashion was enormously helpful in putting the facts (description and evidence) of the college's self-assessment in a form that gave appropriate emphasis to strengths, limitations, and concerns (appraisal and analysis). In March 2007, when the standards were in near final form, the chair of the board, president, and co-chairs of the self-study assigned trustee readers to each standard. This period allowed for a more refined production of the college's goals (projection). During April–July 2007 self-study contributors incorporated final comments, tested conclusions one more time with committees and administrators, and consolidated the standards into a uniform document.

College of the Atlantic is small, intimate, and mission-focused; it has a tradition of broad participation in governance that involves wide-ranging discussion of all issues. Thus the preparation of the college's self-study—and the continual process of refinement of its articulation of strengths, limitations, and goals—benefited from every member of the community. Whether as an active contributor, reader, participant in committee or administrative office, or commenter about any one of a number of ongoing community issues, faculty, staff, students, trustees, and even alums of the college all provided input. The steering committee worked closely with the campus, presidents, and board to guide the production of the final document. Given the recent completion of a strategic planning effort and the presidential transition, the self-study provided an excellent opportunity for the college to focus, study itself candidly, consolidate its goals, and declare its intentions for the future. By reflecting on gathered data and prioritizing what comes next, the self-study period has also provided the president a vital opportunity to energize and inspire the community to greater heights of excellence in furthering its human ecology mission.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC SELF-STUDY OVERVIEW

Over the past decade, College of the Atlantic (COA) has improved in fundamental ways, yet as an educational institution, intellectual community, and community resource its purposes remain the same as they were during the last self-study in 1997. The mission is strong, relevant, and widely shared by the campus community—and increasingly, by the local and regional communities of which the college is a vital element. COA's contributions to national and international efforts to achieve sustainability have increased in influence and visibility.

Most importantly, the college's core reason for existing, its academic program in human ecology, has improved in both breadth and depth. The student population has grown in numbers and quality while the faculty has increased in size and intellectual diversity. Financial sustainability is more certain, with more than a tripling in endowment, growth substantially directed to helping students afford COA—about 85% of students receive financial assistance and COA is one of fewer than 300 colleges which meet more than 98% of students' certified financial need. Facilities are more environmentally sound. The college is in the midst of construction that will substantially increase on-campus student housing and provide a center for student life by Fall 2008. This growth has all been focused on better achieving the college's central academic mission.

As College of the Atlantic has matured as an institution, moving from being an experiment to being an example for others, it has retained its basic values and focus. Thus although COA faces the full range of challenges shared by higher education in general and small schools in particular, the college faces the future with confidence, a growing self-awareness of its strengths and limitations, and a commitment to continual self examination as it seeks ways to better realize it **mission and purpose**.

During the past 10 years College of the Atlantic has reexamined and reaffirmed its **mission** and rearticulated its **vision** statement. These guide all decisions, from formulation of admission policy to faculty searches, teaching standards, and annual budgets.

Both short and long-term **planning and evaluation** have been embedded into an inclusive governance process since the inception of the college and over the past 10 years planning processes have become more integrated.

All constituencies (faculty, staff, and students) contribute to the planning and running of nearly every aspect of the college's operation. The college believes that participatory governance is not only a solid management approach, but also a practice central to its hands-on style of education. As a result, planning and evaluation efforts pertaining to curriculum, staffing, facilities, and budget have broad community input, oversight, and integration.

COA's 2005-2010 strategic plan references and is consistent with the 2003 campus plan and all academic planning efforts conducted by the faculty. The plan guides the decisions of the trustees, the work of the priorities committee that annually updates lists of capital and programmatic needs, and the academic priorities lists prepared by the faculty and academic administration. The plan also guides the development and enhancement of academic programs and student services consistent with the principles of human ecology and responsive to trends and developments within the global community. The plan has provided key input and direction to this re-accreditation self-study, guided the selection of a new president, and provided prospective donors and collaborators with clear institutional direction and opportunities for partnership.

The 1997 NEASC report suggested that the college needed to improve transparency in the budgetary process, clarity and organization of short-term planning processes, and institutional research for planning and evaluation purposes. COA has made substantial progress on each of these and 23 major planning efforts have been completed and contribute to this self-study.

COA's **governance system** is designed to accomplish the ongoing tasks of college policy-making and campus management while fostering an authentic learning community that informs and provides opportunities for its members—including students—to participate in decision-making. There are three partners in governance: the board of trustees, the president and administration, and the all-college meeting (ACM) and its standing committees (Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2). College of the Atlantic's strengths in governance include a shared vision and mission, open communication channels, constructive relationships across constituencies, and a sincere commitment to meaningful participation in major decisions. Board of trustee responsibility and accountability are clearly defined, and the leadership, commitment, and generosity of the trustees have been outstanding. With a new president, academic dean, dean of development and administrative dean, among other new administrative staff, the college has improved communication, information-sharing, and collaborative decision-making. All constituencies have explicitly addressed and resolved concerns raised in the last self-study report.

Led by the faculty and academic administration, the college's **academic program** has expanded emphasis on quantitative reasoning, writing, and history, strengthened the human ecology core course, and crafted a new statement of academic goals and values. A majority of the most recent graduating class participated in study abroad and trans-cultural educational opportunities, a pattern which has been consistent for the past several years and which the college expects to continue.

Equally important, the percentage of foreign students attending COA has risen dramatically due to the Davis United World Scholars Program described in Standard Six. At present, approximately 20 percent of the college's students come from outside the U.S. Over the last decade the intellectual climate at COA has become significantly more diverse, global, and cosmopolitan.

The college has been fortunate to acquire several new facilities in the last 10 years, facilities that have markedly expanded the range and quality of local field experiences. The college now owns two island field stations, one on Great Duck Island and the other on Mount Desert Rock. The college also acquired Beech Hill Farm, a small organic farm on Mount Desert Island. Details of these acquisitions can be found in the five-year NEASC progress report (Exhibit 4.14). In addition, renovations to existing buildings in 2005–2006 created two additional arts studios, providing much-needed space for arts and design courses and student projects. The college has upgraded one of its biology labs and expanded its cooperation with The Jackson Laboratory and the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory, significantly increasing student access to state of the art research capabilities.

In the past 10 years COA has also expanded the diversity and quality of student educational opportunities through new partnerships. The college helped create the Eco-League, a consortium of six colleges with complementary missions, and built or extended formal relationships with Acadia National Park, the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), the Landing Institute, the Shoals Marine Laboratory, the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies, the International Society for Human Ecology, the department of human ecology at CINVESTAV, IPN Merida (Centro de Investigaciones Avanzadas), the Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan (FAUADY), and the Yucatan Peninsula Institute.

The broadly accepted and continually debated meaning of human ecology continues to form the structure of all curricular discussions. The college has further recognized the importance of more clearly and continuously articulating human ecology's intellectual foundations along with developing and consolidating academic and curricular planning. Beginning in Winter 2008, COA will initiate a wide-ranging discussion not only of human ecology's intellectual foundations, but also of how the dynamic changes expected during the 21st century should be studied and understood. The outcome of the discussion will inform development and refinement of the college's commitment to the disciplinary foci and skills needed to effect these changes in the teaching of human ecology and the academic program as a whole.

The reappointment and expansion of college **faculty** since 1997 also reflects the continuing intellectual development and range of human ecology. Given the college's small size, the addition of **new faculty** in any area significantly expands academic offerings. In the past decade COA has added the following positions: video and performing arts, 2000-2001; cultural anthropology, 2000-2001; global environmental politics, 2001-2002 (half-time); government and polity, 2006-2007 (two-thirds time); languages and

language learning, 2006-2007; and green business and leadership, anticipated in 2008-2009. Faculty growth parallels growth in enrollment and reflects the ongoing academic planning of faculty meeting and academic affairs committee. There are now six endowed chairs for which funding has been accomplished, five of which have been filled from within the college's existing faculty. There is low faculty turnover and satisfaction with curricular freedom. The faculty demonstrate a high level of creativity and active spirit of volunteerism and continue to play a valuable and necessary role in the governance of the institution.

Most importantly, the college's commitment to teaching excellence has become a given. The bar for superlative teaching quality is set very high, and faculty members continue to seek ways to improve. By describing teaching excellence at College of the Atlantic in Fall 2005, the faculty personnel committee has begun to articulate what superb teaching requires as well as to provide better means for mentoring faculty. The college continues to revise, update, and improve the process for faculty evaluation, and has begun a systematic reevaluation of its faculty reward system, while seeking to make workload distribution among faculty more equitable.

Student enrollment has grown steadily and in 2006–2007 applications for admission were higher than at any previous time in the college's history. Students increasingly hail from a wide geographic base. Current COA students have come from 42 states and 38 countries and continue to do well after they graduate. Graduates not only readily meet requirements for admission to discipline-based programs in graduate school, but also meet entry requirements for positions in a wide range of fields, including education, conservation, and the arts. Over one-half of the college's graduates continue to graduate or professional school within five years of graduation.

Over the last seven years the admission team has been able to increase applications and yield while also becoming more selective. The college also now provides comprehensive accident and illness health insurance for all students. Since the college's admission process is need-blind, financial aid awards have been determined separately from admission decisions. The process of awarding aid complies with federal guidelines and also maintains COA's commitment to making education affordable. Currently 70% of students receive need-based aid and approximately 85% of the student population receives financial assistance.

The college has significantly increased its student life staffing. With this support, it has been able to offer more services to international students and made a number of significant changes designed to better identify, track, and support students with learning challenges. One of the major concerns of the last 10-year NEASC report was the dual admission counselor/student service role played by staff members. This issue has been rectified with a reorganized structure and the addition of the new student life staff positions. In addition, the inclusion of the dean of admission and associate dean of student life as part of the senior administrative team increases the degree of integration among various areas of the college.

In light of recent abuses of the student financial assistance program at many institutions, during the self-study period COA conducted an independent investigation of its program, finding none of the abuses that have brought such notoriety elsewhere. Nevertheless, the college has taken steps to increase the purposefulness of its programs and the transparency and availability of information relating to financial assistance so it may assure prospective students and their parents of the program's integrity.

Library and **information services** have also improved substantially since the last self-study. The library remains an integral part of campus life, supporting the mission of the college by providing access to resources and services that promote information literacy while dramatically expanding its technological capabilities. Since the last NEASC visit, the library has also established college archives and assumed responsibility for academic audiovisual support. The college now has a campus-wide network infrastructure to support all aspects of academic and administrative computing and is connected to the internet via a T1 line. All buildings on campus are connected to a central 100MB switch via fiber optic cable, and all offices, classrooms and dorm rooms have both wired (Cat5E Ethernet) and wireless connections. Computers are provided to all full-time faculty and as needed to all administrative staff. Overall, the IT department supports 11 servers, 230 COA-owned academic/administrative computers, 100 printers, and various peripherals for a user community of over 400 staff, faculty, and students.

With continuous effort and attention, the college has achieved a better understanding of the challenges for achieving **financial sustainability** than at any time in our recent past. In 2007, the trustees adopted financial strategic imperatives and more than 20 recommendations resulting from a year-long assessment of its financial situation. This self-study includes reports summarizing the college's audited balance sheet and operating budget over the 10-year period from fiscal 1997–2006, a period during which net assets grew from $12.2 million to $27.7 million. The endowment grew from $5.1 million to $17.5 million; the book value of the plant fund (which historically understates the market value of the property) increased from $6.4 million to $10.8 million. Overall the balance sheet is strong with a net worth more than twice the operating budget and about nine times the long-term debt.

Although the past several years have been characterized by annual budget deficits, the strategy adopted by the administration and trustees, along with a new three-year budget management process, projects balanced budgets beginning in FY 2009 as well as improved sustainability and morale.

College of the Atlantic provides on-and-off campus constituencies with abundant, relevant, and clear information to fulfill all requirements for **public disclosure**. Its website, www.coa.edu, is the primary portal used to disseminate information and provides an overview of the academic program, mission, objectives, expected educational outcomes, student life offerings, governance, policies and procedures, and ways to request additional information. The website also includes current course lists, a detailed description of the self-directed curriculum, and a description of the trustees, faculty and staff. Regular review and updating of the website are now standard practice. The college is currently working with ASAP Media to make its web text more succinct and descriptive, and expects to have the new text online in 2007–2008.

COA also broadly disseminates its course catalog and the admission viewbook. These publications are reviewed each year and revised as necessary. College information is shared with various constituencies and the nature of the information and the process for reviewing that information differs by purpose and constituency. There are several means by which members of the general public may obtain information about the college and this self-study document will be posted, along with the catalog, on the college website.

Finally, **integrity** is embedded in the college's mission and pedagogy. The college strives for transparent, purposeful, mission-driven commitment and information dissemination at all levels of the organization. COA continues to make progress in meeting its ambitious goals while providing appropriate privacy and legal protections for all members of the campus community.

STANDARD ONE
MISSION AND PURPOSES

Vision Statement

The faculty, students, trustees, staff, and alumni of College of the Atlantic envision a world where people value creativity, intellectual achievement, and the diversity of nature and human cultures, and where, with respect and compassion, individuals will construct meaningful lives for themselves, gain appreciation of the relationships among all forms of life, and safeguard the heritage of future generations.

Mission Statement

College of the Atlantic enriches the liberal arts tradition through a distinctive educational philosophy—human ecology. A human ecological perspective integrates knowledge from all academic disciplines and from personal experience to investigate—and ultimately improve—the relationships between human beings and our social and natural communities. The human ecological perspective guides all aspects of education, research, activism, and interactions among the college's students, faculty, staff, alumni, and trustees. The College of the Atlantic community encourages, prepares, and expects students to gain the expertise, breadth, values, and practical experience necessary to achieve individual fulfillment and to help solve the problems that challenge communities everywhere.

DESCRIPTION

In 1969, College of the Atlantic was incorporated and received its Maine Charter to award the Bachelor of Arts degree. The college opened its doors in 1972 with a class of 32; the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) conferred candidate status to the institution in 1973, and full accreditation was granted in May 1976, one week before the college awarded degrees to its first graduating class.

The founding trustees had dual purposes in mind for a new college. First, they hoped that a year-round college would enhance the culture and economy of Mount Desert Island (MDI). Second, the Vietnam War and the prevailing concern about an ecological crisis influenced their goals. As a result, the trustees designed a college that expanded the liberal arts, one that prepared students to practically apply their learning to improve prospects for a sustainable, peaceful, and just society. This vision committed the college to an interdisciplinary, problem-centered curriculum, and resulted in a distinctive focus on the relationships among humans and their environments—human ecology.

Human ecology as practiced at College of the Atlantic (COA) has its roots deep in the liberal arts tradition: Since knowledge has intrinsic value, the central aim of education should be to educate students broadly in a range of academic disciplines and traditions. But human ecology does more, extending the liberal arts tradition in four distinctive ways.

First, as already noted, environmental and social problems are at the center of the curriculum, co-curriculum, and student life.

Second, the college seeks to not only teach about environmental and social problems, but also actively prepare students to develop and implement solutions to these problems. In this sense, the college has an action-oriented approach—an approach not typically found in liberal arts education.

Third, the academic program is strongly self-directed. All students work with their academic advisors to design their own major in human ecology, choosing a sequence of courses best suited to their particular interests and goals. With this freedom to construct their own academic program comes the development of responsibility and self-reflection. Thus students' learning is intentional and deliberate, better preparing them to be more effective agents of positive change.

Fourth, the college is strongly interdisciplinary. A liberal arts education values learning from different disciplines, whereas COA's focus on human ecology encourages students to combine understanding and methods from different disciplines to produce new kinds of knowledge and new solutions to problems facing people and populations. The college believes that the complexity of many of today's problems requires fresh approaches and that in many instances the boundaries of academic disciplines serve as a barrier to achieving solutions.

To encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, the college chose not to form academic departments and to have an unranked faculty. The selectivity and size of the college were designed to promote excellence, increase interaction between students and faculty, foster interdisciplinary exploration, and facilitate more personalized programs of study. All members of the community were encouraged to engage in the institution's governance in order to learn about democracy, cooperation, and leadership. Over 30 years later, there are still no departments, the faculty remains unranked, and the governance system still promotes the same values.

Since its inception, College of the Atlantic has believed in the indivisibility of the life of the mind and a life of action. COA is devoted to learning for its own sake and eliciting and nurturing in its students the spirit of creativity and life-long learning. Art is studied and practiced not just as a tool for communication but on its own terms as a means of self-expression and celebration of the creative spirit. Similarly, the sciences are pursued not just as a tool for social and environmental progress, but as part of the human exploration of the universe and an attempt to find meaning.

APPRAISAL

Over the last 35 years, many schools, particularly liberal arts colleges, have increasingly focused on the environment, justice, peace, and health. In addition, "interdisciplinary" has become an almost ubiquitous buzzword in education. The college's focus on human ecology and its contributions to the development of this field give it a distinctive richness and substance. COA's small size enhances students' ability to do true interdisciplinary work. Several unique features of the academic program demonstrate the success and value of the COA mission (see Standard Four). While some aspects of the college are not as unique as they were several decades ago, most of those on campus see this as a sign of success.

In the future the college must not only maintain excellence and distinctiveness but also better project those attributes. The college must continually evaluate its programs and monitor the articulation of its mission to ensure that it maintains both impact and "edge." The leadership of the college recognizes that projecting excellence will be a challenge. Some aspects of the college's culture, in large part a reflection of its egalitarian roots, are still antithetical to recognizing individual accomplishments.

Strengths

- College of the Atlantic's mission and vision statements reflect the institution's distinct approach to education. The mission is supported and understood by faculty, staff, students, alumni, and trustees. Despite the different ways in which people give voice to the mission, community members believe in the positive, transformational power of the style of education it embodies. Students, faculty, and staff all report being drawn to COA by the salience of its mission.

- The college's mission is the cornerstone that determines institutional priorities, policies, and new initiatives. The campus community regularly refers to the mission statement as it considers programmatic direction, policy changes, and fundraising. Most recently the faculty looked to the mission to establish academic priorities, and the financial sustainability committee grounded its ideas for generating revenue in commitment to the established mission.

- The urgency of the college's mission is as acute now as it was 35 years ago. Some current issues appear quite similar to those of 1970 while other issues are just emerging including the fundamentally moral challenges of alleviating poverty, achieving equity between the rich and poor, controlling the use of force for political ends, and achieving sustainable systems of production and consumption.

The mission and vision statements of College of the Atlantic are printed in all major college publications and displayed on the college's website.

Limitations

- The institution's mission statement has not been systematically reviewed since the last accreditation visit, and for some it seems impenetrable and naive. Other members of the community feel that the mission could be more concisely written. There is also a desire to have the mission more accurately reflect the college's aspirations and commitment.

PROJECTION

Under the leadership of the president and with input from the dean of admission, dean of development, and academic dean, the college will continue to examine the image, message, and footprint of COA in 2007–2008. With the help of a generous anonymous gift, COA has engaged a consulting team not only to help it express the mission and approach to education as distinctly and uniquely as possible but also to develop a set of products and publications that clearly conveys that message. The initial phase of this work will be completed by Winter 2008.

COA feels that its mission is strong, relevant, and widely shared by the campus community. Although the mission is vibrant, a presidential task force will further examine its articulation in conjunction with the academic program review beginning in Winter 2008.

§

STANDARD TWO
PLANNING AND EVALUATION

DESCRIPTION

Both short- and long-term planning and evaluation have been embedded into COA's inclusive governance process since the inception of the college. Participatory governance was envisioned not only as a solid management approach but also as a practice consistent with the college's hands-on style of education. Planning and evaluation efforts pertaining to curriculum, staffing, facilities, and budget have broad community input, oversight, and integration.

The president, in conjunction with the board of trustees and in consultation with senior staff, initiates long-term (2+ years) planning objectives. An annual report, submitted to the trustees, details the institution's yearly planning initiatives, assessments of past goals, and projected new goals (Exhibit 2.1).

Long-term planning is generally guided by a mission-driven strategic plan. The current (2005–2010) plan serves as the cornerstone for the institution's planning activities for the next five years (Exhibit 2.2) and was constructed over a two-year period. The president and board of trustees established a strategic planning committee to oversee this process and to ensure that the mission and vision of the organization were encapsulated within the plan's content. The charge to the strategic planning committee, which contained broad representation (board members, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and participants from the council of advisors) and was led by the board, was to:

- Guide the development and enhancement of academic programs and student services consistent with the principles of human ecology and responsive to trends and developments within the global community
- Provide input and direction to the COA self-study for reaccreditation
- Provide input to documents used by the presidential search committee and consultants to indicate strategic directions being undertaken by COA
- Provide prospective donors and collaborators with clear institutional direction and opportunities for partnership

The committee held numerous meetings on and off campus to discuss all aspects of the plan. The academic deans ensured that the 2005–2010 plan complemented an earlier plan adopted in 1997 and that it was consistent with the academic priorities outlined in 2002's Title III Comprehensive Planning Proposal (Exhibits 2.3 and 2.4). Administrative staff ensured that the plan referenced and was consistent with the 2003 campus plan and its updates (Exhibit 2.5). The plan also included the work of the priorities committee—which annually updates lists of capital and programmatic needs—and the academic priorities prepared by the faculty and academic administration. In Spring 2005, a joint campus and trustee retreat was held to solidify the overall plan before it was presented to the all college meeting (ACM) for community review and comment. In June 2005 after final edits, the board adopted the plan with its six broad goals for the institution:

Goal 1: Continually strengthen COA's distinctive and self-directed educational program in human ecology.

Goal 2: Ensure that student life programs build vital leadership, character, judgment, and skills for living in the 21st century and beyond.

Goal 3: Strengthen COA's financial foundation.

Goal 4: Demonstrate principles of human, ecological, and economic sustainability in facilities and operations.

Goal 5: Institutionalize collaborative planning and nurture human resources.

Goal 6: Increase the college's visibility in and service to local, regional, national, and international arenas.

In general, the strategic plan is operationalized and its progress is evaluated within four broad areas: academic program, admission/retention, facilities, and administration and financial management. Planning and evaluation happen within each area, and coordination between areas is directed through the president's office and the deans. An outline of the major planning initiatives for each area follows.

Academic Program

The three main bodies that deal with academic planning and evaluation on campus are the faculty (through faculty meeting), the academic affairs committee, and the academic policy committee of the board of trustees. These three groups work cooperatively to ensure solid curricular planning, implementation, and assessment.

The faculty, who are responsible for creating and implementing the academic program, meet weekly to discuss curricular initiatives, academic priorities, educational goals, and other matters of concern to the faculty as a whole (Exhibits 2.6 and 2.7). At times, faculty meetings are devoted entirely to "resource areas" for concentrated planning based on the college's established curricular groupings (arts and design, environmental sciences, human studies). The faculty also hold an annual retreat to discuss short- and long-term academic planning and evaluation (Exhibit 2.8).

Term by term, the academic affairs committee organizes the curriculum, contracts with visiting faculty, and reviews and approves new courses and group studies. It regularly reviews academic policies and criteria for course evaluation, as well as ensures an appropriate range of courses for each term and year.

The academic policy committee is not only charged with oversight of the academic program and helping to establish academic priorities but also encourages the faculty to have regular program reviews (internally and externally), clear and compelling educational objectives, and sustainable programming.

The following chart details recent major curricular initiatives:

Initiative	Managed by	Exhibit(s)
Revision of institution's educational objectives	Academic deans Faculty President's office	2.9 Goals of human ecology 2.6 Faculty meeting minutes 2.1 Annual reports 2.10 Teacher Certification Self- Study 2.11 State Review Team Report 2.12 Grant status reports
Review of the college's governance structure and educational mission	President's office	2.13 Governance Initiative Liaison Committee (GILC) Report
Academic priority setting	Academic deans Faculty Priorities committee	2.6 Faculty meeting minutes 2.14 Priorities documents
Revision of institutional writing requirement	Academic affairs	2.15 Writing requirement update
Academic policy review/revisions	Academic affairs	2.16 Policy updates
Ad hoc four-seasons committee	Trustees	2.17 Four-Seasons Report
Ad hoc farm/food systems committee	Trustees	2.18 Farm Report

Admission and Retention

Admission and retention efforts have recently focused on improving the number and quality of applicants, making financial aid disbursements more targeted and efficient, enhancing the quality of student life, and

creating and implementing a comprehensive retention and admission plan. To that end, many recent planning/evaluation initiatives have taken place to ensure success:

Initiative	Managed by	Exhibit(s)
Comprehensive enrollment management plan	Academic deans	2.19 MELMAC planning and implementation grants
Comprehensive admission plan	Dean of admission	2.20 Admission board reports
Student-life strategic plan	Associate dean of student life	2.2 Strategic plan, 2.1 annual report, 2.21 initiation of year plan
Student satisfaction assessment	Academic dean	2.22 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) portfolio, 2.23 alumni surveys
Web page improvements	Dean of admission	2.25 Web page planning group documents 2.26 ASAP Report
External consultant reviews of:		
• Financial aid policies and practices	President's office	2.27 Neuger Communications Group Report
• Institutional research and benchmarks	Dean of admission	2.28 Fergerson Reports
• Retention initiatives	Academic dean	Richard Light's visit

Facilities

The college strives to provide facilities and environments that are conducive to meeting its goals and mission. To that end, green-building practices and sustainable facility management are dominant themes. The campus planning and buildings committee and the building and grounds committee of the board of trustees work in collaboration to oversee both short- and long-term facilities planning. The planning initiatives guiding campus facilities include:

Initiative	Managed by	Exhibit(s)
Comprehensive facilities planning	Campus planning and building	2.5 Campus Plan 2003
Comprehensive grounds planning	Campus planning and building	2.29 Campus Landscape Plan 2005
Pandemic/emergency response assessment	President's office	2.24 Pandemic/Emergency Response Plan
Greening the campus	President Director of campus planning	2.30 Campus environmental initiatives
	Director of sustainability	2.31 Director of sustainability annual reports

Administration and Financial Management

Numerous constituencies on campus are involved in the college's fiduciary planning efforts, but the ultimate authority rests with the president, administrative dean, and board of trustees. Financial modeling and fiduciary priority setting are regularly evaluated based on the college's changing needs (see Standard Nine). The major planning/evaluation efforts include:

Initiative	Managed by	Exhibit(s)
Fiduciary priority setting	President's office Priorities committee Board of trustees	2.1 Annual administrative reports 2.14 Priority documents
Financial modeling	Administrative dean Board of trustees	2.32 Budget projections
Committee on financial sustainability	Board of trustees	2.33 Financial Sustainability Report
Salary equity study	Administrative dean	2.34 Gallant Report
Development consultants	Dean of development Board of trustees	2.35 Wayland Report 2.36 Hubbard Report

Response to Previously Identified Issues

The last NEASC report suggested that the college needed to improve:

- Transparency in the budgetary process
- Clarity and organization of short-term planning processes
- Institutional research for planning and evaluation purposes

The institution has taken several important steps to address these issues.

Budget Transparency: Budgets are more open than they have ever been in the college's history, and the president and the administrative dean regularly discuss budgetary issues with the board and the COA community. In the past two years, the budget decision process has been completely redesigned, and now includes multiple opportunities for budget managers to discuss perceived needs directly with the president, the administrative dean, and the academic dean. Senior managers also meet collectively to discuss the budget in a comprehensive way. Beginning in 2007–2008, the process will also include the opportunity to appeal budget decisions to the president prior to the presentation of the president's recommendation to the trustees. Previously, budget managers submitted their requests, and budget awards were announced without discussion. Budget managers often saw a considerable discrepancy between what they had asked for and what they received, both in terms of total amount allocated and the disbursement of funds to line items within the budget. Budget managers now have more discretion to move money between line items within their individual budgets and have a greater overall sense of the institution's total budget needs. They also receive direct feedback on their budget from the president and the administrative team. The college continues to move toward a more transparent budget and to provide information regarding budgetary matters to the campus at regular intervals.

Integration of Short-Term Planning with Strategic Goals and Institutional Priorities: In the past, planning was focused primarily on short-term objectives and was done in individual areas (facilities, academic program, admission, development). The president now ensures that all planning happens collaboratively and openly and that planning is more strategic and comprehensive.

One of the new president's first initiatives was to assess the financial sustainability of the college and develop strategic imperatives for financial sustainability, which imperatives were adopted by the board in April 2007. At their 2007 annual meeting, the trustees will consider the full recommendations of the financial sustainability committee. These recommendations have both short- and long-term implications and are being addressed in budget planning for 2007–2008. They are also being addressed in the development, for the first time, of a three-year projected budget. In addition, the priorities committee established by the board of trustees in 2004 has been energized and now provides a forum for integrating development priorities and major capital initiatives. This committee, chaired by and advisory to the president, includes the academic dean, the administrative dean, the dean of development, and the chairs of the finance, development, and academic policy committees of the board.

Previously the college also operated with an entrepreneurial spirit when it came to its short-term planning. The president is addressing the fact that in some instances, this continues to be a concern. In the past, the institution accepted gifts/grants (such as land and start-up money for programs and/or positions) with little attempt to investigate the long-term costs of these short-term gains or the impact on the institution's overall priorities. This approach afforded the college the ability to grow its academic program in several key areas but a lack of coordination and prioritization of effort were also common.[1] One of the significant strengths of a small institution is the ability to move quickly to take advantage of opportunities, but this requires clear strategic priorities and strong leadership if it is to benefit the college as a whole. The priorities committee now reviews the opportunity costs associated with all major gifts and grants before acceptance. The college

[1] For example, the college's programs in educational studies, marine sciences, international studies, and green business all originated with opportunistic start-up grants or gifts—in some cases, deliberately sought.

is getting closer to its objective, but it still must ensure that influential individuals do not push forward initiatives without the proper review.

Since the last NEASC review, the college's short-term planning has grown more systematic, inclusive, and public. The use of the web for posting committee minutes has increased accessibility to planning information. In addition, the systematic review and revision of committee charters (Exhibit 2.37) has clarified the roles and responsibilities of individual committees.

Institutional Research: In an effort to improve institutional research (IR) on campus, the college conducted an external review of the college's current institutional research practices to suggest improvements. Findings from the Fergerson Reports suggest the college must:

- Freeze its data at strategic intervals to ensure accurate analysis
- Establish a set of standardized institutional research benchmarks ("dashboards") that can be reviewed annually
- Create a committee or hire a half-time IR specialist to focus efforts and serve as a central clearinghouse for data gathering, analysis, and dissemination

The college has followed through on all three of these recommendations. Data are now frozen several times each year to ensure the institution's ability to conduct accurate multi-year analyses. The college has developed a set of strategic indicators that are used as its "dashboard" for planning and evaluation purposes (Exhibit 2.38). And finally, the college has procured initial funding for and added a half-time IR position on campus to direct these initiatives. Reliable and standardized empirical evidence allows for more effective, informed, and defensible organizational management. By systematically collecting and using data to support planning, the college has greatly improved its overarching short- and long-term planning and evaluation efforts.

APPRAISAL

In general, the college's planning and evaluation processes meet the requirements of this standard well—they are continuous, systematic, relevant, and meaningful. With the changes mentioned above, the college is confident that its planning approaches not only meet the institution's operational needs but also serve a central educational role for the community. The college has further identified the following strengths and limitations of its planning approach:

Strengths

- The college regularly gets a high level of community buy-in and input for all planning initiatives.
- A strong mission focus is associated with all planning and implementation.
- The college demonstrates high integration of planning with educational objectives.

Limitations

- Current planning processes are time consuming and labor intensive.
- Recent planning efforts have not always been done within the context of the strategic plan, and procedural and substantive coordination across planning efforts has sometimes been lacking.
- More emphasis is placed on planning and implementation, with insufficient emphasis on evaluation.
- Contingency planning is an area of weakness.

Improvements in planning and evaluation should be addressed at multiple levels. First, although the college invests great time and effort in planning, it often lacks consistent follow-through to the evaluation phase. The college should refocus its efforts to ensure that equal weight is given to implementation and evaluation, and that all plans contain measurable objectives and timelines for implementation. In addition, all major planning/evaluation initiatives must be linked to current strategic planning. Before that can happen, however, operationalization of the existing plan must be completed with a timetable for implementation and measurable objectives and benchmarks (see Projection).

Second, the institution should become more coordinated in its planning and evaluation efforts**.** Data are often gathered from a variety of sources, but little cross analysis, synthesis, and reporting of these findings occurs. The institution will benefit from thoroughly reviewing past planning documents before new planning occurs. Occasionally, different planning groups have reinvented the wheel because they did not review previous planning documents.

Third, the institution appears to have numerous and sufficient internal planning efforts, yet its use of external evaluations should be increased. This will improve the authenticity and transportability of the college's overall planning and evaluation efforts and results.

Fourth, although the college is pleased with the amount of community involvement in planning initiatives, some members of the community view the inclusive process to be burdensome. Others feel that planning processes are not sufficiently inclusive or open. Overall, the administration believes the planning and evaluation process could be more effective if it were streamlined.

And finally, the institution must improve efforts in the area of contingency planning by establishing specific planning procedures for emergencies (such as a pandemic or collapsed roof) and evaluating unplanned funding or other opportunities. Such events in the past have triggered their own reactionary, short-term planning initiatives that were not necessarily linked to broader planning goals. In addition, the college's emergency response plan, revised in 2007, remains inadequate.

Academic Program

In general, the college's academic planning and evaluation efforts have resulted in a relevant and vibrant curriculum. Standard measures of academic success (graduation rates, graduate school placements, student satisfaction and engagement surveys, alumni feedback, national rankings, external program reviews, etc.) all suggest that COA is doing well.

The academic deans, the faculty, and the academic affairs committee regularly review current academic policies to ensure that they are meeting the needs of students and the underlying educational goals they were created to support. Over the last five years, several policies have been revised based on this review. For example, academic affairs, student life, review and appeals, and the faculty meeting have all initiated academic policy changes that have since been brought to and, where appropriate, ratified by the ACM. Amended policies include leave of absence, medical withdrawal, independent study, residency, standing at graduation, student teaching, sexual assault, incomplete grades, and academic probation. Such review and revision practices are essential and will continue on a regular basis.

That being said, community members have raised several questions about the academic program during the past several years' of discussions. These difficult questions that reside at the heart of the college's interpretation of its mission will form an essential component of the academic program review and include:

- Is the college's academic authority base adequate to prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century?
- What is the optimal size of the student body?
- What should be the college's level of reliance on adjunct instructors?
- How should the campus develop a year-round academic presence?

- What is the best way to assess the college's curriculum to ensure interdisciplinary and integrative engagement among faculty and students?
- How often should "programs" be reviewed and by whom?
- How does the college define and how can it best assure academic excellence?

COA's academic planning and evaluation strategies reflect its continued struggles with these questions.

Admission and Retention

The college has made dramatic improvements in admission and retention. The procurement of the MELMAC implementation grant has afforded the college the resources to improve enrollment management. In addition, staffing in student life has tripled since the last NEASC review. This has enabled the college to conduct more systematic planning and evaluation in this area and to better integrate student life with the academic program.

As a result of the financial sustainability report, the college is committed to expanding its academic programs (also recommended in the strategic plan and the Four-Seasons Report). The president, senior administration, and trustees are convinced that increases in the student body and using the campus year-round will make the institution more financially stable, increase the number of faculty positions, and broaden the range of classes available to students. The transition to a full calendar academic program will require careful planning to ensure that the college's pedagogical approach is sustained, that the student:faculty ratio remains at 10:1, and that current students can make the transition to the expanded program without cost to their academic progress (see Projection).

Facilities

Significant progress has been made in facilities planning. The campus plan, produced with the assistance of the Geddes Demshak Architecture and Planning firm, is currently serving as the master planning tool for addressing the campus' facility needs. This plan clearly articulates everything from small-scale renovations and deferred maintenance to new buildings and projected costs. The campus plan also reflects the institution's desire to improve its sustainability and decrease its ecological impact. This plan had widespread community input and has been guided by external experts.

Review of facilities has shown that the college is true to its ecological mission, taking substantive measures to ensure that facilities and operations are environmentally sensitive and sustainable. All facilities planning (building materials used, modes of heating and lighting, cleaning products used in buildings, food served in the college's dining hall, office supplies and equipment purchased, recycling practices) incorporates environmental considerations (Exhibit 2.39). Most recently COA initiated a net-zero carbon emissions plan that targets 100 % campus reliance on renewable energy by 2015.

Administration and Financial Management

The college continues to maintain discipline in managing and planning expenses while simultaneously producing a budget model for long-term financial sustainability. Recent fiscal challenges were a significant factor in putting the college in a year-to-year fiduciary planning mode. Budget planning was largely reactionary and geared toward reducing short-term debt and coping with unexpected shortfalls. Currently a multi-year model is in place that prioritizes budget stabilization and endowment growth.

In addition, financial evaluation shows promise since the college has a strong track record of obtaining external grants for program development. Some recent external funding sources include the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE), Luce, Carnegie, U.S. Title VI, and MELMAC Education Foundation. In addition to providing needed financial support, these funding agencies require convincing program designs, regular assessments, and annual reports. The college's continued ability to procure external funding testifies to a solid level of planning and evaluation and exhibits institutional effectiveness.

In 2006–2007 the president constituted a committee on financial sustainability to look at all aspects of short- and long-term financial planning. Comprised of the president, administrative dean, academic dean and selected trustees, the committee produced a report for the board of trustees' April 2007 meeting (Exhibit 2.33).

Movement has been made in relation to concerns about staff salary equity. In 2004, the college commissioned D. Gallant Management Associates to produce a staff salary report. While the college has not been able to fully implement the Gallant recommendations, its general findings have been incorporated into short- and long-term budgetary planning. Not all community members supported the findings of the Gallant Report. The administrative dean has been working to address general and individual issues while recognizing that the report itself is outdated.

Little progress has been made toward equity in faculty salaries (see Standard Five). The president has asked that the entire faculty reward structure be substantively reviewed.

In an effort to balance its long-term budget, the college and the board have agreed to the following principles of financial planning:

- New faculty should be fully funded (via endowed chairs or increased enrollment) before being brought on line.
- All new buildings should be fully funded and have operational endowment before ground is broken.
- All external funding requests should include 20% operational overhead.

PROJECTION

Making the Strategic Plan Operational

Goal 1: Continually strengthen COA's distinctive and self-directed educational program in human ecology (Fall 2007–Winter 2009).

Goal 2: Ensure that student life programs build vital leadership, character, judgment, and skills for living in the 21st century and beyond (Fall 2007–Winter 2009).

Since these two goals cannot be separated, planning to make them operational will be done simultaneously in an integrated manner. Beginning in 2007–2008 the college will initiate a systematic review of its academic and student life programs. The president will appoint a task force similar to the group that developed the financial sustainability report to oversee this review, which will take between 12-18 months. By March 2009, a comprehensive report will be produced identifying programmatic goals, new directions, timelines, and benchmarks.

Goal 3: Strengthen COA's financial foundation (Spring 2007–Fall 2007).

Two major efforts have been completed to strengthen COA's financial foundation. The committee on financial sustainability submitted its report to the trustees, and the administrative dean is currently using the report's suggestions to inform the college's five-year budgetary planning process. Second, an external development consultant was hired to assess the college's fundraising potential and analyze development office operations and staffing. As a result of this report, the college has hired a dean of development (identified as a key step in the Hubbard Report). The new dean of development will be responsible for assessing and implementing the report's recommendations. The dean will also draft a plan for a major capital campaign, most likely by Winter 2009 (following the academic program review).

Goal 4: Demonstrate principles of human, ecological, and economic sustainability in facilities and operations (Fall 2007 onward).

In Winter 2008, the director of sustainability will produce a five-year plan to meet the facilities and operations aspect of this goal. The plan will detail institutional benchmarks relating to energy savings and green practices for operations and purchasing. The director of sustainability currently produces annual reports on the progress made to date.

Goal 5: Institutionalize collaborative planning and nurture human resources (continuous).

This goal will be embedded in all planning initiatives since it is central to the college's educational and social mission. Both the academic program review and improved budget processes institutionalize collaborative planning. The president will assure that all planning efforts meet this goal by requiring feedback through annual progress reports.

Goal 6: Increase the college's visibility in and service to local, regional, national, and international arenas (Spring 2007–Winter 2008).

Initial steps to improve institutional branding and market visibility are underway. The college hired Peter W. Bernstein and Annalyn Swan from ASAP Media to revise the college's website and print materials. Recognizing that the college has been inconsistent with branding efforts in the past, the dean of admission, dean of development, and president will coordinate to oversee use of the current brand, branding improvements, and additional marketing efforts.

Coordination of Planning Efforts

One of the most important outcomes of this self-study is a three-year project for completing the operationalization of the strategic plan. The college will integrate intermediate planning into the framework of the strategic plan, develop strategic imperatives for each goal in the plan, and ensure consistency between and among short-term plans. All plans will have a timetable for implementation and measurable benchmarks.

Beginning in Fall 2008, the president will designate no more than three major planning efforts in a given year. Each planning initiative will be assigned a project supervisor. Project supervisors will implement and evaluate the project, assure that planning is coordinated, and produce written reports documenting implementation timelines and evaluation criteria. In addition, beginning in Spring 2008, the college's website will have a designated space, supervised by the director of institutional research, to house all planning documents. This will afford a common resource for those charged with conducting new planning initiatives.

External Evaluation

To expand its use of external evaluations, the college will allocate $5,000 per year beginning with the 2007–2008 budget for external consultants, reviewers, and/or national benchmark services. The academic and administrative deans will oversee this fund.

Streamlining Planning Processes

In the 2007–2008 academic year, the administrative and academic deans will review the effectiveness of planning and evaluation practices and strategize planning priorities. In Summer 2008 they will submit a report to the president proposing methods to make the process more streamlined and efficient.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning will be conducted in the following areas:

- Financial: Within fiscal year 2008 the college will move to a three-year budget planning cycle to provide consistent financial contingency planning.
- Safety and emergency response: The president initiated a review and revision of the current plan in Summer 2006 and a new interim plan has been completed. The director of public safety and the associate dean for student life will review and evaluate the interim plan in Fall 2008 and recommend policy changes in Winter 2009. Consultation with the academic dean will ensure that the plan includes means to continue academic services in the face of potential threats to normal operations.

Academic Program

The major strategic challenge for the college's academic program is the refocusing and reinvigoration of the program's substance and content. The NEASC self-study and careful work with the faculty, strongly supported by the academic policy committee of the board, has positioned the college for an exciting engagement with the future. Beginning in Winter 2008, COA will host an ongoing discussion of global dimensions. The discussion, at the heart of the academic program review, will focus on addressing the global and local challenges not only of achieving the transition to sustainability in the 21st century but also of realizing a world that is sustainable, peaceful, and just. Following the academic program review, the college will improve and systematize its plan for assessing student outcomes (see Standard Four). To meet this challenge, the college under the direction of the academic deans will (by Fall 2009) establish an overarching assessment strategy to ensure that institutional objectives are being met.

In addition, the college has long-term academic planning concerns that it aims to address over the next three years. These include:

- Assessing modalities for moving to a four-seasons operation by Summer 2008 on a pilot basis (academic dean)
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the graduate program by Fall 2009 (associate dean for advanced studies)
- Reviewing the impacts of growth: the administrative dean, academic dean, and dean of admission will conduct this research with full community input by Fall 2010 or after the college establishes an FTE of 300 for two consecutive years

Admission and Retention

As stated previously, enrollment management and planning efforts for admission and retention are well underway. These initiatives have concrete assessment plans, and emphasis should be placed on implementation and assessment. The dean of admission and academic deans will oversee these assessment efforts.

Projected two-year objectives for admission and retention include:

- Increase graduation rates by 3% per year (with a target goal of 15% increase over 5 years) beginning in 2006–2007
- Integrate admission strategies with the move to a four-seasons academic program
- Increase quality, diversity, and depth of applicant pool
- Implement MELMAC planning goals
- Continue to refine financial aid disbursement to maximize return and minimize cost
- Consistently review/improve the college's website

- Work with development and financial planning to fully implement new institutionwide data management system and develop means to accurately and empirically compare all areas of planning

Planning for the transition to a year-round calendar will begin in Winter 2008, with the goal of fielding pilot efforts in Summer 2008 or 2009.

Facilities

Immediate facilities projections are related to improving grounds, building new student housing, and addressing the large amount of deferred maintenance. The college expects to:

- Have 51 new beds of green/sustainable student housing by Fall 2008
- Complete significant improvements to the campus landscape in accordance with the campus landscape plan by Summer 2008
- Continue to improve efficiency and "greenness" of campus operations as directed by the college's policies and mission

In addition, the current campus plan will be revised over the next three years to incorporate the implications of new student housing and a new approach to the development of a student center, the Deering Common, as well as to reflect other changes achieved in 2003–2007.

Administration and Financial Management

Following on the work of the financial sustainability committee, the campus has a concrete plan to become economically sustainable (see Standard Nine). This plan requires carefully managing and monitoring costs associated with the aforementioned operational areas. The college is committed to establishing a positive budget by 2009, substantially increasing endowment, and making significant progress on faculty/staff salary equity. The administrative dean will oversee these efforts.

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STANDARD THREE
ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

DESCRIPTION

COA's governance system is designed to accomplish the ongoing tasks of college policymaking and campus management while fostering an authentic learning community that informs and provides opportunities for its members—including students—to participate in decision-making. There are three partners in governance: the board of trustees, the president and administration, and the all college meeting (ACM) and its standing committees (Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2). The most recent history and internal assessment of the governance system can be found in the interim and final reports of the governance initiative liaison committee (Exhibit 3.3).

The board of trustees has the authority and responsibility for conducting all college affairs. As specified by the bylaws, the board's responsibilities include: the acquisition, improvement, and sale of property; reviewing and approving the annual budget; review of all contracts; oversight of financial obligations incurred by the institution; and establishing qualifications for awarding academic degrees. The bylaws call for nine standing committees on the board including the executive committee, finance committee, audit committee, academic policy committee, building and grounds committee, development committee, presidential review committee, committee on trustees, and student life committee. In addition, there are three committees not specified in the bylaws: these include the strategic planning, investment, and priorities committees. In 2002, the committee on trustees began a transition to more generative trustee governance with a continuing effort to improve the structure, style, morale, and performance of the board. This includes an ongoing effort to improve the board's relationship to faculty, staff, and students (Exhibit 3.4).

As chief executive officer for the college, the president provides institutional and academic leadership for all college operations, manages the college's resources, holds the ultimate authority on all decisions regarding the hiring or termination of staff, and initiates and ensures the implementation of campus policies and procedures (Exhibit 3.1, pp. 6-7; Exhibit 3.5). The president, who is reviewed by the board on an annual basis, supervises and reviews the chief administrative team.

The ACM, modeled loosely on the New England town meeting, has been a tradition since the college's first year. Community members in the ACM discuss, evaluate, and ratify proposals initiated by standing committees or members of the campus community through formal procedures outlined in the operating model (Exhibits 3.2 and 3.6). Proposals passed by the ACM are subject to approval of the president and at times the board. Standing committees of the ACM include faculty and student meetings as well as academic affairs, campus planning and building, personnel, and student life committees (Exhibit 3.2, p. 38; Exhibit 3.7). Committee chairs, appointed by the president, are responsible for administrative actions of the committees (Exhibit 3.1).

Standing committees of the ACM carry out administrative business and make minor policy and procedural changes. Standing committees periodically report minutes to ACM, and any member of the ACM may challenge a decision made by a committee by challenging the minutes. If a majority of those present at ACM sustains the challenge, the decision is remanded to the committee. The result is that committees function relatively autonomously and efficiently to carry out their work, while the ACM serves as a check on any one committee's power. Challenges of minutes are infrequent.

If a standing committee of the ACM wishes to materially alter a major campus policy that affects the majority of the community, it must do so via a formal proposal that must be voted upon by the full ACM. Procedures for presenting proposals are detailed in the operating model. In a typical year there are approximately one-half dozen proposals.

The college's academic leadership (academic dean and associate academic deans appointed by the president) is directly responsible to the president for the quality of the academic program and student life, through collaboration with the faculty meeting, academic affairs committee, faculty personnel committee,

student life committee, and student meeting. The academic deans also supervise academic staff, including the director of the Thorndike Library, director of internships, registrar, museum manager, and all of academic services (Exhibit 3.8).

The administrative dean oversees all financial matters at the college and supervises all nonacademic personnel. Administrative advisory committees provide student, faculty, and staff input into administrative decisions affecting the library, museum, admission, financial aid, and the graduate program (Exhibit 3.2, p. 41).

Communication between the board, the president, and ACM and its committees occurs both informally and formally. The board meets quarterly, while an executive committee of the board meets more frequently and as needed. With the exception of the committee on trustees, staff members serve on most board standing committees and act as board-campus liaisons to provide necessary supporting information and to connect board committees with administrative operations and ACM committees (Exhibit 3.8). Similarly, the student ACM moderator reports to the board on a quarterly basis regarding past and upcoming ACM meeting agendas, while the president or his designee reports to the ACM on the most recent board agendas, resolutions, decisions, and actions (Exhibits 3.9 and 3.6). With the exception of executive committee meetings, all meetings of the board and its committees are open to the entire community through prior arrangement with the president's office. ACM and its standing committees generally meet weekly with agendas and minutes disseminated to the on-campus community. Since face-to-face meetings are often impractical, much business, particularly with board committees, takes place electronically or through teleconferences.

Students and faculty can participate in campus governance through the faculty and student meetings, ACM, and its committees. Faculty, staff, and students are often invited to participate on ad hoc committees, such as the presidential search and the recent investment task force. All COA community members are welcome at ACM and its standing committees, unless they are in executive session (Exhibits 3.2 and 3.7).

An external or internal review of college governance has occurred at least once every five years, usually more frequently (Exhibit 3.3, "Interim Report," pp. 1-5). A campus standing committee is responsible for the periodic review of the on-campus governance structures and processes (Exhibit 3.7). The committee on trustees is charged with assessing board performance (Exhibit 3.1).

APPRAISAL

College of the Atlantic's strengths in governance include a shared vision and mission, open communication channels, constructive relationships across constituencies, and a sincere commitment to meaningful participation in major decisions. Since the college's founding, the board has provided strong and dedicated leadership, diverse expertise, and unwavering interest in the mission of the college. During 2006–2007, the board consisted of 33 members, many of whom have demonstrated a long-term commitment to and engagement with COA. Trustees bring a range of expertise and interests to their work for the college including planning, education, arts, medicine, research, organic farming, law, philanthropy, media, and financial management. No trustee has any financial interest in the institution as employee, stockholder, or corporate director, although one serves as an adjunct faculty member teaching approximately one course every two years. There is an increased awareness of the need to avoid conflicts of interest.

With a new president, academic dean, and administrative dean among other new administrative staff, the college has improved communication, information-sharing, and collaborative decision-making. Through weekly meetings and an annual retreat, faculty have a substantive voice in all matters concerning the curriculum, academic policies and procedures, faculty personnel policies and procedures, and institutional priorities. Faculty members also serve on all committees and subcommittees of the ACM with the exception of the student meeting. Students also have substantial opportunities to influence matters that pertain not only to the academic program, buildings and grounds, and student life but also to basic policies of the college. While many students choose not to participate actively in college governance processes, those who do participate report enthusiasm and appreciation for these opportunities to influence the direction of the college as well as to learn from the experience. Student-initiated actions have led to re-

examination of the college's investment portfolio, substantive improvement in the design of student housing, and multiple examples of environmentally sound operational practices.

Strengths

- The governance system is educational, inclusive, instrumental in building a strong college community, and strongly supported. Faculty members typically serve on one standing and/or subcommittee as part of their contract. Staff members serve on all committees and are often encouraged to participate in governance by their supervisors. Students serve on all institutional standing committees and subcommittees, are involved in faculty appointments and reviews, serve on admission, judicial, and review and appeals committees, and were active and involved in the NEASC self-study.

- In general, the day-to-day operations of the campus are assisted by the current governance approach. It is rare to find the ACM taking an action that the president must overrule or to find the president and trustees on opposite sides of an issue. The shared governance model not only allows for greater community input but also fosters the dissemination of information and a feeling of ownership of campus decisions.

- Faculty now operate under a charter. Led by the deans and the faculty moderator, the faculty meet regularly with a clearer purview and clearer responsibilities regarding the meeting's collaboration with academic affairs committee, faculty personnel committee, and the board's academic policy committee (Exhibit 3.7). Similarly, the academic affairs and faculty personnel committees have both revised and ratified their charters, clarifying roles in relation to the faculty meeting and academic deans (Exhibit 3.7).

- Spring 2006 saw the unanimous passing of a revised operating model. The revised model includes improvements to ACM operating procedures and the relationship between the president and ACM (Exhibits 3.2 and Exhibit 3.6, Spring 2006 ACM Report).

- The president has clearly delegated authority not only to ensure that all portions of the governance system are understood but also to increase accountability, communication, and transparency within the decision-making process, especially in regard to the formation of the annual budget.

- Standard practice at COA includes the periodic review and evaluation of governance. The president, administration, and board review campus policies on a regular basis. Since 2005, the board has systematically evaluated its processes and performance (Exhibit 3.4). The president and deans routinely examine policies related to the academic program.

- Although participation by students in ACM is low, students see the ACM as functioning effectively and feel free to attend and participate when interested in the issues at hand.

- There has been visible progress made on all operational fronts, indicating a strong governance system and administration, independent board, and president acting in the best interests of the college in spite of, at times, frank questioning, vocal opposition, and direct challenges.

Limitations

- From time to time, different views on the exercise of authority still exist between the board, president, and campus. Some examples include:

    — In 2001, a proposal to prohibit amorous relations between students and employees of the college brought by the personnel committee to ACM did not gain the two-thirds majority needed to pass. Subsequently, the board instituted a policy prohibiting such relations,

feeling that to do so was necessary to protect the college. Some on campus felt the board's decision to be inconsistent with governance processes (Exhibits 3.2 and 3.6).

— In 2003, after the academic dean of 20 years announced he was leaving administration, there was considerable confusion about appropriate roles in determining the replacement for this key position. Some members of the board strongly suggested hiring an external academic dean and believed trustees should have considerable influence in the selection process. While understandable, this move was in contrast with the institutional personnel procedures adopted by the trustees in 1997 in which they explicitly delegated authority to the president for "all decisions on hiring or termination pertaining to faculty and staff." Once the conflict was pointed out, trustees adhered to their stated policy.

— Because of budget shortfalls and cost overruns, there was a period (2002–2005) characterized by unilateral budget decisions made by the board. Although such actions could be considered within the board's purview, many thought the process was not in the spirit of the established governance model.

— Despite several meetings, the committee on trustees and the steering committee were, over the past few years, unable to come to agreement on the relationship and authority of the ACM in relation to the president and the board.

- The role of the ACM in relation to the board and president is at times unclear. According to the revised operating model, campus policies and procedures are approved by the ACM either as minutes from committees or as policy proposals voted on by the ACM. Such policy stands unless overruled by the president or board (Exhibit 3.2), for the ACM functions as an advisory body to both (Exhibit 3.1). However, to some members of the COA community, the phrase in the bylaws that describes ACM as "advisory to the president" suggests that the ACM has no policymaking authority, whereas to others, the phrase does not accurately reflect how many campus decisions and policies are made by the ACM and its standing committees. While the charters of campus committees now use the phrases "autonomous" and "collaborative decision-making authority" with regard to their purviews, there continue to be differences of opinion about what constitutes and who has institutional authority to set "policy."

- While there has been some improvement in the way community members are informed and educated about governance processes, the college continues to seek ways to share information more efficiently and effectively.

- Many students choose not to participate in any campus governance.

- While the board brings considerable diversity and expertise to the college, the lack of gender and racial diversity on the board has been of concern: two-thirds of the board members are men, and all are European American. About half are Maine residents with the other half residing on Mount Desert Island in summer. In addition, the size of the board may hinder effective operations and communication.

- The college community does not agree on what makes a healthy governance system. COA needs objective indicators; periodic governance reviews often seem to be primarily used as opportunities to air pet peeves.

PROJECTION

- By Fall 2008, the associate dean for student life—assisted by campus committees—will design, pilot, and evaluate a comprehensive governance orientation for new faculty, staff, and students, respectively. The content of this orientation will clearly communicate areas in which individuals and groups have the authority and responsibility to make decisions

as well as those where community members have to collaborate with decision-makers to facilitate informed and effective governance.

- By June 2009, the library's archivist, college web manager, and committee chairs will ensure that all information about governance is documented, accurate, current, and accessible to facilitate institutional accountability and effectiveness. In addition, the relationship between the ACM, president, and board will be articulated consistently across governance documents.

- By Fall 2009, the trustees hope to have reduced trustee membership to 24–26 individuals. The nominating committee will strive to increase the diversity of board membership by the same date.

- By Fall 2011, the academic deans, with the help of the chairs of academic affairs and student activities committees, will identify and agree on desired educational outcomes for those participating in the governance system, outcomes that are consistent with the COA mission. These outcomes will evaluate student participation, assess student learning, and find new or additional ways to encourage students to participate in and learn from their involvement in college governance.

With these improvements, the college fully expects that the extraordinary individuals who comprise the COA community will continue to improve on the college's system of governance. Such experience and measures of institutional effectiveness and integrity will both fulfill and reflect COA's unique educational mission "to investigate, and ultimately improve, the relationships between human beings and our social and natural communities" (see Standard One).

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STANDARD FOUR
ACADEMIC PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION

The undergraduate program at College of the Atlantic offers only one degree: the Bachelor of Arts in Human Ecology. The commitment to human ecology guides all aspects of curriculum and instruction at the college (see Standard One). To facilitate interdisciplinary teaching and learning, the college and its faculty have chosen to not divide into academic departments. For planning and organizational purposes, the faculty is divided into three multidisciplinary resource areas: the environmental sciences, arts and design, and human studies. The latter includes faculty in both the humanities and social sciences.

The college currently offers three 10-week terms.[2] Students take three classes a term, each worth one credit. One COA credit is equivalent to 3 1/3 semester hours; nine credits are equal to 30 semester hours. To graduate, students must complete 36 credits, at least 18 of these at COA over a minimum of six terms. Courses and noncredit requirements are detailed below.

Oversight and Governance

Under broad oversight from the academic policy committee of the board of trustees, the president and the academic dean lead the academic program. The academic dean supervises three associate deans and works closely with the faculty chair of the academic affairs committee (AAC) and the faculty moderator to coordinate academic planning. The academic deans are all members of the teaching faculty, with the exception of the associate dean for student life. AAC is charged not only with establishing all academic policies but also with approving all courses, group studies, and tutorials. The faculty meeting is charged with setting academic standards and the associate dean for advanced studies oversees all aspects of the graduate program. In practice, the AAC, the faculty meeting, the president, and the academic deans work closely in developing academic policy and charting academic direction with appropriate guidance from the academic policy committee of the board (see Standard Three).

Overall Educational Goals

In the 2006–2007 academic year, the faculty developed a new statement of educational goals and values (Exhibits 4.1 and 4.2). There was widespread agreement among faculty that the competencies stated in previous catalogs (Exhibit 4.3) were outdated; they no longer resonated with the faculty or served any practical purpose in organizing the curriculum. The new educational goals are listed prominently in the current course catalog and the means by which these goals will be used to assess and guide the academic program are discussed below. The faculty has also reemphasized the primacy of writing skills.

Course Requirements

The 36 credits required for graduation must include:

- The core course in human ecology, an interdisciplinary reading and discussion seminar, taken during the first fall of all entering students' attendance at COA
- One history course
- One of several courses with a component in quantitative reasoning
- Two courses from each of the three resource areas: environmental sciences, arts and design, and human studies
- One writing class or two classes designated writing-focused

[2] The academic calendar will be adjusted by Summer 2009 to include a summer term option.

These course requirements are detailed in the course catalog (Exhibit 4.4). All course descriptions in the catalog clearly indicate which requirements, if any, are met by a particular course.

Other Graduation Requirements

Writing Requirement: The college's writing requirement consists of two levels: Unless exempted by AP or IB credit, all first-year students must take a writing course within the first two years; and by the end of the second year, all students must submit a portfolio of expository and argumentative writing. The portfolio, which is reviewed by a member of the faculty, must demonstrate that students not only write at a level above the first year but also have the skills to effectively complete the assignments that are typically given in advanced courses. This new evaluation process uses a rubric (Exhibit 4.5) developed by an interdisciplinary faculty team and approved by the full faculty. This review replaces one that used the human ecology essay, written in a student's senior year. If the portfolio evidences that a student cannot write at the advanced level, he or she, the student's advisor, and the reviewer meet to discuss options for improving the student's writing. The student may be advised to take another writing or writing-focused class and/or to work on a regular basis with a trained peer tutor in the writing center.

Internship: All students must complete a 10-week, full-time internship in an area compatible with their career path and interests. A selection of internship proposals and reports may be found in Exhibit 4.6.

Human Ecology Essay: By the middle of their senior year, all students must complete a human ecology essay, a work of exposition, argumentation, or extended description or narration. The essays require that students reflect on their COA education and synthesize multiple areas of study. A selection of recent essays can be found in Exhibit 4.7.

Community Service: All students at COA must complete a 40-hour community service requirement prior to their last term of enrollment.

Senior or Final Project: All students must complete a three-credit senior project, a significant intellectual endeavor, experiment, research project, or original work. The senior project should demonstrate the student's human ecology focus, advance understanding in a particular academic area, and bring together the skills and knowledge acquired during his or her college career. Before beginning their senior project, students must write a detailed proposal that must be approved by their advisor, the project sponsor, and the review and appeals committee. Selected senior project proposals can be found in Exhibit 4.8 and senior projects themselves in Exhibit 4.9.

Self-Directed, Responsive Curriculum

A COA education is significantly self-directed. There are no course requirements associated with an academic major or concentration, and students, working closely with their academic advisors, have the freedom to choose educational paths that best meet their career and life goals. Students play an active role in building their programs in human ecology through course selection and the following options:

Independent Studies: Students initiate and carry out independent studies under the supervision of faculty or community sponsors. To do an independent study, a student must write a proposal that is approved by the student's academic advisor and the independent study sponsor. Independent studies are a relatively frequent occurrence at COA.

Group Studies: A group study is a student-initiated, student-designed, and collectively run class. Students wishing to do a group study must submit a detailed proposal to the academic affairs committee for approval. Selected group study proposals can be found in Exhibit 4.10 and a list of group study titles over the last five years in Exhibit 4.11.

Residency: A residency is a three-credit, term-long educational experience designed by a student who wishes to pursue advanced, focused work in areas that may not be provided in either the content or the

structure of the curriculum. Residency proposals are approved via the same procedures as those used for senior projects and must be supervised by a faculty member.

Tutorials: Tutorials are faculty-run studies for one–five students that cover specialized or advanced material not usually available within the regular curriculum. Faculty members offer tutorials based on student demand. Like regular courses, tutorials are approved by the academic affairs committee.

Curricular Structures and Paths: The Tiered Curriculum

All students at COA construct their own major in human ecology through their course choices—including independent studies, tutorials, group studies, and residencies—as well as their internship and senior project. Many students and advisors find it useful to think about the curriculum at COA as consisting of stages or tiers. The first stage is the most structured, while subsequent tiers place more responsibility on students to chart their own academic path. No two students progress through the tiers in exactly the same way. The diagram that follows explains the multi-tiered curriculum developed as the result of an extensive and inclusive review process conducted in the 1989–1990 academic year and discussed in the college's previous self-study (Exhibit 4.12).

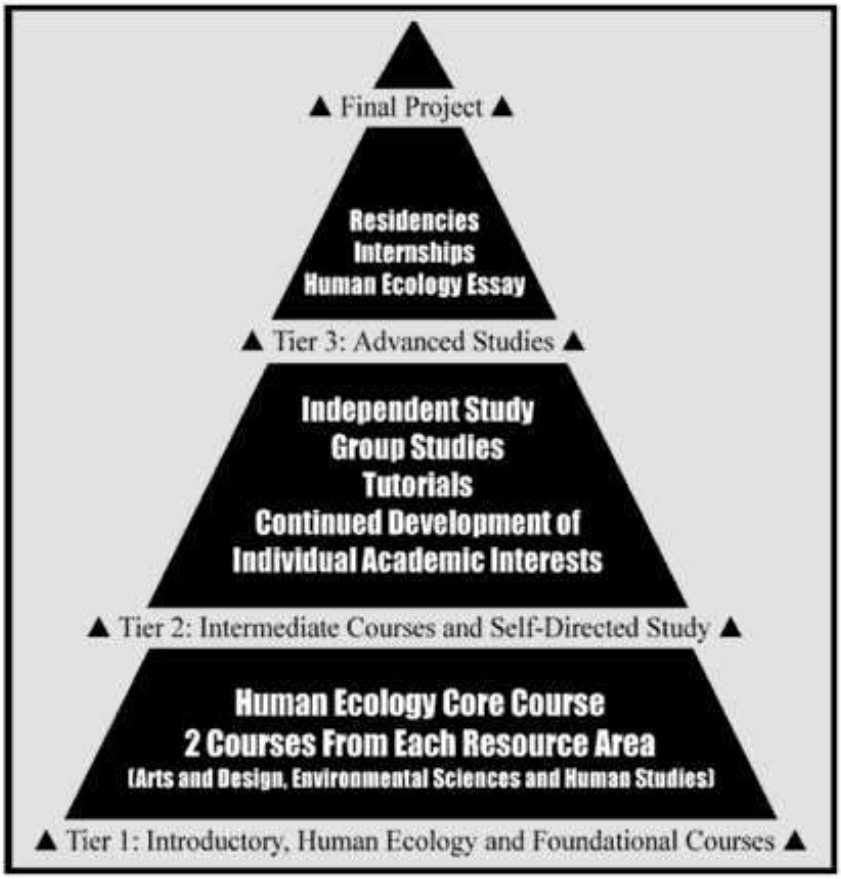

Figure 4.1: A schematic illustration of the tiered curriculum.

Educational Studies and Teacher Certification

College of the Atlantic offers teaching certificates to students in the following areas: elementary (K–8) education and secondary (7–12) life science, language arts, and social studies. Maine certification is

reciprocal in 42 other states. The teacher education program is fully accredited by the Maine Board of Education; its last accreditation was in 2006 and review will occur in Spring 2010 (Exhibit 4.13).

Programs

The term "program" is used in several different ways at the college. In the sense that the word is used by NEASC, COA has only one academic program, the B.A. in Human Ecology. There are no designated majors, concentrations, or certificate programs with the exception of the state certification in education noted above. In practice, courses and faculty can be organized along a number of different lines. These lines provide ways to conceptualize the curriculum for both faculty and students. One such line is that of the resource areas: arts and design, environmental sciences, and human studies. Other areas—marine studies, international studies, and writing and literature—are often referred to as "programs." In 2005, the college began referring to these as "focus areas" to indicate areas of the curriculum in which it has considerable depth and strength.

Academic Advising and Academic Services

Since the curriculum is relatively unstructured and places a significant responsibility on students to design and shape their own academic programs, advising is especially important at COA. In Fall 1996, the area of academic services was established under the academic dean to oversee advising. Together with the academic affairs committee this group is responsible for all advising procedures, internships, academic probation, and review and appeals.

Academic services conducts briefing meetings for faculty and advisors with specific updates on degree requirements, procedures, and other information. The official faculty advisor is a member of the regular COA teaching staff. There are also numerous staff advisors.

An office of internships and career services offers ongoing support and guidance for students seeking internships, jobs, graduate schools, and/or postgraduate fellowships.

External Partnerships

To complement the college's strengths and to provide additional educational, research, and creative opportunities for students and faculty, COA partners with other educational and research institutions. COA has recently helped pioneer the ECO-League, an educational consortium of small colleges committed to instruction with an ecological focus. Students in good standing at any of the ECO-League schools, all of which are fully accredited by their regional accrediting bodies, may attend other schools in the consortium for up to a total of one academic year. COA has also entered into a similar relationship with the Olin College of Engineering. Olin, which opened in 2002, has achieved candidacy with NEASC and anticipates full accreditation from NEASC and ABET as soon as they are eligible.

In addition, the college has a variety of consortium and cooperative agreements with institutions and organizations in Maine, the U.S., and abroad. These include, for example, the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory, The Jackson Laboratory, Acadia National Park, the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), the Landing Institute, the Shoals Marine Laboratory, the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies, the International Society for Human Ecology, the department of human ecology at CINVESTAV, IPN Merida (Centro de Investigaciones Avanzadas), the Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan (FAUADY), and the Yucatan Peninsula Institute.

Noteworthy Developments Since 1997 Self-Study

International Studies: International offerings at the college have increased significantly. Each year, approximately 12 COA students and two COA faculty members spend winter term in an interdisciplinary cultural immersion program in the Yucatan. The college has also piloted a term-long program in Guatemala and a number of shorter programs consisting of a brief international trip after classes have ended. In addition, on-campus curricular offerings have expanded to include more international and cross-cultural

courses. Equally important, the percentage of foreign students attending COA has risen dramatically due to the Davis Scholars Program described in Standard Six. At present, approximately 20 percent of the college's students come from outside the U.S. The net result of these developments is that over the last decade the intellectual climate at COA has become significantly more diverse, global, and cosmopolitan. Recent funding for curriculum and program development in international studies has been provided by an $115,000 grant that the college received in 2004 from the Title VI program of the U.S. Department of Education. The college has also benefited from several endowed funds for international studies from the Davis Foundation.

New Facilities: College of the Atlantic has been fortunate to acquire several new facilities since the last 10-year accreditation, facilities that have markedly expanded the range and quality of local field experiences. The college obtained two island field stations, one on Great Duck Island and the other on Mount Desert Rock. The college also acquired Beech Hill Farm, a small organic farm on Mount Desert Island. Details of these acquisitions can be found in the five-year NEASC progress report (Exhibit 4.14). In addition, renovations to existing buildings in the 2005–2006 academic year have resulted in two additional arts studios, both of which provide much-needed additional space for arts and design courses and student projects. The college also significantly upgraded one of its biology labs.

New Faculty: Given the college's small size, the addition of new faculty in any area significantly expands academic offerings. In the past decade COA has added the following positions: video and performing arts, 2000–2001; cultural anthropology, 2000–2001; global environmental politics, 2001–2002 (half-time); government and polity, 2006–2007 (two-thirds time); languages and language learning, 2006–2007; and green business and leadership, anticipated in 2008–2009.

Course Registration and Academic Calendar

The college has an academic calendar of three 10-week terms in which the normal full-time load is three courses per term. Fall term begins around Labor Day and continues until the Friday before Thanksgiving. Winter term usually begins the first Monday in January. There is a two-week spring break, followed by spring term. Graduation is the first Saturday in June.

In concert with the imperatives in the financial sustainability report adopted by the trustees in April 2007, the president and trustees are convinced that expanding the academic calendar to include a summer academic program is necessary to the financial sustainability of the college (see Standard Two). The addition of such a program will allow the college to increase student FTEs without creating the immediate need for additional capital investments in classrooms and dining facilities. The modalities of such a program will be developed during the 2007–2008 academic year with pilot programs beginning in Summers 2008 and/or 2009.

While faculty and ACM do not dispute the recommendations of the financial sustainability committee, a few faculty members are opposed to program expansion, and all concerned recognize the logistical difficulties in making the transition to a four-seasons academic calendar.

A grant-supported pilot program in Summers 1999 and 2000 was designed to test the feasibility of offering classes for COA students in summer and the possible creation of a summer term. Results from this pilot were mixed but strongly suggest that there are considerable impediments to summer classes (Exhibit 4.15). The most significant are financial considerations for students. Federal financial aid regulations make it difficult for most students to take a term in which they are enrolled in less than three courses or to enroll in more than three terms in a year. In addition, many students use summers to make money to help pay tuition and living expenses. While COA students rarely take classes in summer, field research and internships are common and independent studies occur periodically; the college hopes to build upon these (see Projection). During Summer 2007 the college is experimenting with a marine mammalogy class that will be attached to each student's fall registration with students doing the most significant fieldwork in late August.

Registration for each of the three terms takes place in the previous term with an add/drop period during the first 10 days of each term. Students fill out paper registration forms that are submitted to the registrar

indicating first and second choices. Admission to classes for students who meet published prerequisites is based on seniority. In some cases, however, admission to courses is granted only by permission of the instructor who may use his or her own criteria for admission—a situation faculty and administration closely monitor to ensure fairness. A week or so after registration, students receive information indicating the status of their course choices and enrollments. If all the student's course choices are filled, he or she may be placed on numerous waiting lists and will begin the term formally enrolled in less than three classes.

Graduate Degree Program

The mission of the graduate program at College of the Atlantic includes providing opportunities for a select group of advanced students to pursue cross-disciplinary scholarship and research in close association with a team of faculty mentors. The college's choice of a Masters of Philosophy in Human Ecology rather than the more traditional MA or MS emphasizes the college's interdisciplinary approach to learning. Students are expected to take the ancient meaning of philosophy literally—to succeed they must be true lovers of wisdom.

The MPhil program has two important elements. The first is essentially preparatory and consists of nine courses that serve as foundation blocks for advanced independent work by the candidate. These courses are expected to cover a range of topics and yet constitute a clear theme of study. The second element is the thesis, a work of original scholarship developed in close collaboration with the thesis committee. The thesis should exemplify the interdisciplinary nature of research encouraged within human ecology and ideally will further demonstrate understanding within a specific field or fields of study.

Prior to admission, prospective graduate students are encouraged to contact members of the faculty to discuss possible avenues of study. In order to be admitted, an applicant must have at least two faculty members willing to act as sponsors. Ultimately the student will have a thesis advising team of at least three faculty members, with at least one from outside the disciplinary focus of the thesis.

At the time of application, potential MPhil students and their advisors must list nine classes that they have agreed would form a suitable foundation for the student's thesis exploration. Since the college has no graduate courses per se, the class list must be made up of existing classes or tutorials at the intermediate or advanced level. In some cases, it may be appropriate for a candidate to take additional courses at an introductory level, but these credits may not be counted toward the nine classes required for the degree. With the permission of the thesis committee and the associate dean of advanced studies, students may transfer up to three of the required nine courses from another institution. Transfer credits must be approved at the time of admission. All coursework counted toward the degree must be completed with grades of B or higher.

Graduate applicants must also prepare an informal thesis proposal that is then modified during the first year of study. During the admission process, significant weight is placed on this preliminary thesis statement, and it is circulated to potential faculty sponsors to determine the degree of interest in the applicant.

Particulars of an individual program of study are determined in collaboration with the thesis committee and the associate dean for advanced studies, but generally the bulk of coursework is completed in the first year and the thesis finished by the end of the second year. Maximum allowable time for all work is four calendar years from the date of admission.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

AAC approves all courses (including those offered off-campus), tutorials, and group studies. The faculty supervisor and a student's advisor must approve any proposal for independent study. Senior projects must be approved by the senior project supervisor and the student's advisor. When someone other than a member of the COA faculty supervises a senior project or independent study, a member of the faculty must approve the supervisor's qualifications. Faculty members or independent study or senior project supervisors must assign grades and write narrative evaluations. Students unsatisfied with a grade in a given class may appeal to the review and appeals committee.

AAC sets clear expectations that learning goals and evaluative criteria be listed in all course syllabi and, where appropriate, course descriptions. Course descriptions are published on the college's website to be readily available to all students and the general public. Course schedules for current and upcoming terms are posted on the website and distributed via hard copy to students at least once a year. AAC ensures that enough courses are offered to meet the various graduation requirements. The college publishes clear statements about what constitutes good academic standing in the course catalog along with clear probationary procedures for students who are not in good academic standing.

The college has occasionally offered short but intensive one–two week courses for a full COA credit. COA offers such courses sparingly, and the AAC takes particular care to ensure that the contact hours in a short course are equivalent to those of a regular course. The college offers no distance learning classes. The internship committee, a subcommittee of AAC, determines the creditworthiness of all internships.

Every credit-bearing activity receives a narrative evaluation from the instructor, an evaluation which becomes part of the student's official transcript. In addition to the narrative evaluation, a student may elect to receive a letter grade by declaring this choice at registration. There is no limit on the credit/no credit option, and within a term or over an entire career at the college, students may elect a mix of grades and credit/no credit. In the credit/no credit election, "credit" has the value of C or "satisfactory." Students receive only credit or no credit for the internship and senior project.

The registrar evaluates transfer credit from accredited institutions or from advanced work while in secondary school according to guidelines published in the course catalog.

Academic dishonesty is rare at COA. Usually the individual instructor in consultation with the academic dean handles cases of academic dishonesty. However, either the student or the faculty member may request an academic misconduct hearing. The procedures for a hearing are published in the course catalog. In a typical year there are three or four such misconduct hearings. If both parties agree, the matter may be resolved by the academic dean, or his or her designee.

Individual Courses and Individual Students

The college assesses the effectiveness of individual courses in a host of ways. All students receive a paragraph-long narrative evaluation of their work in each course. This narrative evaluation is a permanent part of the student's academic record. Most students also write self-evaluations reflecting on their learning in each class; this self-evaluation is a part of the student's academic record. (Sample student transcripts are contained in Exhibit 4.16). Additionally, students complete a course evaluation for each course they take. The college's course evaluation form has both quantitative (Likert-scale) and qualitative components. Taken together, these forms of evaluation provide multiple opportunities for faculty to reflect on and assess student learning.

AAC ensures that all course descriptions specify learning outcomes and the basis for evaluation and there are multiple occasions on which students receive feedback about their learning. Students meet regularly with their academic advisor to review their academic record, discuss their overall progress, and plan their academic trajectory. Many courses require one-on-one conferences to assess learning. The second-year writing portfolio also gives students feedback on their progress at COA.

All classes conduct a midterm course evaluation in which students and instructor(s) engage in a discussion about how the course is going and to what extent learning goals are being met. In addition, they consider possible changes to maximize individual and group learning in the last five weeks of the course.

Assessment at the Program Level

College of the Atlantic has only one formal academic program, the Bachelor of Arts in Human Ecology. Since all undergraduate students receive the same degree, program-level assessment is closely related to an overall assessment of institutional effectiveness. Nevertheless, there are some curricular areas at COA that

have engaged in systematic assessment activities above and beyond the more individualized assessment described above.

The most formal program-level assessment occurs within the teacher certification program (fully reaccredited by the state of Maine in 2006).

Assessment for the curriculum in international studies was included as part of the 2004 Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education, and several focus areas receive assessment and external validation via success in securing grants and placing students in graduate schools. For example, in the past five years projects in marine studies have been supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, the Luce Foundation, the Cabot Foundation, and the National Science Foundation. Biomedical research funding from the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and a number of foundations has been made available to students through collaboration with The Jackson Laboratory and the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory.

In addition, many program areas submit reports as part of the annual report prepared by the president and submitted to the board of trustees (Exhibit 4.17).

Specific focus area strengths and weaknesses of the college's program in human ecology will be further considered as part of the overall review of the academic program scheduled for 2008–2009. The president is strongly committed to the inclusion of outside and independent review in this process.

Assessment at the Institutional Level

The assessment of writing at the end of each student's second year not only provides feedback to the individual but also allows the college to assess the extent to which it is meeting its goal of having all students write at the collegiate level.

Since 2004 the college has participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This survey, in which several hundred U.S. colleges and universities annually participate, asks students numerous questions designed to measure the extent to which they engage in activities in which learning of different sorts is known to occur, e.g., making a class presentation, discussing matters with peers with different backgrounds, participating in extracurricular activities, or writing multiple drafts of a research paper (Exhibit 4.18).

The college carefully monitors a number of important indicators of student learning and success such as the percent of graduates who attend graduate or professional school, the percent of graduates who have participated in some form of a study-abroad program, and the number of students who receive external fellowships such as the Watson, Udall, INBRE, and Goldwater scholarships.

In addition, the college conducts standard comparative institutional research, using the benchmarks of the Common Data Set. The college pays particular attention to the six-year graduation rate and the rate of retention from one year to the next.

Institutional Effectiveness

The numerous assessment activities described above all focus on the quality of the college's academic programs. The college uses results of assessment to improve individual classes, particular areas of the curriculum, and the academic program as a whole. Most of the college's assessment is done informally, as is appropriate for a small community of self-directed, interdisciplinary learners.

APPRAISAL

Writing Requirement

Changing the evaluation procedure, which applies to all students entering after Fall 2004, was a significant step. The new procedure gives the college the opportunity to intervene in a student's second or third year and to work with them to ensure that they acquire the skills, knowledge, and practice to become cohesive, graceful writers. The challenge, however, is compliance; currently compliance for students entering their third year in Fall 2007 is 34%.

The new writing requirement is more systematic, and the process of preparing and submitting a writing portfolio makes it clear to students the high value that the college places on effective writing. At the same time, the college recognizes the need to increase general understanding of the portfolio requirement among both students and advisors.

The development of writing-focused courses has given students an additional way to meet the writing requirement. Having a range of both writing courses and writing-focused classes regularly available to students allows the college to better accommodate multiple learning styles and gives students more choices as they design their curriculum.

The process through which the writing requirement was revised also illustrates the college's assessment of learning and its processes for implementing change. One of the benefits of the college's size is that academic concerns can be perceived relatively easily. The series of discussions facilitated by the AAC enabled broad input and resulted in strong, collegewide support for the new writing requirement; it received unanimous approval in the ACM. Together with the writing rubric collectively approved by the faculty (Exhibit 4.5), this process indicates that there is a shared set of standards for all graduates.

Educational Goals

The faculty almost unanimously agrees that the new educational goals in the catalog are a great improvement over the competencies that were formerly published (Exhibit 4.3). Faculty generally see the new statement as a valuable articulation of educational values and goals.

Course Requirements

The resource area requirements are similar to the breadth or distribution requirements of most liberal arts colleges. It is the general sense of the faculty that they ensure breadth and that a wide range of courses is always available to satisfy any particular distribution requirement.

There are enough classes that meet the quantitative reasoning (QR) requirement. In the NEASC report of 10 years ago, some concerns were identified about the strength and depth of the offerings in mathematics. Enrollment in math classes is up considerably, and the college has offered advanced math classes—differential equations, chaos and complex systems, and linear algebra—far beyond what was offered a decade ago. AAC is confident that the QR requirement succeeds in providing students with experience in at least some aspect of symbolic, numerical, or geometric reasoning.

The content and focus of the human ecology core course are a matter of great discussion and some dispute. For the most part, this disagreement is constructive. A healthy debate over a core curriculum is a sign of an engaged and diverse faculty. While course evaluations for the core course do not differ significantly from those of other courses, there is considerable variation from section to section, and students within a given section often experience the class quite differently. The college's upcoming academic program review will provide an opportunity to further develop and refine its approach to the core curriculum.

A few faculty members have voiced concern over the history requirement. Part of this concern is rooted in familiar debates over what constitutes history, a debate that AAC and the deans see as a positive manifestation of the intellectual diversity of the faculty. Of more concern is that the college at times

struggles to offer a sufficient range of courses meeting the history requirement. There is a sense that the college needs to offer more history courses and to broaden the topics and regions covered. AAC is well aware of these concerns and in 2005 endorsed a plan to clarify the history requirement and strengthen the teaching of history at the college. This has resulted in modest improvements, but the faculty discussion on historical topics and regions covered is continuing and will become part of the overall academic program review in 2007–2009.

The college's graduation requirements ensure that all students who graduate from COA have demonstrated knowledge in and ability to use the methods of a range of academic disciplines through the resource area requirements, the study of history, the quantitative reasoning requirement, and collegiate-level writing. In addition, the senior project requires all students to prepare for and successfully carry out in-depth and advanced independent study.

Academic Advising and Orientation

Education at COA is self-directed, interdisciplinary, and often nonlinear. The college consistently encourages intentionality and reflection, but this does not lead—nor should it—to uniform course patterns. Because the college strongly encourages students to take ownership of their own education and to develop their own unique paths through the curriculum, advising is critical.

The college's continuous challenge is to devise, refine, and implement an advising system appropriate to the distinctive academic programs created by individual students. The college celebrates the fact that advisors differ widely in styles, since different students thrive under different styles of advising. The vast majority of students regularly seek advice, formal or informal, from more than one faculty or staff member. Evidence that the current approach is working is qualitative and anecdotal as well as quantitative. The latter form of evidence is provided by NSSE results and a steadily increasing retention rates, in particular, an improved first-to-second year rate (Exhibits 4.18 and 4.19).

The college's advising system is complemented by academic probation procedures that were significantly clarified and regularized by AAC in 2005. These procedures allow the college to quickly identify students in academic difficulty and intervene to provide them support and motivation. When students are unable or unwilling to do satisfactory work, the academic probation procedures enable the college to remove those students quickly and fairly.

In 2000, the college instituted a change from a relatively lenient policy of allowing faculty to assign a grade of "Incomplete" to students who had failed to complete all coursework by the end of the term. Now, with the approval of the academic probation officer, the faculty may only grant extensions to a certain date. This change has helped students complete course work and graduate.

Programs

During the last self-study, alumni surveys showed a clear split between those who would have preferred some form of degree concentration and those who maintain that the strength of the curriculum is the interdisciplinarity and self-directedness of human ecology itself. Senior exit interviews and regular conversations with and surveys of alumni have consistently reaffirmed this difference of opinion. The college believes that the development of fixed majors or concentrations would work against the self-directed, reflective, individualized curriculum that is one of its greatest and most distinctive strengths and is essential to fulfilling its mission.

The college is committed to providing depth to students in particular areas while holding steadfastly to an approach in which the choice of direction remains open to each student. Some students opt for an open interpretation of human ecology without a program-like emphasis. Others choose to follow a more focused track within one of the resource or focus areas. Faculty members in a few areas need to do a better job of coordinating their course offerings so that students have clearer and more logical paths to guide them through the curriculum.

Students at times express frustration or confusion with the human ecology degree, wondering how they can gain depth in a particular area or what careers their degree will enable. While the college wants students to question their course of study, it is clear that COA must more clearly and continuously articulate the intellectual foundations of human ecology—a key goal for the academic program review. Despite the concern, graduates not only meet requirements for admission to discipline-based programs in graduate school quite readily but also meet entry requirements for positions in a wide range of fields including education, conservation, and the arts.

Course Registration and Academic Calendar

Registration forms and course schedules were redesigned in 2005–2006 and for the first time posted on the college website. The chair of the academic affairs committee now maintains a two-year schedule of course offerings reviewed and approved by AAC. Recent improvements in the registrar's office have led to an increase in student and faculty satisfaction with the registration process. Taken together, these improvements are a substantial upgrade over 1997.

Nevertheless, improvements in registration must still be made:

- Students report frustration at the lack of immediate feedback in registration.
- First-year students too often find themselves not enrolled in three classes because their first several course choices were full.
- The add/drop period is confusing for faculty who do not know at any given time who is in their classes.
- There is considerable frustration at the time that it takes for the college to get grades and narrative evaluations to students after the term has ended. The registrar's office assembles almost all narrative evaluations from emails sent by faculty into the current registration software. As one can imagine, this is inefficient and error prone.

The college is looking to pilot its new electronic registration system in Spring 2008. This should greatly ameliorate a number of situations inherent in the paper registration system.

Graduate Degree Program

The original vision of the MPhil program was to develop a small community of scholars modeled on the Harvard Junior Fellows that would enhance the academic life of the campus by their participation in advanced coursework and research. This is still the goal. However, the program has a number of challenges:

- The college has not developed a consistent "critical mass" of applicants or sufficient enrolled students to sustain such a community of scholars.
- The varied interests of the graduate students present on campus at any one time limit the amount of productive intellectual discussion among them.
- At present there is no specific forum to facilitate graduate students' sharing in each other's intellectual development.
- Many faculty members strongly prefer teaching undergraduates and have been reluctant to invest the time needed to support graduate education.
- With the successful graduation of the college's largest "class" of graduate students to date in 2006, numbers have declined below a threshold where a real "community" can operate.
- Under the present policy of remitting one-third of the undergraduate tuition costs, a graduate student is expected to pay approximately $28,000 for tuition over the course of two years. This figure contains no allowance for books, research, or living expenses.

Discussions with AAC in Spring 2005 resulted in an assessment of the graduate requirements and a re-affirmation of the overall program. New and clearer guidelines were included in the course catalog, and procedures for thesis proposals and defenses were formalized. The primary need for the program is

scholarship funds to remit all or a significant part of tuition and to provide at least limited support for basic living expenses.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

The college is confident that it adheres to high standards of integrity in awarding academic credit and degrees. The academic deans and AAC exercise diligent oversight in all matters of academic integrity. The faculty maintains responsibility for all academic credit, and faculty members are expected to grade and evaluate students fairly and objectively. The relative paucity of appealed grades indicates that students have few concerns about grading. Grade distributions are somewhat top-heavy, but nevertheless the distribution is fairly broad. The deans and the chair of AAC monitor all grade sheets and query faculty in the rare instance of an unusual grading pattern.

In Winter 2003, AAC instituted changes in policies concerning independent studies in response to a concern that some students were taking independent studies when they were not in a position to succeed. The new policy clarifies that first-year students and those on academic probation may not enroll in independent studies and also limits the number of independent studies a student may take in an academic year to two. These new policies have been successful in preventing students who are not ready from choosing independent studies.

Individual Courses and Individual Students

The college is quite satisfied with its ability to assess student learning at the individual level and also with the degree to which students and advisors put this assessment to use. The various forms of student assessment provide ample opportunity for students to reflect on their own learning and for faculty to consider the effectiveness of their courses. Small class sizes make it possible for instructors to give considerable direct feedback to students over the course of the term. The vast majority of student evaluations indicate that they have been kept well informed of their progress. And through the narrative evaluations, students receive unusually detailed and individualized assessments of their work in particular classes.

The academic dean or his designee reviews the grade lists of all classes every term, looking for anomalies—large numbers of Fs or a class getting all As. Such anomalies are quite rare, and when they are found, the academic dean discusses them with the faculty member. There is little general concern about grade inflation, but faculty periodically meet to discuss academic evaluative standards and any faculty member can put the issue on the faculty meeting agenda.

Just as small class sizes enable faculty to give ample feedback to students, so students can—and do—give feedback to faculty during the course of the term. This is done not only via the midterm course evaluation but also informally throughout most courses.

In addition, all instructors read their course evaluations subsequent to submitting grades and evaluations for students. A minor concern is that students may be less than forthcoming on the course evaluations. Students may be concerned about jeopardizing their relationship with a faculty member, especially in disciplines in which there are only one or two faculty members. It is difficult to imagine the benefit of a small community and small classes without encountering an occasional reluctance on the part of students and faculty to be fully candid in their assessment of each other.

The course evaluation form was revised several times over the last 10 years in response to student and faculty concerns (Exhibit 4.20). The new form includes both qualitative (free-response) questions and quantitative queries (Likert scales). While a few faculty members disagree with the use of Likert scales, the majority agrees that the new forms are a significant improvement over the old. In particular, the forms are much more straightforward in asking students directly about their learning experience in classes.

COA prides itself on a culture of continuous assessment, reflection, and introspection. Almost without exception faculty take student evaluations seriously and use this feedback to modify their classes. Almost all faculty set very high standards for themselves and their students, and students set high standards for themselves and their faculty.

Assessment at the Program Level

The college is reasonably satisfied with the assessment of its curricular areas and projects. The various forms of assessment, although often largely informal, provide valuable opportunities for faculty and staff to gain useful feedback that can improve programs and provide evidence of effectiveness.

However, too often campus opinion of particular programs or projects tends to extremes: either unqualified support or sweeping criticisms. It has been, at times, difficult to find a constructive middle ground. Different faculty and trustees have different favored programs. To some degree, this phenomenon may be a product of the challenging financial times in which the college has frequently operated. Scarce resources make dialog and constructive criticism difficult but all the more important. The college sees this as an area that needs careful, calm attention during the academic program review.

Assessment at the Institutional Level

Because the college believes so strongly in self-directed education and student-defined majors, there is no standard body of knowledge that all students must master. The college focuses on more indirect measures of student learning such as NSSE, graduation and retention rates, and the percent of students going to graduate school. These measures consistently demonstrate the strength of the college's academic program.

Very strong NSSE results provide one of the clearest indicators of this strength. COA met or exceeded national averages on 83 of the 84 questions on the survey, only falling behind—appropriately—on the question dealing with memorization. NSSE groups items into five broad categories: level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences, and supportive campus environment. The responses of COA seniors significantly exceed national averages for all five categories. These results are significant to at least the $p < 0.01$ level (Exhibit 4.18).

The college also conducts considerable informal institutionwide assessment of student learning. Most faculty members know, and have taught, a significant proportion of each graduating class. This means that the faculty meeting and the academic affairs committee are often acutely aware of academic strengths and weaknesses.

Both formal and informal assessments clearly improve the college academic program. In the case of the writing requirement, the informal assessment was simply the strong sense of the faculty as a whole that they were not successfully identifying students with writing deficiencies in time for the college to intervene and help the student.

More formal assessment such as the NSSE and a careful examination of retention rates has allowed the college to target particular areas of advising. For example, the college has an unusually high first-to-second year retention rate and somewhat low retention rate during students' junior year. This has led the college to create additional advising and "re-orientation" activities for juniors as well as to plan for a professional mentors program (see Projection).

Institutional Effectiveness

The college believes that its assessment and evaluative procedures are more than sufficient to ensure the quality of its educational program. The effectiveness of the educational program is the central criteria by which the college is judged. Budget spreadsheets, assessment plans, the development office, the gallery, the farm, the field stations are all important to COA, but what is most fundamental is the learning experience of the college's students.

PROJECTION

Writing Requirement

By the beginning of Fall 2007, the writing program director will inform all students not in compliance and their advisors and give them the opportunity to submit a portfolio by the end of the second full week of classes. A member of the academic services staff will work directly with advisors to improve compliance with the mandate to submit a writing portfolio for review. Those students who still fail to comply could be placed on academic probation.

At present there are no other plans to alter the college's approach to writing. AAC will continue to ensure a sufficient number of writing courses are offered, and the academic dean and director of the writing program will encourage and support faculty who wish to offer writing-focused courses. The writing requirement will be broadly assessed as part of the academic program review.

Educational Goals

There is a range of opinions among faculty about how to use the new educational goals to improve teaching and learning. A few faculty members maintain the goals are little more than tepid platitudes. Others wish to match these educational goals with specific classes. Most faculty, however, agree that these goals are not useful at the level of assessing or shaping individual classes. Clearly, further planning and discussion are needed. The academic dean will initiate and complete this planning by 2009–2010, after the review of the academic program.

In the meantime, these goals will be publicized more broadly, especially to current students. The academic deans will encourage advisors to make use of these goals, either informally or formally, as they advise students about how to best craft paths through the curriculum.

Course Requirements

The scaffolding of the curriculum has been basically unchanged over the past 15 years with the exception of the significant strengthening of the writing requirement. However, the curriculum has been far from static. Faculty interest and expertise have changed, the cultural and political climate has changed, and each wave of students seems to be slightly different from the last. The college's degree requirements have served as a flexible framework around which the curriculum evolves. No structural changes in the curriculum are anticipated at this time.

Curriculum content and focus are another matter. For the academic program review beginning in Winter 2008, the college will initiate a wide-ranging discussion not only of the intellectual foundations of human ecology but also how the dynamic changes expected during the 21st century should be studied and understood. The outcome of the discussion will inform development and refinement of the disciplinary foci and skills needed to effect these changes in the teaching of human ecology.

In addition, in 2008–2009 the academic dean will lead the faculty and the AAC in a careful examination of the core course and, more generally, the first-year experience. This dialog will be informed by institutional research and outside experts and will be conducted as part of the activities funded by the MELMAC grant.

Finally, as an expanded academic calendar is developed, with concomitant increases in annual enrollment, the college, led by the academic dean and the president, will carefully assess its ability to continue to provide a wide and engaging range of offerings through which students can meet course requirements.

Academic Advising and Orientation

The college has planned a number of expansions to its advising program in the next several years. These are discussed in the MELMAC grant proposal (Exhibit 4.21). The academic dean will be responsible for implementing changes which include conducting an external review of advising processes, examining the

pros and cons of cohort advising, expanding “re-orientation” activities for students at the beginning of their third year, and increasing student participation in the outdoors orientation program.

Another way the college will strengthen advising is to develop an informal mentoring program comprised of alumni and established professionals. The professional mentors program will pilot in Fall 2008, under the leadership of the president and AAC. By Fall 2009, the college’s mentoring program will be in place and available to students at the beginning of their third year so that students who so desire can work with a mentor through graduation and beyond. The college has begun engaging volunteer mentors and is considering seeking foundation support for the program.

Effective advising and sound course planning require access to information about several terms’, if not several years’, worth of upcoming classes. Over the last five years, the college has made significant improvement in providing course projections to students and advisors. However, this information must be more reliably available online and course projections more consistently updated. The chair of AAC will undertake this task.

Programs

The faculty and AAC do not have plans to add formal concentrations or any majors in addition to the self-designed program in human ecology. However, over the next several years, the college anticipates that additional focus areas may be developed as a result of the review of the overall academic program. Such development will allow the college to more effectively portray the areas in which it has depth and strength and will provide an impetus for greater coordination among faculty and better communication with students about possible curricular paths.

Course Registration and Academic Calendar

Implementing an electronic registration system has been a high priority for the college, and it is fortunate to have successfully found means to support such a system beginning in Spring 2008. The new electronic registration system will ameliorate most of the registration concerns identified above.

Consideration of the most effective way to create and transition to a four-term system will be a high priority in 2007–2008. New units of student housing will be coming online in September 2008. By 2009, the college will provide opportunities for additional credit-bearing activities in summer. These activities may initially be primarily for COA undergraduates or select groups of high school students. The academic dean will lead the initiative in exploring additional ways to provide opportunities for students and faculty to take academic advantage of the summer months. In addition to the marine mammology course, a pilot program for high school students is planned for Summer 2007.

Graduate Degree Program

The college will strive to maintain a community of up to 10 graduate students on campus in any given year. In many cases, expenses associated with thesis research will come from grants to programs or individual faculty. However, the college cannot expect grant-based tuition support in any great measure. Allowing for existing financial aid relief, the associate dean of advanced studies estimates that a viable graduate program at the 10-student level would cost between $100,000 and $150,000 per year in tuition support and living stipends. The associate dean of advanced studies will collaborate with the development office to raise these funds.

Greater support from a broader range of faculty would both enhance the program and open up more possible avenues of study to applicants. In 2007–2008, the associate dean will survey faculty to gauge their willingness to take on graduate students and will report to the faculty meeting and AAC. The president has strongly suggested that a willingness to participate in graduate education be a core consideration in all new faculty hires.

Some faculty feel that the college's undergraduate teaching mission does not make it desirable to institute graduate teaching assistantships as a means of funding the graduate program. The president strongly disagrees with this and has voiced concern about the use of undergraduates as teaching assistants in some classes. As noted above, the lack of a broad-based willingness among the faculty to sponsor graduate students currently limits the size of the college's MPhil program. Each of these issues will be actively addressed during the next two academic years.

There is complete agreement that the strengthening of the graduate program must be accomplished in a way that does not diminish the basic focus of the college, the excellence of its undergraduate program. The experience of the past five years suggests that when there is a group of at least 10 active graduate students of appropriate caliber, a dynamic "community of scholarship" develops. The president believes that a small, focused, and strong graduate program is necessary to realizing the college's overall mission. Interest in the program seems high. The college will focus on developing increased sources of financial support and recruiting effort to ensure a suitable pool of candidates to maintain its target.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

The college is in the midst of an undertaking to ensure that the faculty has appropriate oversight over senior projects and residencies in response to a growing sense among faculty and the president that review and appeals committee may not be the most appropriate body to determine whether a senior project or residency proposal is sufficiently well developed. Although the senior project or residency sponsor determines the designation of credit or no credit, the committee currently performs a function that is tantamount to determining creditworthiness when it approves the initial project.

Consequently, AAC is considering the formation of a new, faculty-only group charged with approving all senior projects and residencies. This group will help ensure high standards for senior projects and will monitor the completed projects and report noteworthy trends—especially those that may indicate areas of curricular weakness—to the AAC and the faculty meeting. It is anticipated that this periodic, faculty-led review of senior projects will form a cornerstone of COA's ongoing institutional assessment of student learning. The president strongly supports this initiative and has further requested some form of annual faculty review of independent studies to ensure their excellence and suitability for students' programs.

The academic deans and faculty will continue to monitor grade inflation and initiate faculty meeting discussions if necessary. It is not anticipated that this will be a major issue.

Because the academic deans and the faculty continue to be mindful of academic dishonesty and plagiarism, especially as technology makes it easier to inappropriately use the work of another, they will clarify or strengthen the college's policy or procedures as necessary.

Transfer credit systems are expected to remain substantially equivalent over the upcoming decade, although new articulation agreements and partnerships may evolve.

Individual Courses and Individual Students

No major changes are anticipated in the college's assessment of students and classes. An overview of 2006–2007 course syllabi (Exhibit 4.22) details how individual course assessments have been conducted.

There are no plans to move away from the policy of providing detailed narrative evaluations to all students. The labor-intensive nature of narrative evaluations sometimes raises questions about the value of this process, but faculty and students consider it a key part of the COA education. Narratives convey far more information than a single letter grade and are an essential facet of the college's individualized education.

The personnel committee is considering interviewing or surveying recent graduates as a part of faculty reviews, for such interviews will provide more candid information about the effectiveness of individual courses and will be informed by postgraduation experiences and perspective.

As previously noted, the AAC is examining the process through which senior project and residency proposals are approved. The result will not only generate clearer and more rigorous standards and expectations but also provide an additional assessment point for students.

Assessment at the Program Level

The academic leadership at COA has expressed for some time the desire to come up with at least a semi-regular and semi-formal cycle of assessment for the college's curricular areas, and the college recognizes the value not only of outside expertise but also formal assessment and self-study. However, there are some significant impediments to implementing such a system—most significantly, time and expense. The academic dean and the president will continue to encourage individual program areas to strongly consider including assessment components in external grants and proposals.

Assessment at the Institutional Level

There are four main ways COA anticipates carrying out ongoing, collegewide assessment of student learning.

First, the college will continue to use the NSSE as a measure of its overall academic effectiveness and student learning. Over the next several years, the college will work to increase the NSSE response rate among students. COA will also identify one or more peer groups to compare results against.

Second, the college will continue to closely monitor graduation rates, retention rates, percent of students attending graduate school, and percent of students participating in study-abroad programs. The responsibility for these two ongoing assessment activities lies with the academic dean who will work with the faculty and appropriate staff to address any deficiencies revealed by these assessments.

Third, the college will use its sophomore portfolio assessment as a means of assessing the teaching and learning of writing across the curriculum. By 2009, the director of the writing program will conduct such an assessment in collaboration with other faculty and will submit a report to the academic dean, the academic affairs committee, and the faculty who will consider the results of this review and, if necessary, implement curricular or other changes.

Fourth, the college will conduct a broad, thorough review of the quality of senior projects. This review will be conducted by the new faculty group tasked with approving senior projects and will be completed by 2009. The results of this review will be submitted to the AAC and the faculty who will implement curricular or other changes if necessary.

An open question is whether to use the new educational goals (Exhibit 4.1) as a main instrument for institutionwide assessment. The faculty is not of one mind at present, but the academic program review is likely to lead to greater consensus. There is a general sense, however, that these goals or aspirations are useful as a "compass" and a general statement of educational values, but not as part of a formal assessment instrument. The academic dean will resolve the matter in the faculty meeting by Fall 2010.

Institutional Effectiveness

The college will engage in institutional assessment at all levels, as appropriate for a small institution with limited staff and limited resources. Trustees, administrators, staff, and faculty will remain focused on the academic program as the fundamental purpose of the college.

§

STANDARD FIVE
FACULTY

DESCRIPTION

College of the Atlantic faculty define, develop, and interpret the intellectual principles of human ecology. Through courses and advising, faculty provide the necessary interdisciplinary framework for students to discover and articulate human ecology in ways that suit their professional and educational goals. Position descriptions for faculty reappointment and expansion since 1997 reflect the continuing intellectual development and range of human ecology (Exhibit 5.1). Faculty growth parallels growth in enrollment and reflects the ongoing academic planning of faculty meeting and the academic affairs committee (see Standard Two).

The faculty consists of 30 full-time and part-time (1/2, 2/3, and 3/4) faculty members appointed and contracted for periods of three–five years.[3] In addition, three lecturers have two–three year contracts. Other categories of faculty—visitors and adjuncts—are contracted on a course-by-course and term-by-term basis. Visiting and adjunct faculty teach courses that will enrich and complement the academic program or fill a temporary need (faculty leave or sabbatical).

Qualifications for faculty must be appropriate to the diversity of fields and approaches within human ecology. All full-time faculty members have PhDs or the corresponding terminal professional degree. Part-time faculty, lecturers, and adjuncts must have at least a Masters degree or appropriate professional experience, although a number also have a PhD (Exhibit 5.2). Within the faculty there is a diversity of age ranges and fields of professional competence.

The individualized and interactive nature of COA instruction requires a low student:faculty ratio, a ratio to which the college is strongly committed and which has ranged consistently around 10:1 (Exhibit 5.3).

Faculty Teaching Load

Each full-time faculty member teaches five or six courses over the three-term academic year. Faculty with five-course loads must undertake substantial administrative activity, usually via one of the college's major committees. The six-course option is for those who prefer not to engage so heavily in administrative work. The average teaching load for a full-time faculty member is approximately 75 students per year with a range of approximately 50–150. The average advising load is 8–10 per full-time faculty member with a range of 7–27, although advisors differ in the amount of time they spend with advisees. There is a significant amount of informal advising that skews the interpretative value of these numbers.

Faculty responsibilities that may vary from those at other institutions include directing senior projects, independent studies, tutorials, residencies, and graduate studies; continuous coordinating and planning of academic offerings; writing narrative evaluations for every student; ongoing contact with graduates; and engaging in administrative service via participation in numerous aspects of college governance. But teaching activities are the priority. An informal survey in Spring 2006, with faculty self-reporting, shows that faculty members spend 8–20 hours of contact time weekly with students outside of formal classroom and laboratory hours. It has been the college's practice since its founding to encourage the participation of faculty in all aspects of college governance including the admission, personnel, and campus planning and building committees in addition to faculty meeting, academic affairs, resource areas, and faculty searches (see Standard Three). Since there is no departmental structure at the college, the interdisciplinary faculty meets as a whole on academic matters and to make recommendations to committees, the president, and, where appropriate, the board.

[3] This figure includes two faculty members who share a single full-time position and a recently appointed 2/3 faculty member whose position will be made full-time and searched for within the next two years. It does not include a vacant position for which the college will likely search in 2008–2009.

Faculty Assignments and Workloads

A dean or department chair does not determine—as is common at many institutions—faculty courses and committee assignments. Faculty members typically consult broadly with colleagues in determining what courses to offer and what extra responsibilities to take on. The academic deans may consult with faculty to help them identify overall curricular needs and to encourage priority attention to teaching. The academic affairs committee must approve all course proposals.

A significant proportion of courses include regular laboratory sessions, field trips for observation, films and lectures, and/or frequent one-on-one or small group conferences. All faculty attend faculty and resource area meetings as well as the annual two-day faculty retreat.

Faculty Appointment

The process for defining faculty positions is detailed in the academic affairs charter (Exhibit 5.4). Exhibit 5.5 outlines the faculty search process, fully described in the faculty manual (Exhibit 5.6). Full-time faculty position searches have a faculty chair appointed by the president, require national/international posting, and are advertised broadly to obtain a large and diverse applicant pool. Faculty search committees, which typically consist of several faculty members, two students, a personnel committee representative, and the affirmative action/equal employment opportunity officer, are then formed by the faculty personnel committee and approved by the personnel committee and president. Under the guidance of the chair, search committees read and discuss credentials and written materials of all applicants and conduct telephone interviews prior to inviting finalists for a two–three day visit. These visits consist of a public lecture, mock class, interviews with the president and other relevant administrators, and meetings with students, faculty members, and the search committee. All members of the community who have had contact with the candidates are asked to submit oral or written comments. The committee carefully considers this input in its final selection, makes a recommendation, and brings that recommendation to the president who has the final authority to appoint faculty. The personnel committee certifies that the committee followed all college procedures and applicable laws. Letters of appointment are provided to all new faculty members at the completion of the selection process. Both during the faculty search process and during their initial contract period, new faculty members meet with the academic and administrative deans to clarify contract requirements and expectations.

Contractual System without Tenure

Since its founding, the college has been committed to a nontenure structure for two primary reasons: the belief that regular review ensures the quality of teaching necessary to accomplish the college's mission and a desire to reduce divisions among faculty that might be caused by a system of explicit ranking. Such divisions could negatively impact faculty ability to collaborate effectively in maintaining the currency and innovation of the human ecology curriculum. Periodic suggestions to institute tenure have been discouraged by the faculty as a body, most recently in 1997. In the absence of tenure, a system for faculty contracts and evaluation (Exhibit 5.7) has developed to ensure academic freedom and economic security while maintaining control over faculty quality. The first five-year comprehensive review serves as a threshold for the strong likelihood of continuing reappointment; from 1997–2007 all faculty who have successfully passed their first five-year comprehensive review have been continued. However, faculty reviews do hold the potential to identify major concerns—such as a dramatic change in teaching effectiveness—that might require reduction or termination of a faculty member's contract.

Faculty Evaluation and Personnel Policy

The faculty review system is designed to diminish the power of hierarchies that may exist in traditional institutions, while preserving academic excellence, economic security, and academic freedom. With the exception of dismissal for cause or financial exigency, faculty contracts can be shortened or terminated only for reasons deriving explicitly from stated faculty review criteria for teaching, advising, professional activity and achievement, and institutional collaboration.

The review system is rooted in the principle of peer review and designed to spread the responsibility of peer review throughout the faculty. Contract reviews are conducted in the year before the current contract expires by a team appointed by the faculty personnel committee (FPC) (Exhibit 5.7). Depending on the type of review, the committee includes one or more faculty members and one or two students. The team meets with the faculty member and examines all aspects of the contracted responsibilities using criteria specified in the faculty manual. Specifically, the team examines the faculty member's course and advising activity record, student course evaluations, professional activities, and self-evaluation as well as all submitted comments. At the completion of the review, the team writes a formal report that must be submitted to and approved by faculty personnel and personnel committees. The academic dean or associate dean, in consultation with the president, approves the report and issues a new contract as specified. The faculty manual (Exhibit 5.6) and best practices for faculty reviews (Exhibit 5.8) contain detailed information on faculty review procedures.

Co-chaired for 2007–2008 by the academic dean and the associate dean, the faculty personnel committee is charged with the fair, consistent, and systematic review of faculty members according to the contract schedule and review criteria outlined in the manual (Exhibits 5.6 and 5.9). The academic and associate deans are responsible for implementing review recommendations, maintaining files, meetings with faculty between reviews, and bringing recommendations to the full committee.

Faculty Compensation

Full-time faculty salaries, which are generally for a 10-month contract, range from approximately $40,000 to $75,000 per annum, reflecting years of experience and in some cases summer salary for additional responsibilities. Analysis of faculty curriculum vitae provides initial assessment of teaching experience to place new faculty on the baseline (Exhibit 5.10) created in 1995 when the faculty, president, and board approved a plan to bring faculty salaries level with the average at all national baccalaureate institutions. A further goal was identified as bringing faculty salaries to the average at all private baccalaureate institutions. Part-time contracted faculty member salaries are prorated at the same levels as for full-time faculty members. Lecturers are compensated on a similar scale but starting on a lower base rate and with a per-course cap, since they are contracted solely for specific course responsibilities.

The flexible benefit package for the faculty, excluding paid sabbaticals and tuition waivers, is currently approximately 30% of salary and includes medical, dental, life, and disability insurance, 6–7 % contribution to TIAA-CREF (depending on matching funds), and access to pretax flexible spending accounts for medical and childcare expenses. The ratio of benefits:salary varies from year to year as a result of changes in insurance premiums and other variables.

Faculty Development

A modest amount of partially endowed faculty development funds has been available since 1997; the amount for 2006–2007 is $8500 (Exhibit 5.11). The president and academic deans supplement these funds with small budget lines which faculty must apply for; these include course budget enhancement and Davis international faculty development funds. In April 2007, President Hales instituted an additional pool of funds (approximately $10,000 annually) that faculty can now apply for in order to carry out special summer projects. Regular sabbaticals are intended to provide faculty with time for professional development. All faculty who teach every term are eligible for the program and earn a one-term, paid sabbatical after nine consecutive terms of teaching. To ensure the integrity of the curriculum and timely arrangement of appropriate replacement courses, faculty must apply for sabbaticals.

Faculty Integrity and Academic Freedom

The college subscribes to the position of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) whose statement on academic freedom is printed in the personnel manuals. The manuals (Exhibit 5.6) also outline ethical and professional guidelines for faculty and staff. An expanded statement on sexual harassment was produced in 1992, clarified upon counsel's advice in Summer 1998, and updated for further clarity in Summer 2004.

APPRAISAL

Faculty, administrators, and the board face three pressing faculty issues: faculty workload, the need to continue refining the faculty review system to ensure excellence, and faculty compensation. The latter was also identified as an issue in 1997 (Exhibits 5.12–5.15).

Strengths

- The college has a dedicated, innovative, energetic, entrepreneurial, hard-working faculty devoted to its human ecology mission.
- There is low faculty turnover and a high degree of satisfaction with curricular freedom.
- The college's faculty demonstrate a high level of creativity and active spirit of volunteerism.
- The college has a strong tradition and practice of faculty collaboration in governance, forming interdisciplinary curricula, and developing new curricular aspects of human ecology.
- Both within and beyond their fields of specialty, faculty model and develop human ecology in practice.

Limitations

- Faculty compensation has not kept up with the identified target scale.
- The college's demanding faculty workload is not equally distributed.
- The college's faculty review system demands significant faculty time and does not always help faculty improve their teaching.

Number and Quality of Faculty

The faculty has grown slightly from 27 members in 1997–1998 to 30 in 2007–2008. With this growth, three lecturers, and several adjuncts that teach every year, the college calculates its faculty at 40 persons and 28.2 FTE using the Common Data Set (Exhibit 5.16). At this time, this is considered sufficient to accomplish the mission and purpose of the college for the number of students enrolled, although it should be noted that lecturers and adjuncts do not carry an advising load. Trustees authorized a student/faculty ratio of 10:1 in 1992 as part of a long-term plan for the college's growth to 250 FTE (now surpassed). The student:faculty ratio has remained between 9:1 and 11:1 over the past 10 years. This allows faculty to participate in a highly interactive educational process and to be available to students for independent studies, residencies, and senior projects as well as for extensive interaction outside of class. With so much individualized instruction, the demanding faculty workload falls on some faculty more than others.

Lectureships have been used judiciously to support key areas of the curriculum. A policy for target-of-opportunity hires has improved the college's ability to attract and retain new faculty. The curriculum is also enhanced by the six relatively permanent adjuncts in areas such as theater, journalism, and writing. In 1997, the composition of the faculty was 17 men and 10 women; in Fall 2007, the composition will be 19 men and 11 women; 20 men and 13 women if lecturers are included. The COA faculty includes several individuals from underrepresented groups, and three who are foreign nationals.

The vast majority of COA faculty members have remained active in their fields while broadening their interests and areas of expertise (Exhibit 5.17). For some faculty, professional development occurs largely through interacting with colleagues at other institutions, crafting new courses, and working with advanced students. For other faculty regular conference presentations and publication, community organization, or

performances are the norm. Faculty must demonstrate their professional development during the review and evaluation process, and the college has continually reaffirmed its commitment to foster professional development. However, the college has deliberately not required faculty development to take a specific form because of its emphasis on teaching and the interdisciplinary requirements of human ecology.

The bar for superlative teaching quality is set very high. By describing teaching excellence at College of the Atlantic in Fall 2005, the faculty personnel committee began to articulate what superb teaching requires as well as to provide better means for mentoring faculty to help them achieve this level of excellence.

Over the past 10 years, three faculty members have not had contracts renewed—an indication that the college's peer review system can accomplish the difficult task of identifying inadequate job performance. Until 2006, all other faculty turnover during the 10-year period of the self-study had resulted from resignation or death. However, in Fall 2006 a faculty member was dismissed for cause. There has been no substantial faculty objection thus far to the process that was followed, although a few faculty members have asked that the college review its dismissal-for-cause procedures.

As noted above, the COA faculty carries a significant instructional responsibility that goes well beyond classroom teaching. Substantial administrative involvement is common. One of the areas for review under the 2002 governance initiative (see Standard Three) was the amount of faculty time spent on administrative tasks. The current academic administrative system is one institutional response to that review. The faculty charter has further clarified the role of faculty in governance, and the college has worked to more systematically develop effective management structures in key committees. In addition, staff positions have been created to support particular curricular areas, enabling some faculty to devote more of their time to teaching. The 2003 suggestion of a rotational dean structure could provide a mechanism for faculty—in a model similar to that of department chairs—to contribute administratively in a more concentrated and strategic way, but the proposal was put on hold during the presidential transition period and is now the purview of the new president. Faculty time studies, initiated as a reflective tool in 2003–2004 and confirmed by a faculty survey regarding contact hours in Spring 2006, demonstrate that the bulk of faculty time, despite administrative responsibilities, is spent on activities related to classroom and out-of-classroom instruction. Workload remains a concern and will be an important element to monitor with shifts in enrollment.

By policy, the college does not use graduate students to teach courses, although three graduate students with significant teaching experience prior to COA have become visiting or adjunct faculty while completing their Masters. Graduate students, along with undergraduates, are often trained to take on the roles of teacher or research assistants, usually to work one-on-one to provide additional tutorial assistance to students in math, writing, biology, and other areas. Introductory-level writing courses are usually taught by long-term adjuncts, but in general COA does not hire visiting or adjunct faculty to teach foundational or advanced classes. Visiting faculty instead provide an essential element of curricular diversity. Of the over 50 courses offered each term, 8-14 are typically taught by visitors, adjuncts, and lecturers. The bulk of the lecturer and adjunct load is devoted to programmatic needs such as writing, language intensives, mathematics, and educational studies. Academic affairs carefully screens visitor curriculum vitae and course proposals with the assistance of faculty in the relevant instructional area (Exhibit 5.18). Lecturers are evaluated as regular faculty. The chair of academic affairs, the academic affairs committee, and the academic deans evaluate adjuncts and visitors. Teaching excellence and adherence to all college policies are required for continued appointment of all lecturers, visitors, and adjuncts.

Faculty Recruitment and Appointment

COA strives toward a systematic faculty search process that engages the entire community, especially the students who will be most affected by a faculty appointment. Search committees deliberately do not rely on or consist solely of disciplinary experts, and have usually proved adept at identifying criteria of overall excellence and indicators of successful teaching and intellectual development at COA. Between 1997 and 2007, two newly appointed faculty members have left the institution; other searches have produced long-term committed faculty with vital ongoing contributions to and development within the human ecology curriculum.

COA's recruitment and appointment process has been effective in attracting high quality applicants and in encouraging and facilitating input from all segments of the college. The faculty is the greatest participant in the search and selection process. Faculty, in a confidential meeting, not only review strengths and weaknesses of all applicants who have visited campus, but also assess each candidate's ability to meet the requirements of the position as advertised. Broad, engaged faculty participation in searches not only provides search committee members with a critical assessment of each candidate's potential for teaching and for continuing to grow intellectually, but also offers COA's nondepartmental faculty a unique opportunity to reaffirm its vision for the position and establish the conditions for a candidate's success. When a significant number of faculty express concerns, even if there is committee consensus, experience demonstrates that an appointment will not be successful. While the college had over 1,000 applicants for a literature/writing position in 1995, in more recent years the pool has been reduced to 400 (1997) for a widely advertised historian position to 50 for more specialized areas such as marine mammology. Since 1997, COA has made progress in attracting faculty from underrepresented groups, but it remains difficult to attract and appoint qualified applicants from such groups because of the college's location in downeast Maine and its noncompetitive salaries.

Nevertheless, the college's reputation, nondepartmental structure, size, location, educational approach, interdisciplinary curriculum, human ecology focus, and population of idealistic and energetic students have all been attractions. Improving salaries remains the primary concern for recruitment, although the college has generally been very successful in attracting and retaining its top choice applicant and improved its attractiveness to candidates with the adoption of the category of a shared appointment in 1996-1997 and a policy for target-of-opportunity hires in 2000.

Search procedures for all college positions were reviewed and clarified in Spring 2005 after two years of work (Exhibit 5.6).

New Faculty Mentoring

Based on feedback from new faculty members, the mentoring process (a concern raised in the 1997 reaccreditation report) has been revised. In Summer 2005, the associate dean also produced "Helpful Hints for New Faculty" to go along with the "Visiting Faculty Survival Guide" produced by the manager of academic and administrative services and the general orientation organized by the academic deans. The college has not implemented a formal orientation for new faculty because each individual comes with a different range of experience, questions, and needs. Instead, the college has encouraged and supported new faculty members' visiting campus in advance of their start date. During these visits, incoming faculty plan with colleagues and committees and more fully articulate individual concerns with appropriate personnel.

Evaluation System without Tenure

The COA contract system has now been in effect for over 35 years with only minor modifications. However, some senior faculty have asked about the feasibility of longer contracts to reduce the amount of personnel effort spent in reviewing those who have proven their value, a suggestion seconded by many faculty. Faculty personnel committee has held preliminary conversations with the faculty to discuss the parameters of an initial proposal and will conduct further faculty meeting review during 2007–2008. While some faculty members are strongly inclined toward a tenure-type system, many others remain opposed.

Faculty Review: Formative and Summative Evaluation

From its inception, the college sought to establish a faculty review process appropriate to its mission while maintaining standards of excellence. Review procedures continue to determine which faculty members are suitable for continued employment, provide dialogue between the faculty member and the institution, and improve morale and teaching. The success of this complex mission has varied with the experience of reviewers and with the sensitivities of reviewees. Concern over possible variations in practice among review teams led to the production and annual revision of the "Best Practices for Reviews" mentioned above (Exhibit 5.8). From Fall 2003–Spring 2007, review oversight—now formally shared with the

academic dean—has been the responsibility of the associate dean. Although many faculty find the evaluative criteria to be sufficiently explicit, newer faculty often express anxiety at the breadth of possible interpretations and relative weighting of review criteria. Guidelines for the self-evaluation and review criteria, appendices to the "Best Practices" information, help new faculty understand the nuanced decisions that must go into faculty assessment. The college remains committed to "360°" faculty reviews, and faculty personnel committee reports at least annually to the faculty meeting. Efforts to further clarify the relative weight of each criterion and to consider a more standardized format for review reporting are underway and discussed further in Projection.

Procedures for faculty evaluation adequately include processes for both the formative and summative components of the review. Formative evaluation assists the faculty in job-related professional development and performance. Summative evaluation regarding faculty member performance forms the basis of the contract review reports and all formal recommendations. It has become clear over the past few years that reviews adequately achieve their summative purpose of renewal or nonrenewal.

However, in the evaluation sessions conducted in faculty meeting (2005–2006 and Winter 2007) as well as in faculty personnel committee's self-evaluation in 2005–2006 and in a preliminary response to President Hales' request for a systematic review of the faculty reward system in March 2007 (Exhibit 5.20), there was general agreement that the formative aspects of the review process could be more useful. Faculty self-evaluations for review purposes (Exhibit 5.21) reflect considerable self-knowledge and self-criticism, but because faculty conversations on teaching methodologies and interdisciplinary work are not as common as desired, the college is developing plans for improvement, some of which will be located outside of the review system.

In keeping with the mission and principles of the college, any member of the community can provide primary input to a faculty review team, as long as the context of their firsthand knowledge of the faculty member is clear. This broad range of input allows the team to obtain a full sense of the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses. The review team and faculty personnel committee carefully summarize and synthesize comments and exercise considerable judgment and discretion. Concerns with reviews come from either differences of opinion regarding the weighting of review criteria, the methods of collecting and reporting data, or about what constitutes objective information; in some instances concerns are also about the composition of the review team. Such concerns have existed as long as there has been a faculty personnel committee and in large measure reflect the points of stress between faculty members at a small, collaborative, but not perfectly synergistic institution. Faculty personnel committee has repeatedly stated that it is imperative that the review team and faculty personnel committee appropriately discern and deflect personality issues or policy concerns from the summative review. Faculty personnel committee has also required that specific recommendations be itemized in the final review report that personnel committee approves.

In those cases where a faculty member has contractually specified administrative responsibilities, the college assesses administrative performance separately from teaching performance. This system works well to maintain the focus of the review on academic excellence. Overall assessment of administrative performance is the responsibility of the academic dean. The academic dean has the option of asking the review team to assist him in assessing specific elements of administrative responsibilities.

Over the past five years, faculty personnel committee has addressed faculty reviews with the following: faculty workload guidelines (Exhibit 5.14), teaching excellence at COA (Exhibit 5.22), ongoing updates and clarifications to the faculty manual (Exhibit 5.6), best practices for faculty reviews information (Exhibit 5.8), sabbatical and workload reports (Exhibits 5.23 and 5.24), a more detailed contract letter following review (Exhibit 5.25), and the report within faculty personnel committee and to faculty meeting on 10 years of reviews conducted in December 2006 (Exhibits 5.15 and 5.15.1). Further conversations with the faculty and president began in Spring 2007 and are necessary to reach consensus on recent policy improvements. Suggestions for improvements are noted in Projection.

Faculty Personnel Policies

The faculty personnel committee and personnel committee charters underwent major revision, updating, and approval by ACM in 2004–2005. A major review of the faculty manual (Exhibit 5.6) was conducted in Summer–Fall 2005, although this work is, of necessity, ongoing. The manual is comprehensive and had its most recent legal review in 1995–1996 (see Projection), with regular updates as policies are adjusted. The frequent policy updates have been made much easier with the location of personnel manuals on the website. Consultation with counsel occurs on an as-needed basis. Personnel committee had planned to review all manuals beginning in Spring 2007, but this project has only recently been prioritized.

For the past several years faculty personnel committee has focused on a number of policy issues as well as the key areas discussed further in Projection: the review of 10 years of faculty reviews, workload issues and rotational administrative responsibilities, teaching excellence/raising the bar, the question of a COA-type model of tenure or longer-term contract, and possibly proposing some permanent changes to the mechanics of the faculty personnel committee to ensure a more general sense of faculty responsibility for personnel matters.

Anticipating retirements of founding faculty members, a faculty emeritus category was proposed and approved by faculty personnel and personnel committees in Spring 2007 (Exhibit 5.19).

After several years of faculty contracts being the responsibility of the president, they have recently become the purview of the associate dean. In Summer 2006, every faculty member was issued a new contract letter with position responsibilities specified.

The faculty personnel committee did extensive work to propose a variety of faculty retirement options to personnel committee and to develop a medical leave policy, both discussed below in Faculty Compensation.

In an effort to strengthen faculty personnel committee's relationship with the faculty as a whole, during the academic year 2005–2006 the committee conducted both a committee self-evaluation and an evaluation in faculty meeting (Exhibits 5.20 and 5.26). This work continues in 2007–2008 and forms the basis for the Projection section and its implications for faculty personnel policies. The evaluation (Exhibits 5.15, 5.15.1, and 5.20) affirmed the committee's ability to provide internal checks and balances and to maintain the standards of fairness and excellence required for faculty reviews. Discussion with faculty meeting also raised a number of general concerns (Exhibit 5.26), including issues with the system of volunteerism leading to faculty personnel committee membership and with the professionalism and consistency of how reviews are carried out. A series of evaluative discussions coincided with and perhaps precipitated a significant change in committee membership for 2007–2008. Of course, there is always some controversy regarding the faculty personnel committee, particularly for contract actions and review recommendations that are seen as punitive. The committee has been responsible for and remains committed to further investigating all concerns raised by the faculty and making new policy recommendations where appropriate. In addition, the committee resolved to work on systematically examining the use of contracts other than the five- or six-course/ten-month norm. Any proposal for a change in policy would have to be approved by the board.

The review of 10 years of faculty review committee membership and review reports was undertaken by the associate dean and a long-term member of the faculty personnel committee. Most reviews showed that the performance of faculty members remained fairly constant over time; for the few faculty whose initial five-year review indicated major concerns, there was improvement in the second five-year review but not necessarily a complete turn-around. This is somewhat but not entirely consistent with the desire to "increase the bar" at the first comprehensive review. Clearly until a faculty member has received strong overall commendations at the five-year mark, there remains an appropriate sense of "need to improve." More detailed findings raise a number of questions to be addressed by the faculty personnel committee and faculty meeting, but not all of these will be policy matters.

The COA faculty review system is not de-facto tenure, because a review always carries the potential to become comprehensive and this could lead to nonrenewal or a shortened probationary contract. There have been occasional shortened contracts in the past 10 years; most occurred before the first five-year comprehensive review and signaled difficulties that were remedied. The faculty manual and guide to best practices outline an appeals process for reviews, though it has not been put into action in the last 10 years. Faculty concerned with aspects of their review process or the nature of the review sometimes say that they do not feel confident about addressing their concerns with their review team. They have, however, expressed these concerns to faculty personnel committee, the academic dean, or associate dean, all of whom have been able to mediate any difficulties.

The fact that all faculty members under review are invited to submit a formal written response to their review for the files ensures that individual faculty members maintain a voice throughout the review process. Few faculty take advantage of this option, suggesting an absence of substantial difficulties with the evaluation process. A faculty member under review may also appeal the faculty personnel committee's decisions—using the college's grievance procedures—directing their concerns to the president, academic dean, or associate dean, but this option has not been utilized over the self-study period.

Faculty Compensation

Faculty salaries have only sporadically been competitive and are far behind designated targets. The highest paid faculty member in 2005–2006, with over 30 years of teaching experience, earned significantly less per year (29.7% and $31,500) than the national average for all faculty members in private baccalaureate institutions. The same faculty member earned 22.8% and $22,000 less than the average for all baccalaureate institutions (the intermediate target scale) and far less than the average for senior professors. The total amount by which faculty salaries have fallen behind even the college's intermediate salary target is approximately $400,000 annually (Exhibit 5.27). Between 2005 and 2007, trustees initiated an endowment gift of $1,000,000 with an associated challenge to develop a $4,000,000 fund for faculty salaries. Although compensation for faculty and staff remains an issue, after a period of no gain during 1999–2004—effectively a reduction in salaries—the college over the past three years has been making at least annual cost-of-living adjustments for both faculty and staff (see Standard Nine). Increases above cost-of-living have been awarded for the last two years and are projected for 2007–2008. In addition, President Hales has recently asked for the faculty personnel committee's assistance in developing a process for systematic review of the faculty reward system (see Projection).

The flexible benefit package for the faculty is more than adequate in most respects. However, a relatively low 6% of this (1% increase in July 2000) is the institutional contribution to the Teacher Insurance Annuity Association-College Retirement Equity Fund (TIAA-CREF) and does not require matching funds. An additional 1% to TIAA-CREF (added July 2001) does require individual match. The establishment of several retirement and drop-back options in Spring 2006 (for example, allowing faculty nearing retirement to drop back to 2/3 or 1/2 time) has helped the college to facilitate an upcoming generational change while recognizing the financial needs of individual faculty members. The college intends, however, to make this policy more generous and find a means to provide health insurance coverage (see Projection). The faculty medical leave policy (Exhibit 5.28) has also provided a new benefit. In 2006–2007, a carrier-sponsored health insurance plan with three options for employees (to match styles and needs of consumption of health care) was instituted. The Projection section contains further information on plans and goals for faculty benefits and salary improvement.

Faculty Sabbatical Program, Faculty Development, and Endowed Chairs

Faculty sabbaticals are essential for faculty development and morale. The clarified system put into place in 2003 allows the college to maintain improved records of all sabbatical requests and reports (Exhibit 5.23). All eligible faculty over the past 10 years have received earned sabbaticals, with an occasional deferral of the sabbatical term, sometimes for the purpose of accumulating two sabbatical terms for a longer leave. Over the self-study period, two faculty members have been granted one-year leaves of absence without pay and two others have benefited from one-term leaves of absence without pay for additional professional development. Three faculty members have used the new faculty medical leave policy. Reconsideration of

the faculty sabbatical policy is one of the elements of President Hales' Spring 2007 request to the faculty personnel committee.

Increasing funding for faculty development is a goal identified at the Summer 2006 academic policy committee meeting of the board on student and faculty excellence. The priorities committee instituted in 2004 and the strategic planning effort have provided frameworks for focusing on critical development priorities (see Standard Two), but there is as yet no specific plan for increasing faculty development support. Nevertheless, individual faculty members have been innovative and entrepreneurial in finding means for obtaining professional support, largely through grants. All agree that the annual sum for faculty development ($8500) is inadequate, although the overall situation has improved considerably with the addition of endowed chairs (see below) and specialized funds such as the Davis Fund for international faculty development, Rothschild Fund for faculty-student collaboration, and President Hales' summer projects fund. Increased for the first time in the college's history, faculty budgets in 2006–2007 have also provided significant additional support. The college provided some start-up salary and a first-year course relief for the most recently appointed science faculty member in Summer 2005, another first for the college. Through Title VI, Luce, FIPSE, and NASA grants, among others, the college has consistently funded both faculty development and student research.

In addition to funded faculty development opportunities and sabbaticals, the creation of an associate dean has provided the college with a position that has as its chief responsibility not only the oversight and administration but also the support and advocacy of faculty. This dean represents the faculty to the president and board when necessary and attends all board meetings as a member of the academic administrative team. The dean also reads all faculty course evaluations, oversees all faculty reviews, and beginning in 2006–2007 meets annually with each faculty member to review their workload report and discuss teaching, scholarly, and professional goals. The dean regularly assists faculty in dealing with matters that may require faculty personnel committee action along with those that involve mentoring and advocacy. This position has given faculty, administrators, and the board greater confidence and has been widely accepted.

Initiating a COA Chairs Policy in 1997, a policy that was reviewed and informally updated in 2002 on campus, has provided general budget relief and additional specialized funds for program and faculty support. However, the trustee policy is at odds with several aspects of recent practice—a matter being addressed by the president and campus chairs committee. The college currently has six completed chairs, five of which provide budget-relieving salary support for faculty; the sixth supports program development and is targeted to fund a new faculty member in 2008–2009. Four of the six chairs are held by existing faculty members, a fifth began with a part-time assignment in Fall 2006, and the sixth has not yet been appointed. The majority of chairs thus support existing positions. The goal is for each endowed chair to have an associated fund for activities in support of the chair and to include funds for faculty development, distinguished lecturers, student/faculty collaboration, and student conference attendance. Additional resources for faculty development and the continued campaign and strategic planning efforts to endow faculty positions will help the college make further progress in these areas in the near future.

Faculty Workload and Assignments

Workload at COA is difficult to analyze, since there are no departmental comparisons and most faculty feel they are at maximum capacity. Full-time faculty generally agree that they should be on campus five days a week in order to fulfill their teaching and advising duties, although some faculty members have successfully managed to fulfill their responsibilities with an extended four-day week. Many faculty members are themselves individual departments and respond directly to student need to offer the variety of classes, tutorials, and independent studies required in their areas. While all faculty members have contracted course loads, there is wide diversity in the number of independent studies, tutorials, residencies, and senior projects they supervise as well as the time devoted to advising. Some classes require considerably more contact time with students than others, and a large class demands far more time for writing evaluations than a smaller one. To the extent possible given the relative autonomy of COA faculty, the academic deans and the faculty personnel committee attempt to keep faculty workloads reasonable. While at one level the system is fair, a series of workload interviews in 2004–2005 identified concerns

(Exhibits 5.13, 5.14, and 5.29) that have begun to be addressed by follow-up analysis and the development of workload guidelines in 2005–2006. These guidelines will be monitored and periodically reviewed with the faculty by the faculty personnel committee. Many of the workload concerns derive from the college's low salaries and the lack of an overload policy. Despite the several changes that have been made and the considerable attention given to this matter over the past 10 years, disagreements remain about what constitutes a reasonable workload and whether individuals are working too hard or not hard enough.

With the growth of the faculty and appointment of additional deans, some administrative tasks have become less burdensome for most faculty. However, workload discussions (Exhibit 5.13) indicate that with the simultaneous growth of the student body and acquisition of substantial academic resources and programs, faculty have felt increasingly stretched in effectively managing their teaching and advising workload. These observations formed the basis of the faculty personnel committee's report to the financial sustainability committee about factors to monitor with enrollment growth (Exhibit 5.30). Continued attention to this area is a major focus for faculty planning; faculty concur that a long-term plan of the college should be to conduct only those programs it can execute at 100% level of effort, commitment, and excellence.

There has been vast improvement in the planning for visiting and adjunct faculty appointed on a term-by-term basis, with contracts approved well ahead of time by the chair of academic affairs and the academic dean. Since the last self-study, COA has taken several other actions that address workload: the college has raised the rate of pay for visiting faculty, established a policy for part-time lecturers, and appointed three lecturers based on continuing programmatic need and teaching excellence.

Academic Integrity and Standards

Faculty regularly discuss academic standards within resource areas, at faculty meeting, and in informal conversations with colleagues. Academic affairs committee and the registrar's office maintain strict control over the credit-worthiness of all academic projects and course offerings as well as all partnerships and affiliation agreements (see Standard Four). Academic probation has been rigorously reviewed to ensure fair, equitable, and firm treatment of issues related to academic standards. Faculty members recognize their responsibility for ensuring that the contents and methods of their instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Students do fail courses and go on academic probation.

The academic dean keeps a file of all instances of student academic misconduct. Statements of academic honesty are printed in the catalog and handbook, and both students and faculty are accountable for maintaining academic integrity.

Since Fall 2004, the academic deans have made a presentation on academic integrity and human ecology as part of the orientation for all incoming students.

Academic Freedom and Ethical Standards

Because of the commitment to self-governance, collaboration, broad consultation, and community, faculty custom and tradition have generally ensured responsible behavior. The faculty manual uses AAUP guidelines for faculty responsibility and standard guidelines for issues that can become problems in job performance such as unethical behavior. Attorneys have reviewed these procedures. With an increasingly litigious college climate, the college has, of course, experienced lawsuits and threats of lawsuits, but the substance of the expressed ethical standards has not been a concern. All faculty members receive the mandatory sexual harassment training required by Maine law.

If a question of professional behavior arises, individual faculty disciplinary issues are mediated between the faculty member and academic administration or, as appropriate, reviewed by the affirmative action/equal employment opportunity officer to provide employee advocacy for the faculty member and ensure compliance with all federal and state laws. In all cases, such matters have been handled without recourse to a formal grievance—although faculty members in such situations have been apprised of their right to a

grievance hearing. Confidential, locked files regarding complaints and disciplinary issues are maintained by the AA/EEO officer and the academic or associate dean (whoever is consulted). Rumors are always a concern in a small institution, but faculty participate minimally in this activity and generally support the confidentiality of disciplinary processes.

Teaching and Advising

COA faculty remain devoted teachers and advisors. Excellence in teaching is the primary requirement for continued appointment, and frequent revision of course content and experimentation with innovative methods, new field experiences, etc. are the rule rather than the exception.

The former associate dean for academic services (now the academic dean) has facilitated a number of systematic improvements in the advising system and continues to oversee advising while seeking to recruit another faculty member to handle the more discrete area of academic probation. Over the past 10 years, and with a few notable exceptions, advising loads have been more systematically and equitably distributed; certain types of advising needs have been appropriately directed to study skills, resumé writing, or other workshops, and the college has substantially increased its level of counseling services (see Standard Six). All of this has helped faculty to clarify their roles as academic advisors and to devote more time to the substantial academic advising of helping students design and follow their own programs, programs which include internships, advanced studies, and career and postgraduate educational planning. While each faculty member advises in a different way, advisors typically meet at least twice a term with each advisee, sign all course registration and other paperwork, and participate actively in their advisees' matriculation progress.[4] Since students can change advisors at will, those desiring a particular advising style can find it.

The college has made an effort in the past five years to ensure that student orientation stresses that college success often depends on making and maintaining faculty and staff connections. Orientation emphasizes that such connections are especially critical with a self-designed program. Retention data (see Standard Two) have shown that the college's greatest weakness has been the loss of students between the second and third years, and the academic advising team has developed and annually updates a comprehensive retention plan to study and address the circumstances of this trend. Targeted conversations in the faculty meeting (April 2007) have identified several suggestions for further improvements to the advising system (see Projection).

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

The majority of COA faculty members engage in scholarship, research, professional, community, and/or creative activity on a regular basis, even though specific forms of scholarly pursuit (in particular publishing) have not been mandated. Without a requirement for a specific form of professional development, each faculty member seeks individually appropriate means to apply his or her own work to human ecology and to maintain the quality, currency, and vitality of instructional offerings. Many faculty members join with the president in seeking to increase the faculty's level of scholarship, research, and creative activity. The college recognizes that improvement in faculty salaries and workload as well as continued attention to funding faculty development will be necessary to maintain the culture of continuous innovation and improvement the college prides itself on.

Institutional Effectiveness

Through strategic planning efforts, academic administration, the academic affairs committee, and the faculty meeting, the college periodically evaluates the sufficiency of and support for its faculty. The faculty personnel committee and academic administration evaluate the effectiveness of the faculty in teaching and advising, scholarship, service, research, and creative activity appropriate to the institutional mission on a regular schedule. Indicators of student and graduate success such as NSSE results, fellowship awards, and

[4] The academic dean reviews the number of course registrations signed at the last minute by the academic services team.

graduate school admission provide solid evidence of both sufficiency and strength in the faculty. Faculty members are allowed considerable academic and intellectual freedom within the broad outlines of their contracted position responsibilities. This ensures the continued innovation and excellence in teaching as well as the constant adaptation to the changing academic, intellectual, and world environments required by the college's mission, commitment to experimentation and hands-on learning, and human ecology. A strong record of success with major granting agencies and routine faculty professional activity provide external evaluation of the faculty's excellence, though not on a systematic basis.

PROJECTION

Number and Quality of Faculty

If and when the college grows enrollment, the number of faculty will increase to maintain the college's 10:1 or better student:faculty ratio (see Standards Two and Nine). Although some faculty positions have already been identified to match trends in enrollment growth that may occur over the next five–ten years, the academic program review will develop firmer and more systematic academic planning to continue to ensure faculty quality.

Faculty Recruitment and Appointment

Standard Nine discusses the plan for improving faculty compensation; this will be critical to the recruitment and retention of faculty.

Contractual System without Tenure

Faculty personnel committee will be developing a proposal for a modified contract system for discussion in the faculty meeting during 2007–2008. *The Questions of Tenure* (ed. Richard P. Chait) will provide a structure for some elements of this discussion.

Faculty Evaluation and Personnel Policy

Goals for the FPC and academic deans in the next five years include the following:

- Continue to respond to the review of 10 years of faculty review committees and reports along with other faculty meeting concerns
- Raise the standard of excellence in the first five-year review
- Develop appropriate policy based on the results of discussions regarding a COA-type model of tenure or longer term contract
- Increase the number of faculty conversations on teaching and provide more mentoring opportunities
- Conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of the faculty reward system (compensation, sabbaticals, professional development opportunities)
- Evaluate the process for appointing members to the faculty personnel committee

The main focus of efforts in the areas of faculty evaluation and personnel policy will continue to be the longitudinal study noted above, further discussion of workload concerns and questions of excellence in faculty meeting, the work of the faculty personnel committee, the associate dean's conversations with faculty members, and President Hales' request to FPC in Spring 2007. All oversight responsibility for accomplishing these tasks will rest with the associate dean and academic dean, with annual updates to the president and faculty over the next three years. These reports will begin with a proposed process for reviewing the faculty reward system in conjunction with and probably following the upcoming academic program review.

It is the faculty personnel committee's goal to continuously improve the faculty review process without requiring an onerous level of additional faculty administrative work. Some of the improvement is cultural;

faculty personnel committee would like faculty members to experience more clearly the rewards of their reviews and to work more closely with appropriate colleagues to create a culture of continuous and collaborative improvement and innovation in teaching. Faculty personnel committee will also continue to work directly with the academic and administrative deans to identify and deal promptly with faculty needs.

As faculty personnel committee focuses on excellence in teaching, it will develop a system for evaluating the success of these efforts in response to the academic program review and in consultation with the faculty as a whole.

Reviews of all personnel manuals will be undertaken under the supervision of the administrative dean and personnel committee beginning in 2007–2008.

The president, academic and administrative deans, and faculty personnel committee will also clarify the system of deans and enhance existing procedures for the review of all faculty administrative responsibilities (2006–2008).

Faculty Compensation

Faculty compensation is adequate for some but not attractive and is especially challenging for the youngest faculty. Improving faculty salaries is necessary for the long-term health of the institution. The college has committed to making a modest annual cost-of-living adjustment, which will continue, but it needs a plan for achieving the targets approved by the board in 1995. As part of the modeling for financial sustainability, the college must continue its work on medium- and long-term plans for controlling the cost of education, managing financial aid, and budgeting for inflationary costs (see Standard Nine). During 2007–2008, the college will continue, under the leadership of President Hales, to focus strategically on key priorities, make difficult financial decisions, and assess various models for long-term sustainability. Further key steps will include the following: the president and administrative and academic deans have begun to create an entirely visible budget model where the costs of one program are seen to influence the rest of the operating budget; the financial sustainability committee or appropriate presidential designees referred to in Standard Nine will develop a workable plan and timeline specifically for improving faculty and staff salaries; and the academic and administrative deans with the assistance of the president, financial sustainability committee, and faculty will not only assess the trajectory in terms of enrollment growth and potential but also determine how to reach the most optimal level of enrollment for ensuring financial stability and maintaining the college's core values.

Faculty Development

Faculty development is not optimal but has improved significantly through entrepreneurship and thus remains a secondary focus to faculty salaries. The next capital campaign will include plans for increasing faculty development funds. In the meantime, the academic deans will continue to work with the president to provide support for faculty development. The college expects to have new endowed chairs within the next five years and intends to fully endow any new faculty position that cannot be supported by enrollment growth.

Faculty Workload and Assignments

Faculty workload will continue to be monitored and evaluated through further conversations with the faculty. The beginnings of this conversation will come from presidential leadership and an explicit request to focus more on teaching and less on governance, from curriculum planning work at the 2006–2008 faculty retreats (three years), and from explicit conversations with the faculty in relation to the workload guidelines, academic program review, and modeling for sustainability. The academic deans will lead further discussion in the faculty meeting and in individual conversations about the relevance of faculty members' initial position descriptions to current workload assignments to ensure that there is an appropriate, curriculum-sustaining balance at all times between both faculty creativity and innovation and the core needs of human ecology.

Academic Integrity

Faculty meeting will continue to periodically review all matters of academic integrity including academic honesty, the ways policies apply to students, and standards of ethical faculty behavior. Academic services will provide continued training for advisors on referrals to counselors, sexual harassment, appropriate treatment of students with special needs, and all matters of evaluation.

Institutional Effectiveness

Through the ACM, faculty and committee meetings, and the president's leadership, the college and its faculty will continue to strive to always uphold the founding principles of human ecology. With the encouragement and oversight of the president, board, deans, and the faculty personnel committee, faculty will continue to work to be the best teachers they can possibly be and to provide students with appropriate guidance for life success. The administration will focus on ensuring that faculty are fully able to carry out their primary educational responsibilities through attention to all matters of faculty personnel policy, compensation, workload, and morale.

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STANDARD SIX
STUDENTS

DESCRIPTION

The primary goal of staff working in student services is to ensure individual student success by enrolling qualified students and then providing the necessary challenge and support to help each student achieve his or her academic and personal goals. The college's small size affords staff the opportunity to have an intensely individual approach to student services that is intended to generate a strong sense of community. Organizational structure and staffing have changed significantly since the last reaccredidation in 1997 and since the interim report in 2002. The dean of admission, who supervises a staff of five including the director of financial aid, oversees all admission and financial aid activities. The remaining student services are part of the academic program under the direction of the academic dean. Career services and academic support services staff all report to the academic dean. Health and counseling, dining services, residential life, leadership and student activities, and international student services are overseen by the associate dean of student life who supervises a professional staff of four and a student staff of nine (Exhibit 6.1). All staff that provide student services have proper training and experience in their area of responsibility as well as membership in appropriate professional organizations (Exhibit 6.2).

Admission

Recruiting and admitting a broad range of qualified students who can succeed in the college's interdisciplinary learning environment is a critical element of success. The recruitment and admission process reflects the college's individualized approach and relies a great deal on personal contact. Admission criteria are available both in the viewbook and online (Exhibit 6.3). Undergraduate applications are evaluated and decisions made by the admission committee which consists of the dean of admission (chair), admission counselors, three faculty members, the associate dean of student life, and several students. The dean of admission orients each committee member and explains the process of evaluating candidates (Exhibit 6.4). At least one faculty, student, and staff review every application. Admission to the graduate program is determined by the associate dean for advanced study and faculty in the applicant's proposed area of study (Exhibit 6.5).

Diversity

The student body comes from 42 states and 39 countries; 15% percent of students are from Maine and 10% are first-generation college students (Exhibit 6.6). In 2000, COA began participation in the Davis United World Scholars Program. In approximately five years, the percent of international students grew from 5% to 20%.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is distributed according to clearly defined policies and procedures that are available as part of the application for admission and on the web (Exhibit 6.7). All students seeking aid are required to complete the FAFSA, Certificate of Finances, and COA Financial Aid Application every year (Exhibit 6.8). The admission process is need-blind, and therefore financial aid awards are determined separately from admission decisions. The process of awarding aid complies with federal guidelines while maintaining a commitment to making education affordable for the majority of students. Currently 70% of COA students receive need-based aid, and College of the Atlantic is one of less than 300 U.S. colleges and universities that meet more than 98% of total student need. Overall, 85% of students receive financial assistance.

In light of recent abuses of the student financial assistance program at many institutions, the college conducted an independent investigation of its program. None of the abuses which have received such notoriety elsewhere were found at COA. Nevertheless, the college has taken steps to increase the purposefulness of its financial aid and the transparency and availability of information relating to financial assistance to assure prospective students and their parents of the integrity of its program.

Student Life Philosophy and Programs

Student life is in a process of transition resulting from additional staffing and an ongoing philosophical shift from providing basic services to a co-curricular, learning-based model. The availability of student life staff and their ability to achieve rapport with students are critical to the college's receiving feedback and evaluation that allows it to tailor services and programming to meet student needs. The college's small size makes this time-intensive approach possible. The mission adopted by student life staff three years ago is adapted from the principles of campus community articulated by Ernest Boyer in *Campus Life: In Search of Community* (Exhibit 6.9).

Information about programs and policies (health, counseling and wellness; food service; residence life; student activities, organizations, and leadership; the outdoor program; international student services; campus safety and emergency response; community policies; academic support services; information technology; career services and internships; and academic policies, requirements, and appeals processes) is presented during campus orientation and is available in the student handbook and in an academic planner which is distributed to each student every year (Exhibit 6.10). As of Fall 2008, this information will be available on the website. Faculty, staff advisors, and resident advisors are also given the information as part of their preparation for interacting with students. Some information related to health and counseling services, the wellness program, and emergency response are emailed to the community every term and are posted in residences and in key locations in public buildings.

Community Policies and Privacy

The college works to create an expectation of respect for the individual and the community and encourages the acceptance of personal responsibility for the impact of one's actions (Exhibit 6.11). Because the values of the college's approach are internalized early in a student's academic career, there is little need for explicitly stated restrictions on individual behavior (Exhibit 6.12).

In accordance with FERPA, the college takes a strong stand on student privacy. The policy related to the privacy of student records and information is clearly stated in the course catalog. College of the Atlantic recognizes that students are adults and the college's primary relationship therefore is with the student, not with her or his parent. Recognizing this shift, the college sends information related to its privacy policy and general approach to incoming students and their parents prior to arrival on campus (Exhibit 6.13).

Academic Support Services

Beginning in Fall 2003, the college initiated a number of significant changes designed to better identify, track, and support students with learning challenges—whether from diagnosed learning differences or potentially insufficient college preparation. The college also rapidly identifies students with worrisome academic performance. Recent changes include better early identification of individuals with learning challenges through the admission process, better outreach to all incoming students regarding services and points-of-contact, regularly scheduled group and one-on-one academic skills sessions, revisions to several academic policies (including leaves of absence, eligibility for independent studies, and tighter timelines for incomplete and extended work), regular communication between the academic dean and student life, and stricter monitoring of students on academic probation (see Standard Four). When students with potential or demonstrated issues are identified, the student is brought to the attention of the appropriate person to ensure that a program of support for academic or language issues, mental/physical health, or cultural adjustment can be put in place as soon as possible.

Orientation

Orientation is designed to introduce students to the college's culture, community, and educational approach. It has three parts: language orientation (supplementary instruction for incoming students who would benefit), outdoor orientation or OOPs (optional six-day wilderness excursions), and campus orientation to cover advising, the academic program, resources, expectations, and community building (Exhibit 6.14). Information about OOPs trips is sent over the summer, and all new students are encouraged

to attend (Exhibit 6.15). Student life staff, faculty, and representatives from various campus programs organize orientation. Each year, the student life committee solicits student, faculty, and staff feedback to assess the program and make changes when needed. In addition, starting in 2004, student life began incorporating Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education goals for orientation programs into its planning process.

Health, Counseling, and Wellness

One of the most significant changes within student life has been the introduction of accident and illness health insurance for all students—international students in Fall 2002 and U.S. students in Fall 2005 (Exhibits 6.16 and 6.17). A review of health and counseling needs conducted in 2002–2003 led the college to increase coverage to its current levels. Basic medical care is provided on a walk-in basis by a family nurse practitioner who is on campus approximately 20 hours per week. Three local practitioners provide counseling on campus for approximately 15 hours per week. In response to reluctance from some students and in particular from international students to attend "mental health" counseling, the college included a pastoral counselor as part of the team. Regular consultations offer the data necessary to assess current use and to identify emerging issues that may need to be addressed campuswide. The college has also established a regular schedule of free, on-campus wellness programs such as yoga, tai chi, aikido, and end-of-term massage. These activities supplement offerings at the local YMCA where every student receives membership.

Dining Services

Food is available in the dining hall three meals a day, five days a week. Menus always include vegan and vegetarian options with enough variety to satisfy a diverse community. Preference is placed on using regional and organic ingredients including produce from the college farm. In Fall 2006, the college introduced plasticized identification and meal cards to track consumption.

Student Activities and Leadership

In 2005, the college added a position of director of student leadership and engagement. This has significantly improved and increased opportunities for learning outside the classroom. The student activities committee, chaired by the director, offers a wide range of cultural, social, and recreational experiences for the college community. These include concerts, open mics, life-drawing sessions, world cinema, contra-dances, and support for several student organizations including SustainUS—a UN-affiliated youth network—and a student initiated housing cooperative group (Exhibit 6.18). Building on the OOPs program, the director of student leadership and engagement has also begun to develop a comprehensive outdoor program that provides a wide range of daytime excursions and weekend overnights throughout the year.

Students acquire leadership skills by leading OOPs trips and outdoor programs, being a resident advisor, and participating in student organizations and the governance system. Students serve on all committees and actively participate in making college decisions. Students involved in the steering committee determine the agenda and shape the format for community discussion through the all college meeting (ACM). The student moderator of ACM also makes a presentation on governance activities at each trustee meeting. The operating model that outlines the governance system is available in the student handbook and presented at orientation (Standard Three and Exhibit 6.19).

Student Residences and Facilities

Housing capacity (approximately 35% of students live on-campus) has not changed since the last reaccredidation, but construction has begun on 51 additional beds to be available in Fall 2008. The residential population is composed primarily of first-year students. Resident advisors (RAs) are the key component of the program, performing a complex role that focuses on community building and assisting new students in the transition to college (Exhibit 6.20). Emergency cell phones now ensure 24-hour support from one of the three professional student life staff so that RAs need not focus on crisis response and policy

enforcement. The goal is to expand expectations for RAs through additional training and leadership development while increasing the quality and number of applicants for the positions (Exhibits 6.20 and 6.21).

Special Student Populations

The dramatic increase in the international student population led to the decision to make the coordinator of international student services position full-time. In addition to ensuring individual and institutional compliance with governmental regulations related to F-1 students, the coordinator issues relevant documents, assists students with cultural transitions, provides specialized orientation, advises individual students, advocates for the needs of international students in a variety of campus settings, and serves as a liaison to the Davis United World College Scholars Program.

COA also supports various off-campus programs in international contexts, and many students engage in independent work in a variety of cultural settings. A pilot program to prepare students for independent study off-campus was offered in Fall 2005 as part of a larger plan to develop modules for preparation, support, and reintegration (Exhibit 6.22). An initial site visit to assess student life needs in the college's off-campus programs was made to the Guatemala program in Spring 2006.

Retention and Assessment

The college strives to ensure that its programs and services provide the environment for each student to meet his or her academic and personal goals. Retention and four- and six-year graduation rates are measured for each class of students as well as for specifically recruited populations. The academic dean analyzes retention and other measures of student success, and this information is shared with the admission committee and other appropriate offices to inform decision-making processes. First- to second-year retention rates are currently at 82% and the six-year graduation rate is 59%. In 2004, the college was awarded a MELMAC grant to develop programs and services designed to increase student retention. Implementation of the project is underway and various pieces will be phased in over the next four years (Exhibit 6.23).

Additionally, for the last several years the college has also participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which provides valuable information about student participation in institutional programs and comparisons with other similar colleges. Committee feedback and information gathered through extensive one-on-one and small group interaction are also critically important and consistent with the college's individualized approach.

APPRAISAL

One of the major concerns in the last reaccredidation was the dual admission counselor/student service role played by staff members. This issue has been rectified with a reorganized structure and the addition of several new student life staff positions. Additionally, including the dean of admission and the associate dean for student life as part of the senior administrative team increases the degree of integration among various areas of the college.

Admission and Financial Aid

Over the last seven years, the admission team increased applications and yield while also becoming more selective (Exhibit 6.24). New technologies and the incorporation of a database management system have increased the ability to reach more students while maintaining a dedication to personal relationships. At the same time, admission recognizes a need to develop additional fluency with new and emerging communication technologies to best reach young adults. A redesign of the website is underway, but that alone will not be enough. The college recognizes that it should use additional data analysis to ensure that financial aid is allocated in a way that is sustainable (see Standard Nine).

Diversity

While admitting a diverse student body has long been a goal of the college, the previous evaluation team noted that the college lacked a plan for doing so. Participation in the Davis United World College Scholars Program and successful international recruitment efforts (average enrollment of 12-15 per year) has profoundly increased the diversity of the student population and the variety of experiences and perspectives students bring to COA. Domestic racial and ethnic diversity remains an issue.

Student Life Philosophy

While the college's individualized approach to student services is time and resource intensive, it also represents one of the key benefits of small size and is consistent with COA's self-directed education. Given recent staff transitions—three professional staff have been in their positions as currently configured for less than a year—student life has begun reviewing its philosophy to ensure consistency with the college's mission. Staff have also begun developing co-curricular learning goals based on three sources: goals of human ecology approved by the faculty (Exhibit 6.24), program outcomes outlined in the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education's *Book of Professional Standards for Higher Education* (6th edition, 2006), and *Learning Reconsidered: A Campus-Wide Focus on the Student Experience* (2004, American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)). Together these sources ensure that student life is not only meeting the standards set by practitioners but also the goals of a human ecological education.

Community Policies

The update to the student life sections of the website scheduled to be completed in Summer 2007 will enhance the ways in which the college already communicates and publishes community policies. While the college is not aware of any concerns, periodic review is appropriate to ensure compliance with stated policies. The social and academic misconduct policy was noted as a concern in the last reaccredidation report. This revised policy has since been clarified to ensure transparency and consistency while maintaining the college's willingness to take particular circumstances into account (Exhibit 6.26). Fortunately this policy rarely needs to be invoked, and most complaints are resolved informally through communication and mediation. When informal resolution is not possible, the procedure for convening a formal judiciary board composed of faculty, staff, and students is followed. Judiciary boards have wide latitude to determine consequences appropriate to the complaint being heard.

Orientation

The annual review process has led the college to move away from orientation activities that simply present a catalog of services and resources to one that exposes students to the social and intellectual expectations of the college. An equally important goal is to build a strong sense of community. Student feedback has indicated experiential and interactive sessions are the most successful and engaging. Therefore, student life will implement a significant change this fall from sessions using a lecture format to small group discussions focused around shared readings. The committee expects that this approach will be more consistent with the college's overall pedagogical approach. The college has also designed a new start to the academic year that incorporates several traditional activities while making some additions designed to celebrate community (Exhibit: 6.27).

The outdoor orientation program (OOPs), in its 35th year in Fall 2007, continues to be one of the longest standing and most successful programs. Anecdotal information and the experience of student life staff members indicate that often students who have a hard time finding a peer group or who struggle with homesickness did not participate in OOPs. Data also indicate that there is a positive correlation between participation in OOPs and retention from the first to second year (Exhibit 6.28). Based on this information and on a recommendation from the previous evaluation report, the college has established a scholarship program for students unable to cover the additional cost of OOPs.

Student Activities and Leadership

Several trends have created expectations for more services on campus and a greater need for supervised programming. The student body has shifted toward more students of a traditional age and the international student population has grown substantially. In addition, nationwide there has been a rise in students with mental health challenges, and parental involvement in their children's college affairs has increased. The college now has the opportunity to develop innovative programming not previously possible because of severe staffing limitations. Currently these additional challenges are being met by balancing the college's traditional support for student-directed initiatives with more structured activities.

The director of student leadership and engagement has already begun to address student leadership by strengthening the training offered to OOPs leaders (Exhibit 6.29); similar changes to the RA training will begin in Fall 2007 (Exhibit 6.30). The governance system continues to offer some of the most significant leadership opportunities for students.

Residence Life and Facilities

The nature of the residential program has been refined since the last report when it was noted as a concern. A clearer understanding of the characteristics of the residential population and the issues that arise as students transition to college have led to a model that is appropriate and reasonably successful. However, several additional concerns related to the residence life program must still be addressed. First, residential buildings are used almost constantly between the academic program and the summer program. This leaves little time to perform necessary and routine maintenance. Second, furniture and fixtures in many buildings need to be replaced, but funds have not yet been budgeted. Third, current student numbers heavily tax the dining facilities. Fourth, planning is underway to review current residence life and meal plan programs in light of the construction of 51 beds of student housing opening in Fall 2008. The increase in beds means that the number of returning students living on campus will increase from 15% to 30%.

As noted in the interim report, the student lounge space was lost when admission and financial aid were relocated as part of the Turrets renovation. While the loss was to have been temporary, admission was never relocated, and students are still left without a designated space to congregate for social and recreational purposes. This loss particularly affects students who do not live on campus and therefore have few spaces in which to remain on campus when not in class. The library and the dining hall have become surrogate spaces, but this is not ideal. The college plans to convert Sea Urchins, previously scheduled for demolition as part of the housing project, into a campus center—the Deering Common (Exhibit 6.31). The project will provide much needed space for current and anticipated student life services and programs while addressing the critical need for a social space for both residential and nonresidential students.

Special Populations

International student services staff continue to do an excellent job of identifying and meeting student needs. Much progress has been made in recent years to clarify policies and procedures. Two areas to be addressed are taxation on need-based aid and the difficulty that students, particularly from developing countries, face when they try to return home to work or study after graduation.

With more and more students participating in COA programs off-campus as well as undertaking independent study in various cultural contexts, the college must find ways to better serve students when they are at a distance. Initial projects, undertaken in 2005–2006, must be further developed.

The college has not yet assessed the needs of first-generation college students or graduate students. However student life, in conjunction with admission and the associate dean of graduate studies, intends to determine how best to meet the needs of both populations.

Retention and Assessment

Overall, retention rates are improving, indicating that the college is learning what kinds of students can thrive in its educational environment and is providing co-curricular activities that satisfy students (Exhibits 6.32 and 6.33). The college seeks to continue this trend through implementing the MELMAC grant awarded in 2005. Student life will be responsible for developing programs to support the local off-campus student population in a systematic way. COA's results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (Exhibit 6.34) are encouraging. Of particular importance to student life were the scores the college received for supportive campus environment; these were higher than scores of selected and Carnegie peers.

PROJECTION

Admission, Retention, and Financial Aid

- Develop the capacity to utilize additional data analysis to refine admission strategies to better allocate resources; led by the dean of admission, software was purchased and a consultant contracted in Spring 2007 with data analysis to begin Summer 2008.
- Increase staff or capacity to incorporate new communications technology into the admission process; consultant engaged Spring 2007, new hire planned within two years contingent upon funding.
- Conduct dialog to determine if diversity in the U.S. student population is an institutional priority to which the college is willing to allocate resources for recruitment and appropriate campus services and programs; dean of admission will present for community discussion during the 2008–2009 academic year with recommendations by Fall 2010.
- Implement components of the MELMAC grant concentrating on programs for second- and third-year students; directed by the associate dean of student life and the director of student leadership and engagement to be completed as outlined in the proposal, concluding by Spring 2011.
- Refine strategies to allocate student aid that maintain a commitment to affordable education while encouraging the matriculation of highly qualified students; discussion and implementation are ongoing led by the administrative dean, finance committee of the board of trustees, and dean of admission.

Student Life Philosophy and Programs

- Conduct a comprehensive review of the student life mission and programs including examining consistency with the institutional mission, incorporating external standards, developing co-curricular learning outcomes and plans for assessment; undertaken by student life in conjunction with the review of the academic program beginning in Winter 2008 to be concluded by Spring 2009.
- Evaluate communication, implementation, and effectiveness of community polices (including judiciary board proceedings) and their consistency with institutional mission and student life philosophy; student life committee will conduct in Spring 2008.
- Develop the leadership curriculum further by strengthening the outdoor program, resident advisor program, governance system, and student organizations; the director of student leadership and engagement with the associate dean of student life will oversee with the assistance of relevant campus committees and constituencies. Pilot programs will begin in Fall 2007 and continue through Spring 2009 with ongoing evaluation and recommendations for permanent implementation by Fall 2010.
- Revise campus orientation program to focus on preparing both U.S. and international students to have intercultural exchanges while developing opportunities for student leadership consistent with the college's educational approach; directed by associate dean of student life in conjunction with student life committee and academic deans, pilot program starting Fall 2007 with annual reviews on an ongoing basis.
- Evaluate health and counseling program and focus on the impact of student insurance and the increasing need for ongoing support of existing mental health issues, while also developing goals

for expansion of the wellness program emphasizing a holistic approach including spiritual needs and preventative health education; conducted by associate dean of student life in partnership with campus providers starting in Fall 2009 with recommendations by Fall 2010.

- Assess dining services including facilities, staffing, and meal plan options examining the impact of additional residential students; conducted jointly by co-directors of the kitchen, associate dean of student life, director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety with possible need for an external consultant, starting Winter 2008 with recommendations for Fall 2009.
- Compare staffing, compensation, programs, and facilities of student life programs at peer institutions; undertaken jointly by the student life committee of the board of trustees and the campus over the next 18 months with final recommendations to be made by Spring 2009.

Student Life Programs and Facilities

- Develop residence life philosophy centered on intercultural exchange incorporating new student housing and language or other theme housing, living/learning communities, or transitional housing for students departing for and returning from off-campus study; led by student life in conjunction with the international studies committee to be completed by Spring 2008.
- Develop a timeline and plan for resource allocation to address deferred maintenance and replacement of furniture and fixtures in older residences; joint effort led by associated dean of student life, administrative dean, and director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety.
- Create a programming plan for the proposed campus center; jointly led by the student life and campus planning and building committees with wide community input, to be completed by Fall 2008.

Specific Student Populations

- Develop mechanisms to address tax withholdings for international students; led by the coordinator of international student services, to be resolved by Fall 2007.
- Assess ways to support international students, particularly from developing countries, as they transition home after graduation; coordinator for international student services will implement with recommendations by Spring 2008.
- Develop program to support local students living off-campus in rental housing; associate dean for student life will lead during the 2008–2009 academic year.
- Assess programs and services to support graduate students; jointly conducted by director of student leadership and engagement and associate dean for advanced study, to be conducted during academic year 2008–2009.
- Assess programs and services to support first-generation college students; conducted jointly by associate dean of student life and dean of admission, to be conducted during the 2009–2010 academic year.
- Develop programs to prepare, support, and reintegrate students engaging in independent or COA sponsored off-campus programs; led by the coordinator of international student services in consultation with the international studies committee, the office of external programs, and the advising team, to be conducted during the 2008–2009 academic year.

Emergency Response

- Review/develop appropriate response plans for campus emergencies and community disasters that include campus education; led by director of public safety and associate dean of student life with broad campus and community input, to be completed by Spring 2008.

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STANDARD SEVEN
LIBRARY AND OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

College of the Atlantic operates two distinct departments for information resources and their services. The director of the library, who is supervised by the associate dean of faculty, manages the Thorndike Library. The director of information services, who is supervised by the administrative dean, runs the campus information technology (IT) department. While these areas have operated independently in the past, the library's rapidly expanding use of electronic resources, particularly in the last 10 years, provides a growing impetus for the departments to work more collaboratively.

DESCRIPTION: Thorndike Library

Located in the center of campus, the library is an integral part of campus life. It supports the mission of the college by providing access to information resources and services that promote information literacy. Since the last NEASC visit, the library has established college archives and assumed responsibility for academic audiovisual support. The library has been developing rapidly to keep up with information technologies (Exhibits 7.1 and 7.2).

The library staff includes two full- and five part-time employees, totaling 4.5 FTE (Exhibit 7.3). Each term, 24-32 workstudy students provide additional support. The library committee, a subcommittee of academic affairs, advises the library staff on plans and policies (Exhibit 7.4). With input from the COA community, the library purchases resources in support of curricular, research, special project, and individual needs. Items required or recommended by faculty in support of academic programming receive purchasing priority. Suggestions made by the entire COA community are also welcomed.

The collections are documented and managed using Athena, a PC-based integrated library system that offers worldwide web access to the college's collection. Collection highlights include 40,000 print books, 8,000 ebooks through netLibrary, 200+ print subscriptions, 900 cds, 1200 videos/dvds, access to 15,000+ ejournals/newspapers, and multiple subscription-based databases (Exhibit 7.5). The archives, the library's special collection, and the COA collection are maintained and housed in the library (Exhibit 7.6). In addition to making audiovisual equipment and laptops available for circulation (Exhibit 7.7), the library is responsible for ensuring classrooms are equipped.

The library is open seven days (100 hours per week) during the academic year (summer hours are reduced). Over 28,000 items (books, cds, videos, reserves, and AV equipment) circulate per year. The library does not have a security bar strip system and the loss rate reflects that none is needed (Exhibit 7.8).

Through an open-door policy, the librarians provide detailed reference assistance, answer basic reference questions, and hold library orientations for incoming students and some classes at the request of faculty. The library's web page is maintained by one of the librarians in coordination with the web master. With a recently implemented proxy server, students now have off-campus access to most electronic resources. Podcasts of COA events are available and the library is exploring the use and benefits of other web-based technologies. Library policies are posted on the web as well as available in print in the library lobby (Exhibits 7.9 and 7.10).

The library supplements its holdings by providing interlibrary loan (ILL) services. Access to additional resources is made possible through special arrangements and memberships that the library has with other libraries throughout the area. The COA community also benefits from Maine's digital library that provides access to dozens of databases and an integrated statewide catalogue (Exhibit 7.11).

In 2004, library staff in consultation with faculty extensively reviewed journal holdings. Currently, the staff is systematically weeding the monograph collection. To assess the effectiveness of library services and resources, the staff solicits comments from the community, from workstudy students, and from faculty who have asked library staff to instruct their classes (Exhibit 7.12).

Spanning the second floor of Kaelber Hall, the library's physical space has changed little in the past 10 years. The library lobby includes two staff offices, a circulation desk, reserves shelves, and public computers. An adjacent seminar room is used for classes and meetings. The reading room houses the reference collection and current print journals and newspapers. The stacks house most of the library's print collection. Wireless service is accessible throughout the library, and study areas are available in both the reading room and stacks. Behind the stacks there is a small computer room and a small library workroom; there is additional storage on the lower level of Kaelber Hall.

APPRAISAL: Thorndike Library

Strengths

In the past 10 years, the college's library has adequately faced the challenges of emerging technologies, budgeting setbacks, a growing student body, and new academic programs by:

- Eliminating print journal subscriptions no longer used or duplicated electronically through databases offered by the state of Maine (7.11)
- Providing adequate space for the collections
- Changing the job description for the library/media specialist position to that of an audiovisual technology specialist
- Budgeting flexibly and creatively
- Formalizing the position of workstudy coordinator
- Moving funds between budget lines to adjust quickly to changing resource needs
- Developing new ILL procedures that take advantage of a state network

Limitations

At the same time, there have been challenges, including:

- Budgets have been limited (Exhibits 7.13 and 7.14).[5]
- Staff and workstudy students share limited office space.
- The college has been experiencing a growing demand for audiovisual equipment (Exhibit 7.15).
- Added responsibilities affect the staff's ability to provide excellent library services in the same ways as in the past.
- An increasing need for cooperation with IT requires additional staff time and training.
- The college has limited professional development and staff salary equity funds (Exhibit 7.16).
- Securing a storage area for the archives is especially important as COA faculty approach retirement.

[5] There is always the concern that databases supported by the state depend on the budget actions of the state legislature.

- Some faculty—particularly in the humanities and social sciences—feel collections are inadequate for their teaching needs.

PROJECTION: Thorndike Library

Since advances in technology have changed the library landscape and how people access information, library challenges require a strategic approach.

By 2009 and in conjunction with the academic program review, the library will develop a strategic plan that identifies and evaluates alternative approaches to meet the demands of the future. As part of the strategic plan, the library will consider how to ensure that by graduation, students are proficient in using IT resources. By January 2008 the directors of the library and IT will present a plan to the deans outlining a shared set of goals and strategies to guide these efforts. In addition, they will present a full proposal to the academic affairs committee and the deans for consideration by May of 2008.

Addressing key facility concerns of all staff and faculty will be part of the next campus plan. Plans to adjust salaries are discussed in Standard Nine.

DESCRIPTION: Information Technology

The information technology (IT) department is responsible for ensuring that the necessary information technology infrastructure is in place to support COA's mission and goals. The IT department supports all academic and administrative computing needs through purchase, installation, and maintenance of all COA computer systems. The IT department also manages network infrastructure, academic and administrative data systems, telecommunications systems, the college's website, and institutional research. The staff includes the director, network manager, web master, and systems administrator. During the academic year, 8–10 workstudy students provide additional staffing.

COA has established a campuswide network infrastructure to support all aspects of academic and administrative computing (Exhibit 7.17). The campus is connected to the internet via a T1 line; all buildings on campus are connected to a central 100MB switch via fiber optic cable, and all offices, classrooms, and dorm rooms have both wired (Cat5E Ethernet) and wireless connections. Computers are provided to all full-time faculty and as needed to all administrative staff. Overall, the IT department supports 11 servers, 230 COA-owned academic/administrative computers, 100 printers, and various peripherals for a user community of over 400 staff, faculty, and students. Equipment replacement cycles vary from three–five years for specialized classroom labs (GIS/Graphics), to four years for faculty, and five years for servers and administrative computers.

APPRAISAL: Information Technology

The rapid changes in information technology present challenges and opportunities to all institutions, and COA has been able to meet many of these challenges.

Strengths

- The college recognizes the critical role of information technology in learning and teaching as well as in management and administration.

- IT has expanded network infrastructure to the entire campus, and ensures that all buildings added to the campus are incorporated into the campus network. Switches have been upgraded and a firewall added to allow increased management capabilities, essential in providing necessary oversight of increasingly heavy network traffic.

- As use of and dependency on computer resources has increased, IT has taken steps to ensure the security of service. Campus resources are protected by a firewall, and wireless networks operate in

a closed environment. Management tools are used to monitor network and bandwidth usage. A computer usage policy is in place and is enforced (Exhibit 7.18). All servers are equipped with RAID5 and redundant power supplies; tape backups are run nightly and stored off-campus (Exhibit 7.19).

- Over the last two years, the IT department has been transitioning from CRT to LCD monitors for both energy and ergonomic concerns. To date, approximately 80% of campus monitors have been replaced with low-energy LCD displays.

- Computer resources available to faculty and students have expanded to meet increasing demand. There are currently 10 classrooms/labs equipped with computers as well as five spaces equipped with computers that provide 24/7 general access to the college's information systems (Exhibit 7.20). Three classrooms have been set up as "smart classrooms" managed by library A/V personnel.

- IT has also been able to respond to an increased demand for computers in the classroom. In addition to teaching classrooms such as GIS and Graphic Design, a seminar-style classroom was recently equipped with a cart of 15 notebook computers. Computers are available in the zoology, botany, and chemistry labs, the writing center, and the multi-media classroom. Four classrooms have been equipped as smart classrooms, and the library maintains several notebook computers and video projectors that are available to faculty and students.

Limitations

- Network traffic has increased dramatically in the last few years, taxing the college's current infrastructure. The T1 connection is used at near 100% capacity for much of the time during the academic term, affecting all users. The demand for wireless access is also growing, with requests for campuswide coverage.

- The academic software package (CAMS) used for billing, admission, and student records has several constraints. Since this package is platform-specific, running only on windows-based systems, faculty members running MacOS or Linux systems currently do not have access to student records for advising purposes. All grade entry and registration is done by the registrar's office, a labor-intensive process. Also, students do not yet have access to registration, grades or billing.

- The college needs a document management system to archive and organize student records that predate use of CAMS. The registrar's office does not have any electronic archive or backup of student records prior to 1997 (the year CAMS was implemented). Paper documents are stored in file cabinets with no environmental controls or protection. File copies of student records should be scanned, converted to PDF format, and imported into a document management system. This system could also meet archival needs of other administrative offices.

- As more faculty and students incorporate technology into the classroom, facilities must be upgraded. Several classrooms have been equipped as smart classrooms, but more are needed. The library maintains notebook computers that can be checked out to faculty or students for in-library or classroom use, but demand is outpacing supply, and many of these computers should be replaced.

- The IT budget has been level-funded for four years. One of the outcomes of this has been the elimination of any funds for staff training, conference attendance, and professional development—especially important in rapidly changing fields such as IT. In addition, the college's inability to keep pace with salary equity adjustments has affected the IT department particularly hard, since wages have not kept pace with industry standards.

PROJECTION*:* Information Technology

- Upgrading to increased bandwidth is a high priority, and the college is currently negotiating with its network provider to upgrade from a T1 to DSL. Over the next one–two years, COA will collaborate with other research organizations on Mount Desert Island to bring higher speed access to campus. The rapid increase in network usage also affects on-campus traffic; the college anticipates upgrading the network core switch from 100MBit to 1GBit technology within two years.

- An upgrade to a web-based system (CAMS Enterprise) to include student and faculty portals and offer access through any internet connection is expected in Spring 2008.

- As the physical campus grows, continued attention will be paid to maintaining standards of connectivity throughout campus. Two projects are currently underway, student housing and a student center. All buildings will have fiber optic connections to the campus backbone, and both wired and wireless access to the network.

- Upgrade of the academic information system to a web-based system is a priority that will be met by Spring 2008.

- The IT department is committed to working with library staff to more fully integrate technology and library services to support both teaching and learning environments at COA. The IT department will collaborate with the library in the development and implementation of strategic goals around this objective.

- Salary equity and professional development have been identified as priorities in the college's financial sustainability model. As progress is made in achieving financial goals, funds will be made available to adjust salaries and provide training and professional development to IT staff.

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STANDARD EIGHT
PHYSICAL RESOURCES

DESCRIPTION

The institution's idyllic coastal location provides ample opportunities for hands-on learning, ecological appreciation, and community service. The 35.6-acre campus has 2000 feet of shoreline and is bordered by Route 3 and Acadia National Park. The college is in the historic district of the town and resides on the site of six former summer estates. Classrooms, student activities, office space, and related functions are housed in 20 main buildings and several other secondary structures as shown by the campus map (Exhibit 8.1).

The college sees its physical plant and progressive operations as part of its educational mission. To that end, the institution wants to create a "living laboratory" of sustainability, shared stewardship, and sound educational practice through its resource management approach. COA is recognized as a national leader in the sustainability movement among colleges and universities because of actions that it has taken toward meeting this goal (see Exhibit 8.2).

In Fall 1996, the all college meeting (ACM) formally approved the campus environmental initiative as college policy. This initiative highlights the institution's environmental responsibility in all policies, programs, and practices (Exhibit 8.3). This policy helps to guide the development of projects that enhance the sustainability of both the educational and physical landscape. Similarly, the policy helps the college identify specific aspects of management where resources are not environmentally and economically efficient. In such areas, community members work to implement more sustainable alternatives. Through this initiative the college is committed to:

- Instituting environmentally and socially responsible purchasing policies (for example, using only renewable lumber, biodegradable building materials, environmentally safe cleaners and paints)
- Reducing campus waste (via recycling, green cones, composting)
- Maximizing energy efficiency and using sustainable energy sources
- Enhancing sustainability in land-use and building planning
- Encouraging low fossil-fuel energy (carbon offsets, wind)
- Providing curricular opportunities to study campus and local environmental issues
- Utilizing regional and organic food sources
- Maintaining environmentally and socially responsible development and investment
- Greening through public outreach
- Enabling access to tools for sustainability
- Maintaining a physical infrastructure, institutional practices, and personal behaviors that will foster public health

The director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety chairs the campus planning and building committee (CPBC). This committee is the governing body that oversees all campus building projects, landscape work, maintenance, and upgrades. The CPBC is a standing committee of the ACM and is comprised of faculty, staff, and students. Because the CPBC reports to the ACM and uses this public venue to get input into planning processes, the entire college community has the opportunity to be involved in facilities planning. CPBC holds a joint meeting each year with the academic affairs committee to develop and prioritize the academic space needs. The building and grounds committee of the board of trustees ultimately approves all decisions made by the CPBC that have significant financial/operational implications. The buildings and grounds committee meets quarterly to review plans, progress, and priorities.

Important facilities documents that have been developed by the college's planning processes include:

2002	Geddes Demshak Master Plan (Exhibit 8.4)
2003	Campus Plan (Exhibit 8.5)
2005	Campus Center Architectural Plan (Exhibit 8.6)

2005	Landscape Plan (Exhibit 8.7)
2006	Turrets Engineering Plan (Exhibit 8.8)
2006	Farm Plan (Exhibit 8.9)
2006	Campus Housing Architectural Plans (Exhibit 8.10)
2006	Pandemic and Emergency Response Plan (Exhibit 8.11)
Annually	Deferred maintenance assessment (Exhibit 8.12)

Since 1997, the college has made several important property acquisitions including:

1998	Great Duck Island research facility, 10 miles offshore consisting of 11 acres including lighthouse, innkeeper's house, boathouse, and other structures
1998	Mt. Desert Rock research facility, 23 miles offshore consisting of 3.5 acres, lighthouse, light-keeper's house, and boathouse
1999	Beech Hill Farm, 80-acre organic farm, located 12 miles from campus
2001	The Davis International Center and carriage house
2003	Ryles, which has provided some student housing and a student recreation room and is being examined for renovation as a campus center
2004	Witchcliff, a one-acre estate adjacent to the campus including a main house which has been renovated for office and classroom use

There have also been significant building, renovation, and improvements to the campus since 1997. Some major accomplishments include:

1999	George B. Dorr Museum of Natural History construction was completed.
2002	The Davis Center was painted and renovated for faculty offices, classrooms, and meeting rooms.
2002–2006	The Turrets received extensive fire safety upgrades and general classroom renovations.
2004–2006	Structures on the island research stations were repainted and their piers rebuilt.
2005	The old buildings and grounds headquarters was renovated and converted to two art studios and two offices.
2006	The Witchcliff estate was converted to five offices and two classrooms.
2006	New roadside signage was added for the campus.
2006	Significant campus landscape improvements were made, including renovating gardens, resurfacing campus walks and roads, removing trees, changing entrances, etc.

In addition to the physical upgrades, many technological enhancements have occurred since 1997. Major technological upgrades include increasing high-speed internet access from 10 mega bits to 100 mega bits campuswide, ensuring internet access to all classrooms, installing a firewall, adding video conferencing capacity, implementing a CAMS system, providing a wireless network throughout 90% of the campus, installing a fiber optic network throughout the campus, and significantly upgrading the entire phone system (see Standard Seven).

The highest priority for the physical plant is the completion of funding for additional student housing. Construction began in Spring 2007 to expand on-campus student housing by 51 beds. The new housing is designed to be an international village, drawing together students from many countries to form a vibrant community. From its beginning, the project was conceived as a set of connected cottages drawn together by an active outdoor space, all sharing a close relationship with the shoreline of the Maine coast. The primary goal for the creation of the housing was to create separate houses of eight (with a few extra beds) where all students can feel comfortable and assimilated and students from other countries can feel "at home" in a foreign setting. The project has a hierarchy of supplementary social spaces ranging from kitchen/dining areas in each house to social/game rooms shared by houses. Spaces in the complex provide considerable potential for establishing a sense of respect and community.

The additional student housing will enable the college to continue modest growth of the student body, consistent with its strategic plan, and will enable more students to have the close community connection

from on-campus living that is especially important in their first and sometimes second years. The additional income to the college from housing fees will also help balance future operating budgets.

College of the Atlantic is also examining the feasibility and costs associated with renovating Sea Urchins, the historic building on the Ryles estate, to become the Deering Common. Preliminary plans indicate that many of the functions planned for the campus center, as outlined in the campus plan, can be accommodated in this facility at a fraction of the cost of the larger project. Depending on its cost, the college may be close to reaching the fundraising goal that will make this project possible within the year.

Currently the college has two small research and several recreational boats. The larger research vessel (the *Indigo*) will be replaced within the next five years. The college's small fleet of vans and work vehicles will all need to be replaced within the next three years.

The director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety ensures that the college addresses fire codes and other public safety issues. The two night watchmen, professional student life staff, and resident advisors are all trained in safety measures and connected by emergency phones. Recently a "night bus" was added for evening rides to and from town locations to ensure student safety. A comprehensive review of emergency preparedness and pandemic planning was ordered by the president and is currently underway.

APPRAISAL

The institution has sufficient and appropriate physical and technological resources to achieve its educational goals. The director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety maintains the institution's facilities with a professional staff of 10 employees including a groundskeeper, three custodians, two night watchmen, a head gardener, a carpenter, a painter, and an assistant for daily operations. All members of this staff are also available to do mechanical work, metal work, painting, and a variety of small construction jobs. In addition, 30–40 workstudy students support the professional staff during the academic year and three–five seasonal employees are hired for the summer. Large renovations and new construction are generally contracted out. Although the staff is sufficient for current needs, additional staff will be needed as the student body and physical plant expand.

The institution does an excellent job at infusing its mission and educational objectives into guidance for and management of its physical plant. The campus "walks the talk" of sustainable and environmentally sound facilities management. Some recent examples include:

- In 2001 COA entered into a 10-year contract with Endless Energy Corporation to supply COA's electrical energy needs from wind power.
- COA is a charter member of the Green Campus Consortium of Maine whose mission is to develop an effective, Mainewide network of colleges, universities, and partners that will stimulate the continual improvement of environmental sustainability by campus-based institutions through communication and education.
- A director of sustainability was hired in 2005 to promote sustainable behavior throughout the campus.
- The college purchases renewable energy certificates, also known as green tags, to support the development of new renewable energy projects.
- COA is a member of Maine's STEP-UP program and the only participating academic institution. The STEP-UP program provides opportunities for organizations pursuing sustainable behaviors to network with each other and to receive recognition from the governor for their accomplishments.
- COA has joined the Governor's Carbon Challenge Program. As such, the college has committed to reduce its carbon emissions by 50% by 2010.
- COA is a member of the Clean Air-Cool Planet's Campuses for Climate Action Program. This program measures the institution's carbon footprint.
- COA also joined the U.S. EPA's Green Power Partners Program because of its support for the development of renewable sources of energy.

- In 2005, COA held the first zero-waste college graduation in the nation. Waste from all public activities during the week including campus meal service, college operations, a faculty picnic, a garden party for seniors, commencement, and a reception for 800 people totaled five pounds. The zero-waste graduation was covered in a *New York Times* article.
- The college resolved to achieve 100% reliance on energy from renewable sources by 2015.
- In 2006 COA committed to be a net zero greenhouse gas emissions institution. At the request of the president, the trustees resolved to avoid, reduce, or offset all greenhouse gas emissions associated with activities of the college.

In the last self-study the college stated that the existing classroom space was inadequate. Classes are now offered in 28 different locations throughout the campus—six of which are new since the site visit. The college feels that classrooms are appropriately equipped and adequate in capacity. New furnishings, heating, lighting, carpeting, and technological enhancements have been installed in several teaching spaces in the last two years. As the college continues modest expansion of student enrollment, it recognizes that it needs to continue to add classrooms and review the conditions therein. Although the college has recently remodeled and refitted its largest laboratory, it is still felt that laboratory space should be expanded. Similarly student workspace and storage space are viewed as insufficient—these will be expanded as resources become available.

As the college has increased classroom space with the new acquisitions, it has also expanded office space for both staff and faculty. While some staff share offices, those positions that require privacy have private offices. Full-time faculty have private offices while most part-time and adjunct faculty share an office. COA also retains several freestanding offices built by students. Overall, office space is not seen as a major problem unless and until the size of the faculty and staff expands.

As COA continues to have modest increases in student enrollment, it recognizes that the college needs to expand the dining facility and keep pace with added classroom and office space. The college must also increase on-campus student housing. However, the college is convinced that the new student housing followed by the campus center will alleviate many of the most immediate needs.

A top priority for the physical plant is increasing the budgetary allocation for deferred maintenance. The estimate for deferred maintenance now exceeds $4,000,000. The director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety maintains a list of top priorities that the institution is working to accommodate. Some of these priorities are very urgent such as replacing the roof on the library. The college recognizes these needs and is pursuing options such as financing from the Maine Health and Higher Education Finance Agency.

Although the college is committed to being a national leader in green initiatives and sustainability, it also recognizes that several of its current operational practices must be improved. Most notably, several buildings will benefit from additional insulation, window replacement, and heating system upgrades. These upgrades are scheduled within deferred maintenance planning.

PROJECTION

Given the extensive accession of many properties, several of which have significant capital needs, the college realizes that after student housing, the focus for future fundraising must be on consolidating its gains, concentrating on the needs for repair and deferred maintenance as spelled out in the exhibits noted above.

The institution will take the following steps:

- The administrative dean will build in deferred maintenance and replacement costs into all institutional budgets beginning in the 2007–2008 academic year.

- The director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety will ensure that the new student housing is completed on time and ready for residents by Fall 2008.

- The director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety will work with the board, his staff, and the community to complete the landscape plan by Winter 2008.

- The president, in consultation with the administrative dean, the director of campus planning, buildings, and public safety, and the associate dean of student life, will present the pandemic and emergency response plan to the campus by Spring 2008.

- COA's campus planning and building committee along with the academic affairs and student life committees will review space needs on an annual basis and continue to develop an annual needs list.

- By 2010, the director of sustainability will ensure that the college has met its goal of reducing its carbon emissions by 50%.

- The academic dean will work with the dean of development to procure grants to replace the vehicle fleet for the institution by Winter 2010.

- The buildings and grounds committee of the board of trustees will move the trustees at their 2007 annual meeting to update the 2002 Geddes Demshak Master Plan and 2003 Campus Plan Update.

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STANDARD NINE
FINANCIAL RESOURCES

DESCRIPTION

Exhibit 9.1 summarizes the college's audited balance sheet and operating budget over the 10-year period from fiscal years 1997–2006. During this period, the net assets grew from $12.2 million to $27.7 million. The endowment grew from $5.1 million to $17.5 million; the book value of the plant fund (which historically understates the market value of the property) increased from $6.4 million to $10.8 million. Overall the balance sheet is strong with a net worth more than twice the operating budget and about nine times the long-term debt.

The accumulated operating fund balance has fluctuated from $165 thousand surplus in 1997 to a deficit of almost $2 million in 2001 and to a deficit of about $900 thousand at the end of 2006. The major sources of the operating budget have been tuition, annual fund contributions, and income from the endowment. Tuition and fees grew from about $4 million to nearly $8 million in this period, but more importantly, the net tuition after offsetting student aid grew steadily from $2.2 million to $4.7 million (an annualized growth rate of 8.5%) and is continuing to increase. Annual contributions fluctuated but generally ranged from $1 to $1.3 million. With the growth of the endowment principal, the annual endowment allocation to operations has grown from $156 thousand in 1997 to $547 thousand in 2006 and will be over $900 thousand in fiscal year 2008. As is noted below, since fiscal year 2005, the board has authorized a special draw from the unrestricted portion of the endowment to stimulate further revenue growth by supporting certain capacity building initiatives. This has increased the effective endowment allocation to about 8% on an interim basis.

Exhibit 9.2 compares the expenses of the college in 1997 to those of 2006. Overall expenses have increased at an annualized rate of 6%, while the student enrollment increased from 239 full time equivalents (FTE) to 285 FTE, an annualized growth rate of 2%. Most of the line items have changed only marginally with inflation. The exceptions are instructional and student activity which has grown at 9% due to more staff and services for students, general administration which has grown at 12%, and payroll taxes and fringe benefits which have grown at 16% due to health insurance, salary increases, and some increases in staffing. During this period, the college has been able to maintain its 10:1 student:faculty ratio.

The college's investment committee, consisting primarily of trustees, oversees the management of endowment investments. The investments are managed in three segments. Nominally 25% of the principal is kept in bonds or more recently in fairly high-yielding interest-bearing accounts; the remaining 75% is allocated to equities and is split between two professional investment managers. Within the endowment there are about 40 separately tracked funds, each with separate purposes and donor restrictions. The academic and administrative deans track internal ("155") accounts to ensure that donor restrictions are honored.

The management of the college's finances is currently in a state of transition. In 2004, the board recognized that it was strategically important to strengthen the two major sources of revenue for the operating budget. There has been a strategic goal to increase the undergraduate student body level to 300 FTE and it was believed that support for the annual fund needed to be enhanced. In the FY05, FY06, and FY07 budgets, the trustees, therefore, authorized several "capacity building" investments to strengthen the admission department, the development department, the college website, and various publications intended to raise awareness of the college. These investments were funded partially from a special "capacity-building" campaign and partially from a special draw from the endowment; in addition to the annual 4–5% allocation common to all endowments, a special draw of 2–3% was authorized on a temporary basis to balance the annual operating budget and to support those initiatives which in the long run strengthen the key revenue sources.

This current transition period is also characterized by changes in several key staff positions. In Summer 2004, as part of a reorganization plan, the position of director of finance was upgraded to administrative dean. The position was filled in December 2004. In Fall 2004, the president announced his intention to

retire, effective June 2006 after serving for 13 years in office. His successor assumed office in July 2006 and has been reviewing priorities and all current financial operations. Most recently, the position of director of development has been upgraded to the dean of development and a successful search process was concluded with the hiring of this new dean in July 2007.

An important principle of the college is transparency of management decisions and involvement of the community as a whole. While final budgetary decisions remain with the board of trustees, the preparation and analysis of the budget and related issues involves much of the community. Financial issues are openly discussed at All College Meetings (ACMs), with budget summaries the primary topic at ACMs at least twice per year. Ad hoc committees including students, faculty, and staff have been formed to review and analyze such critical and sensitive issues as the management of the growth of student aid. Throughout these discussions, it is widely accepted that the primary purpose of any budgetary plan is to live within the college's means while providing the maximum educational benefit to students.

Another important principle of financial management is the trust of those managers and department heads that are responsible for daily financial decisions. These managers take their roles seriously and are extraordinarily responsible in controlling the expenses of their budgets while fulfilling the mission of the college. They receive monthly financial reports distributed by the controller. The administrative dean reviews all the budgets and issues monthly summaries to the finance committee of the board and shares these with senior management. At the end of the fiscal year, the financial records are audited and the financial management has received favorable management letters in its annual review.

APPRAISAL

Over the last half-dozen years, operating budgets have been squeezed. Salary increases have ranged from zero to small percentages, below the local inflation rates, resulting in a generally recognized salary inequity described in other sections of this self-study. Similarly capital investments have been minimal and maintenance has been deferred, resulting in fairly obvious needs for repair of the physical plant. It has also been a challenge to keep pace with inflation of uncontrollable costs such as utilities and health insurance.

With the increase of student levels in FY05, it was initially believed that the college could achieve a balanced budget without a special draw from the endowment and that it could begin to address the immediate needs for salary increases and some deferred maintenance. In Spring 2005, a small committee including staff and faculty reviewed the revenue prospects and the current cost structure. After years of budget squeezing, it was felt that further budget cuts would not enable the college to meet its strategic goals. However, it seemed unrealistic to forecast increases in the revenue sources that would be adequate to meet ongoing needs. At that point the college developed the strategic operating model, a multi-year plan that showed that the college could balance the budget through a combination of initiatives. This model shows that if the college achieves certain goals in the next capital campaign and if it can increase its student body while controlling the growth of student aid, it can achieve a balanced budget and begin to address the needs for salary equity and deferred maintenance. These assumptions are spelled out in Exhibit 9.3.

The college held many discussions of this model within the staff, at ACMs, and with meetings of the finance committee of the board and the full board of trustees. It became the basis for allocating the FY06 and FY07 budgets and will be the basis for future budgets. The college expects to continue the involvement of this informal budget committee to review priorities and key budgetary assumptions as the financial picture evolves.

A very important variable in the current and short-term budgets is net tuition. A committee including the dean of admission, the administrative dean, key staff, a faculty member, and students was formed in Fall 2005 to review in detail admission patterns and student-aid practices. To meet admission targets in recent years, the college had issued student aid to any admitted student with financial need regardless of the college's budgetary constraints. This issue has been discussed with trustees, staff, faculty, and ACMs with the consensus that the college needs to attract more applicants and that it must control the growth of student aid, limiting the size of aid packages to the most lowly "ranked" students in the admission process. The formulas for allocating student aid were therefore modified for students entering the college in Fall 2006;

while there is only limited data available to measure the impact of these changes, targets for incoming students were met while limiting the growth of aid. Further refinements in the award process were made for the class entering in Fall 2007.

The annual budget has been closely scrutinized, but some variables cannot be projected precisely. On the revenue side, the biggest uncertainties are the continued level of support for "capacity building" and the net tuition, described above. On the expense side, budgets are closely monitored but increases in fuel costs, heath insurance, and potential emergency maintenance could exceed fairly modest contingency funds. The college expects that it will exceed budgeted levels for net tuition as student levels continue to grow. However, in the short term if contingencies exceed these reserves, the college would have to either draw more from the endowment or operate at a deficit for the fiscal year. The operating fund has sufficient cash to support a modest deficit and the endowment has continued to grow even with the increased draws. The college recognizes, however, that this is not a sustainable model, and it will continue to review the operating model and either find new sources of revenue or cut expenses.

At this point in the transition, it is difficult to measure precisely the impact of recent investments. The development of the college's donor base and its general reputation and public awareness are gradual processes. Similarly, recruitment of highly qualified students is a process built on relationships and is not subject to abrupt expansion, particularly in a competitive environment in which many small schools are struggling to attract students. Nonetheless, targeted figures for student attendance were exceeded in FY05, FY06, and FY07 and seem to be exceeded for FY08. There are also signs of increases in the application rate, which is perhaps the most important single factor in balancing the operating budget in future years.

As noted above, the growth rate in the level of student aid is being tempered by offering less aid to more lowly ranked applicants, at the risk of missing targeted enrollment figures. Initial results for the Fall 2007 entering class indicate that the college met enrollment targets, while both maintaining the quality of the entering students and limiting the growth of aid packages despite the increased cost of attendance.

The new dean of development will oversee the annual fund operations, cultivate major restricted gifts, revitalize planned giving and grant writing, and the plan the next capital campaign. The objectives are not new and include broadening the donor base, strengthening ties to the alumni, continuing to cultivate major gifts, and securing grants that provide some budget relief. The formulation of plans and related goals for each of these areas will be guided by the findings of the 2007 Hubbard Report (Exhibit 9.4) which analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the college's development programs and assesses the potential for future efforts. A key finding is the assessment of the viability of the next capital campaign.

Strengths

- Strongly supported and important mission and curriculum
- Solid asset base
- Excellent track record in attracting grants and gifts
- Committed faculty, staff, students, board, and alumni
- Significantly improved fiscal management
- Increasing student enrollments
- Success in beginning to manage student aid
- New president and dean of development
- Affiliation with Davis United World Scholars Program

- Ability to attract new donors

Limitations

The college has many financial challenges, along with its extraordinary strengths. Among its primary challenges are:

- Improving compensation levels to continue to attract and retain excellent faculty and staff
- Addressing deferred maintenance of aging buildings and equipment
- Controlling expenses, some of which—like health insurance—are subject to inflationary increases
- Strengthening and broadening its donor base
- Continuing to increase student enrollment while maintaining the values of its small, intimate, interactive college community.

The financial picture has improved greatly over the last decade and will continue to grow based on the college's fundamental strengths. The world of today greatly needs the values of the college. The individualized education with dedicated faculty is extraordinary. Human ecology and especially its environmental aspects are being more widely accepted as ideas and values, which the country should support. Those growing number of people learning about the college recognize its importance and will enable it to grow beyond the initial visions of the founders while maintaining their principles.

Although it is critically important that the college achieves improvements in revenue sources, in the interim, the college is achieving its immediate goals. The students are being given an excellent education. Many of them are getting substantial financial aid. While the salary structure is slowly being addressed, the turnover rate among both faculty and staff is extraordinarily low (about 10% per year).

PROJECTION

In Summer 2006, the new president, working with the chair of the board of trustees, formed an ad hoc financial sustainability committee to examine longer-term financial issues. This committee consists of two trustees, a faculty member, the president, and the academic and administrative deans. The focus of this committee, using the strategic operating model, has been to review the gap between current financial resources and the need to address salary parity, deferred maintenance, and program enhancement. In general it confirmed and refined the assumptions earlier outlined in the strategic operating model. The final report from this committee is presented in Exhibit 9.5 and includes five strategic imperatives:

- Balance the budget. As a top priority and as soon as possible (and taking into account additional expenditures expected to be incurred), ensure that revenues exceed expenditures in every fiscal year without the need for extraordinary draws from the endowment.
- Increase operating revenues of the college by $2 million annually by FY2012, while increasing the reliability and predictability of those revenues.
- Increase the annual fund to $1.8 million by 2009, primarily through targeted broadening of the donor base.
- Increase the net tuition from about $5 million to $7 million annually by a combination of increasing enrollment, managing growth of student aid, and targeting recruitment.

- Begin immediately to design, develop, and carry out a major capital campaign to meet the long-term endowment and capital needs of College of the Atlantic.

Through a combination of these initiatives, the committee believes that the college could address its financial needs, maintain the commitment to the educational values upon which the college is based, and maintain a viable and sustainable financial operating model.

Specific fundraising plans are spelled out in the priority schedule (Exhibit 9.6), which identifies goals for certain buildings, chairs, deferred maintenance, and endowment enhancements. The development committee of the board reviews these plans and priorities quarterly. Long-term priorities and issues are described in the strategic plan, seen as a working document. Key financial issues being examined include the size of the school, the use of the facilities in summer months, and the importance and integration of the academic program with ancillary activities such as the farm.

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STANDARD TEN
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

DESCRIPTION

College of the Atlantic provides on-and-off campus constituencies with abundant, relevant, and clear information. The website is the primary portal used to disseminate information. It provides an overview of the academic program, mission, objectives, expected educational outcomes, student life offerings, governance, policies and procedures, and ways to request additional information. The website also includes current course lists, a detailed description of the self-directed curriculum, and a description of the faculty and staff. The website is regularly updated and reviewed. The college is currently working with ASAP Media to update its web text to make it more succinct and descriptive.

COA also broadly disseminates its course catalog and the admission viewbook. These publications are reviewed each year and revised as necessary. College information is shared with various constituencies and the nature of the information and the process for reviewing that information differ by constituency. Background and assessment of the college's commitment to meeting the standards of public disclosure are organized into prospective students, current students, international students, and interested members of the public.

Prospective Students

The primary print piece for prospective students and their families is the viewbook, produced by the office of admission (Exhibit 10.1). The viewbook provides information on the academic program and its resources, the size and characteristics of the student body, and nonacademic opportunities available to COA students. While content in the viewbook may change from year to year, the college's mission statement, nondiscrimination statement, and a listing of faculty (including degrees earned and program affiliations) are always included. The admission staff also works with faculty, the office of internship and career services, and the office of development to produce other print pieces for prospective students. These include "Life After COA," focus area brochures, "The Academic Program," and "Enriching the Community That Enriches Us" (Exhibits 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.5, respectively).

Prospective students obtain information about cost of attendance and financial aid through the college's website and printed materials. The viewbook contains preliminary information for someone interested in applying for financial aid. In-depth information is available in the financial aid brochure and online. Topics range from procedures for filing for aid to average loan amounts to an explanation of the types of aid that are available.

Those wishing for more in-depth information on the college's policies and resources including the transfer of credits, rules and regulations for student conduct, and refund policies are encouraged to consult the course catalog and student handbook (Exhibits 10.6 and 10.7). Hard copies of the catalog and student handbook are available to all prospective students who request them.

As more people turn to the web for information, COA has responded by expanding and refining its website. Information found in the viewbook and catalog is available on the web as are forms and more detailed contact information. The viewbook and other print publications, along with the website, make it clear how to contact the college with further inquiries; the admission staff fields the general inquiries that come via e-mail, mail, walk-ins, and phone (including the college's toll free number).

Another source of information for prospective students and their families comes from the campus tour and interview. Prospective students are strongly encouraged to visit campus, attend classes, and meet with faculty. Most families who visit COA have a tour led by a current student. About half the prospective students also engage in an interview with either admission staff or alumni. During the tour and interview, the prospective student gains insight into the college's academic and social offerings.

A statement of accreditation status is provided on the front page of the academic section of the website and in the course catalog.

Current Students

The course catalog is updated on an annual basis under the oversight of the academic dean. Only courses taught within the last three years are included in this publication. Classes are listed by resource area and cross-listed by name and course number. Students follow the academic expectations of the catalog under which they entered; for social policies and procedures, students are subject to those existing for that current academic year.

The college provides every student, faculty, and staff member with a copy of the student handbook every fall or upon point of entry. The handbook is comprehensive in its scope and has four principal sections: academic policies, governance, community policies, and college resources. The first section contains the college's mission, learning objectives, and all policies and procedures related to the acquisition and administration of academic credit including tuition, fees, and refund policies. The second section covers the college's decision-making processes for the vast majority of campus policy decisions; the third contains all social expectations for student conduct including the procedures by which infractions of those expectations are dealt with. The final section illustrates all the services and opportunities available to students including, but not limited to, borrowing outdoor equipment, and academic support, library, and health and counseling services. This resource is evaluated and updated annually by the associate dean of student life.

With over 85% of students receiving financial aid, the office of financial aid does the following to ensure dissemination of accurate and useful information:

- Summary information on financial aid eligibility and filing information are presented in the school's viewbook and college catalog (includes information on workstudy) while a separate workstudy handbook gives a comprehensive description of the workstudy program along with students' rights, responsibilities, and options.
- Entrance interviews for new students are provided in person (if possible, which is about 99% of the time) with detailed explanations of federal loan programs, borrowing limits, and borrower rights and responsibilities as well as information about accumulated debt, repayment, and budgeting. Exit interviews are also conducted in person whenever possible (about 98% of the time) and cover the same information as well as data specific to the student.
- Annual mass mailings to parents remind them of the financial aid filing deadlines and guide them through the process.
- Students are provided annually with financial aid forms and instructions on filing.
- Frequent mass e-mails remind students about the filing process, deadlines, and where to get information if they require it.
- Students are regularly notified about strategies they might use to search for outside scholarship and opportunities as well as the college's policy about applying for such funds.

To ensure confidentiality of student records, the college requires written permission from the student to have a person other than the student's advisor review his or her records.

International Students

Since 1999 the international student population has risen dramatically, due to the generous scholarships offered by the Davis United World Scholars Program. From less than 3% of the student body in 1999 to 20% in 2005, international students have transformed the academic and social life of the college (see Standard Six). These students have specific information needs and the federal government mandates reporting on various aspects of their enrollment. The International Student Handbook (Exhibit 10.8), a resource compiled by the coordinator of international student services, assists COA's international students with information about the rights and responsibilities of an F-1 student and works to keep them successfully adjusted to the United States. The handbook contains information related to immigration

regulations, work authorization, taxes, accepted forms of identification, health care, banking, communication, travel, and campus and community resources. There is an appendix related to the guidelines for the Davis United World College Scholarship that answers some of the students' most frequently asked questions. The handbook is updated every year to reflect any changes in policies or procedures affecting international students and is distributed as students return in the fall. New students participate in a multi-session orientation that reinforces the key points detailed in the handbook. All students are required to attend an immigration update session to ensure they are aware of federal regulations related to F-1 student status and to notify them of any changes to regulations that may affect them. Additional informational sessions are held to assist students with applications for work authorization. Any significant changes made during the course of the school year are reported to students through email.

Interested Members of the Public

Interested members of the public gain information about the college from many sources. The institution's website details the schedule of public events. Electronic mailings and news releases to local papers keep off-campus constituents informed about activities and events on campus. To ensure prompt and accurate public information dissemination, in 2005 the college hired a professional director of public relations after a five-year hiatus with this position.

The COA magazine (Exhibit 10.9) is mailed to alumni, trustees, parents, and friends of the college and distributed to the campus community. This magazine is published twice yearly and covers campus news as well as achievements by faculty, students, staff, and alumni. The Dorr Museum of Natural History sends out a monthly newsletter to the campus community and museum supporters. In addition several annual student publications including Edge of Eden—which offers student art and creative writing (Exhibit 10.10)—and Human Ecology Essays (Exhibit 10.11) showcase student work to outside constituents. Over the last 10 years, the campus has also seen the rise and fall of three student papers—Off the Wall, The Insider, and Dead Reckoning. These were all primarily for campus consumption, but some were sent to trustees and alumni.

The assistant to the president works with the chairman of the board of trustees to provide all trustees with copies of the documents and information referred to in this report. In addition, campus administrators prepare a list of strategic indicators for enrollment, academic programs, and financial data that are shared with the trustees three times each year (Exhibit 10.12). Finally, monthly updates and an annual report are sent to the trustees directly from the president.

APPRAISAL

Prospective Students

The college has made progress in ensuring that the content of its publications on paper and online is accurate and timely. Both the college's review of its governance structure in 2001–2002 and a need for strengthened public relations have motivated it to produce the most useful, clear, and accurate information possible.

The accuracy and effectiveness of admission publications are measured in two ways. First, all students admitted to COA are surveyed to learn their impressions of the school. They are asked to comment on everything from campus visits to the viewbook and website. This survey collects direct feedback on the publications received by prospective students and measures the accuracy of understanding that students take away from these publications. If there are gaps between the perceptions held by prospective students and the realities experienced by current students, then the office of admission alters publications to better reflect reality. The second method of assessing accuracy and effectiveness of publications is through an annual all college meeting discussion; the office of admission asks for feedback from all members of the community on the publications it shares with prospective students. Input from the community helps shape these publications to ensure that they best capture the actual experience of being a student at the college. Because of the ACM, for example, the college changed how it emphasized the opportunities available to

students through the college's farm. The reality was that the curricular and extracurricular connections with the farm were not as extensive as materials suggested. Current students asked that the college de-emphasize this relationship until the collaboration was improved, and the college did so in subsequent printings of the viewbook. In 2005 the college's publications committee proposed that they serve as a sounding board and filter for community feedback on admission publications, an offer accepted by the office of admission.

The dean of admission also oversees the content management of the website, since the college has determined that, thus far, the greatest amount of traffic to the site comes from prospective students. In addition, the college understands that the web is gaining status as the primary decision-making tool when choosing a college. The dean of admission works with the webmaster and various college staff and faculty to maintain up-to-date web content on a site that is technically sound and reliable. Feedback on the site is funneled to the dean of admission, and she coordinates the responses and changes. Recently she proposed that the college also hold an ACM devoted to commenting on the college's website; this ACM was instituted in the 2006–2007 school year. Information gathered at this ACM will be considered as the site goes through a major overhaul; a new site is scheduled to go live in early 2008. As mentioned above, the faculty, staff, and students are currently working with ASAP Media to clarify the language used to describe COA and find a design that best supports the college's programs and vision.

COA has fallen short on the requirement that graduation and retention rates be published. While they can be found deep on the website in the online responses to the Common Data Set questionnaire, they are not readily accessible. The college, having noted this absence, will add them to the website as of Fall 2007 under the "About COA" section on the "Quick Facts and Stats" page. A short statement will be included with these figures so that people understand the reasons students choose to leave COA; this deepens a prospective student's understanding of the college.

A primary source of information for prospective students and their families comes from the campus tour guide. Often the information gleaned from a tour guide sticks in the head of a prospective student in a way that written information does not. For several years COA neglected the formal training and oversight of its guides, trusting that the good intentions of a student would be enough to guarantee complete and correct information. In conversations with prospective and current students about their tours, it became clear that there were inconsistencies in the information being offered and so in Fall 2005 a formal tour guide training and oversight program was instituted. Monthly training, coupled with peer and staff evaluation, has cut down on the dissemination of incorrect information. Through interviews and surveys, the college gleans information from prospective students and modifies the training and oversight of guides.

Current Students

College academic and community policies are all subject to periodic review. In most cases, such review and subsequent refinement or deletion are passed through the governance system and ultimately ratified by the ACM. This ensures that regulations and procedures remain relevant and timely from year to year. The academic affairs committee updates academic policies and procedures; the steering committee, as the coordinating point for the ACM, updates community policies and procedures. All changes are forwarded to the office of student life which ensures the currency of the campus resources section and which publishes the student handbook.

While the college does not believe it has failed to provide full disclosure about financial aid eligibility and processing, the college continues to improve its methods of communication to keep the college in compliance with federal regulations. Most specifically, the office of financial aid is enhancing the website to provide greater access to forms as well as to provide more information and links to additional financial aid-related sites.

Interested Members of the Public

This year the college has initiated a master calendar of events to create a point of entry for the public to learn about all campus activities and events. In addition, the professional nature of the COA magazine reflects the college's investment in public relations.

Strengths

- The college is committed to producing an honest and consistent message. It reviews and revises its print and electronic material regularly and strives for accuracy through extensive feedback loops and external consultants.

Limitations

- Website updating and maintenance have not been systematic or well planned. The sheer volume of material that must be updated and/or incorporated for the website creates a backlog of work that is difficult for the limited staff to keep up with. Currently no office or individual has complete oversight for the website.

- College of the Atlantic must establish broader means to disseminate its story to the outside world. The college is often on the cutting edge of sustainability and environmental movements for college campuses, but it does not have a broad enough media footprint to capitalize on accomplishments. As a result, the college is not reaching enough prospective students and donors.

PROJECTION

The college will continue to rely on the systematic review of all print and electronic publications including the web used by prospective and current students. Using the publications committee as a filter for community feedback, in conjunction with surveys of prospective students, the college will offer the "groundtruthing" necessary to ensure the accuracy and relevance of publications. As the web becomes even more central as a source of information to current and prospective students, the college may move toward a different staffing configuration for managing web content. With the possibility of limiting print publications for reasons of resource sustainability, insuring the website is not only comprehensive but also user-friendly remains a priority.

- By Fall 2007 the dean of admission will ensure that student graduation and retention rates are added to the Quick Facts section of the website for ease of discovery.
- By Winter 2008, the dean of admission will ensure that the work commissioned by ASAP Media is incorporated into the website. Improvements will include new text, frames, and web flow for greater effectiveness. In the event of a work backlog, the dean of admission will also prioritize which updates get entered first.
- By Winter 2008, the publications committee will review the feasibility of starting, or continuing, a student-run publication. The committee will identify the main reasons for past failures and report its findings to the ACM by Spring 2008.

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STANDARD ELEVEN
INTEGRITY

DESCRIPTION

College of the Atlantic maintains an atmosphere where faculty, students, and staff are free to pursue knowledge in all its varying forms and to disseminate such knowledge without risk of reprisal. At the same time, the college ensures that strict ethical standards pertaining to its teaching, research, and administrative practices are followed. All members of the college community are expected to conduct themselves with proper respect for personal, intellectual, and environmental rights.

College of the Atlantic's educational philosophy requires that all members of the community draw on knowledge from a plethora of disciplines as well as from personal and communal experiences. This intimate and interdisciplinary approach to learning requires that all individuals—faculty, staff, students, trustees, and alumni—conduct themselves in an ethical and truthful manner. Faculty members, sometimes the sole experts in their field within the faculty, and students who foster academic interests of a wide variety depend on each other to ground their interdisciplinary ideas, theories, and practices. Such a mixture of cross-discipline academic projects promotes an atmosphere of fairness, honesty, and openness.

Intellectual freedom at the college is not only protected but also celebrated. The faculty manual has a section providing guidelines for academic freedom (Exhibit 11.1, Section 7.1). A portion of this section states: "Under no circumstances is the controversial or unconventional nature of a subject grounds for its exclusion from classroom discussion. Indeed it has become a custom at the college to give particular attention to exploring as many diverse perspectives as possible in a given discipline." This is one of the college's most prized and protected ethical standards.

The college is governed under the terms of a charter granted by the state of Maine. This charter specifies the institution's authority to grant Bachelor of Arts and Master of Philosophy degrees in Human Ecology. In addition, in 1992 the state also afforded the college the right to award professional teacher certification to students at the elementary level (grades K-8) and the secondary level (grades 7-12) in the areas of language arts, life science, and social studies (Exhibit 11.2 Teacher Certification Approval). As specified by the state, the college is legally governed by the board of trustees who ultimately holds the responsibility for directing and managing the affairs, funds, and property of the institution as set forth by the college bylaws (Exhibit 11.3).

The administration, faculty, and staff comply with federal and state regulations directing the institution's legal and ethical obligations to its internal and external constituencies. These regulations include, but are not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1998, the Civil Rights Act, the Maine Human Rights Act, the Federal Student Right-to-Know Law, Immigration and Naturalization Service regulations, and the Veterans Administration requirement for financial aid. The president, board of trustees, deans, personnel committee, and AA/EEO officer are responsible for overseeing this compliance.

The privacy assurances and fair treatment of college faculty and staff are protected by policies and practices articulated in the faculty manual, administrative staff manual, support staff manual, and college handbook (Exhibits 11.1 and 11.4–11.5). The collective personnel manuals contain policies and procedures pertaining to working conditions, benefits, and individual rights. They also detail what procedures should be taken in reviewing or disciplining a member of the staff or faculty. These manuals are available to all college members online and are also available in hard copy at the request of faculty or staff. Manuals are periodically reviewed and updated as a whole or in part to reflect changes and additions to college policies. Confidential faculty and staff records are kept in secured files in the AA/EEO, associate dean's, academic services, and administrative dean's offices.

The college handbook is the primary reference for all policies and positions that the college holds on sexual harassment, sexual assault, affirmative action, grievance procedures, academic probation policies, general

campus policies, and academic integrity criteria (Exhibit 11.6). This handbook is distributed at the start of each year to new students. This resource serves as the student handbook in laying out the college's expectations of students (academic and social) as well as the rights and procedures should a student feel that his or her rights have been violated.

The college maintains a nondiscriminatory policy in the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students. The affirmative action equal employment opportunity officer (AA/EEO) is responsible for the oversight of the college's nondiscrimination policy. New positions are advertised nationally in appropriate journals, magazines, newspapers, and/or websites. Staff job descriptions are developed by the area supervisors and are reviewed and approved by the personnel committee. Faculty positions are developed by academic affairs committee in conjunction with the nominated search team (see Standard Five). For every position search, a core committee of faculty, staff, and students is established. The AA/EEO officer meets with all search committees and reviews the legal and ethical issues associated with a search to ensure that the committees follow hiring procedures as set forth by the state of Maine.

Privacy rights and fair treatment of the college's students are protected by college policies and practices articulated in the handbook. Student files are maintained securely and confidentially in relevant offices (academic files: registrar; application material: admission office; health, counseling and social misconduct files: student life; academic misconduct and learning differences documentation: academic dean's office). Access to student grades is limited to academic advisors, the registrar's office, and key administrators. Requests for information pertaining to student records are only granted with signed authorization from the individual student (Exhibits 11.7 and 11.8).

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures that most communication between a student and the college is considered confidential, and that information about a student's experience on campus can be shared with the parents of an individual student only under very specific circumstances as defined by federal law.

College of the Atlantic makes every effort to establish a positive relationship with its students by treating them as emergent adults and encouraging them to make autonomous and responsible decisions. To this end, COA chooses not to share any academic or medical information with parents without first obtaining written consent from the student (even where allowable by FERPA) unless there is a life-threatening issue. Parents and guardians are informed of this approach in a formal letter given out during parent orientation (Exhibit 11.9).

At the beginning of every academic year, a brief overview is given to staff on these legal and ethical privacy guidelines, and all academic advisors are required to attend. Users of the college's academic information system must agree to the FERPA guidelines before they are given access to students' records. In 2005, the college invited a FERPA specialist to answer questions about the many "gray" areas of FERPA interpretation that tend to arise for faculty and staff. The college's advisor handbook (Exhibit 11.10) details many common issues that arise pertaining to FERPA in its frequently asked questions (FAQ's) section.

Standard copyright laws are posted adjacent to copy machines, in the faculty and staff manuals, and communicated to the community via e-mail each fall. As a condition of employment, each employee agrees not only to accept responsibility for reading and understanding the requirements of the copyright law but also the college's policy statement for complying with those requirements and guidelines. Similarly library reserve materials are screened to ensure that copyright rules are followed and posted with copyright warnings. In Spring 2007, the college invited a copyright specialist from Bates College to answer questions from faculty and staff.

The college holds workshops for faculty and staff to address sexual harassment policy, disseminates this policy in writing, and asks each employee to acknowledge the receipt of this written policy with a signature on an annual basis. In addition, students are given sexual harassment training in orientation. These

meetings and documents serve their function to educate the community on sexual harassment training as required by state law.

The college requires faculty and staff to disclose potential conflicts of interest (Exhibits 11.1 and 11.4–11.5; Section 15.3 faculty manual, 2.2.5 support /administrative staff manuals) as soon as they are noticed. Furthermore, the policy states: "no college employee shall participate in any institutional decisions or evaluations involving a close relative or outside business or professional associate." Similarly the trustees are asked to report any conflict of interests and must sign an affidavit to that effect (Exhibit 11.11).

The institution sponsors conferences, workshops, and enrichment activities for the campus and community at large. The annual report details these activities and area administrators ensure the integrity and appropriateness of such activities.

APPRAISAL

The COA community reviews and evaluates its integrity policies through its standing committee structure as well as administratively in performance reviews to ensure that the institution is meeting the highest ethical standards and can be responsive to both current and anticipated needs. As a result of these regular evaluations, two major policies have been recently clarified. First, student grievance policies have been separated into two categories (academic and social). Previously the academic dean oversaw all grievance procedures pertaining to student issues. Under the new policy, the associate dean for student life oversees social misconduct procedures while the academic dean handles academic misconduct. The student grievance reporting and evaluative processes have been expanded and made more structured, uniform, and clear. Second, the institution has chosen to clarify the differences in procedures dealing with sexual harassment and sexual assault. Upon review of previous policies and policies from other institutions, and through participation in professional training workshops, the college was convinced that its sexual assault policy needed additional clarification. The sexual assault policy now clearly articulates aggressive interventions to ensure safety and identifies legal rights for both parties in the event of litigation. Although the revised sexual assault policy has not had to be tested, the college is convinced that it made the right decision in clarifying the differences in approach should the need arise.

Through this self-study the college has concluded that its oversight of faculty/student research must be improved (see Projection). In the past, the academic dean oversaw faculty research, the review and appeals committee was responsible for evaluating student research in relation to senior projects and independent studies, and the individual instructor reviewed course level research. Although this system met federal requirements, it was found to be antiquated. There is also a strong internal desire for a more formal process.

This self-study has afforded the college the opportunity to reflect on implicit practices as well as its formal policies. Upon review of practices the college has found that the community demonstrates a high degree of sensitivity and acceptance in relation to cultural, racial, sexual identity, ecological, and age-related differences.

Overall the college is confident that it is meeting both the letter and the spirit of established integrity standards. Administrators and staff keep current on campus legal and ethical matters by attending professional development training. In addition, administration consistently reviews and revises its practices as well as uses external legal counsel specializing in college issues to ensure integrity persists in relation to all college functions.

PROJECTION

The college will continue to ensure that all legal and ethical principles are met in relation to its operations and oversight. To that end, the college will:

- Establish an Educational Research Board (ERB) as specified by federal law (this action was completed in Spring 2007). The ERB will set appropriate policies and procedures pertaining to research conducted by members of the college and present its recommendations to the community

for adoption by the end of Fall 2007.

- Stay abreast of national trends in policy affecting institutional integrity by continuing to participate in professional development, subscribing to professional journals dealing with the subject matter, exchanging ideas/insights with other institutions, and seeking out external legal counsel as needed. The academic dean, associate dean of student life, and the AA/EEO officer will attend workshops and provide information to the campus on an annual basis.

- Expand community-training opportunities for legal and ethical issues pertaining to campus life. The following lists scheduled training sessions and those in charge of coordination:

    — Every Fall: sexual harassment training for all faculty and staff (AA/EEO officer)
    — Fall 2008: copyright training for all faculty and staff (director of library)
    — Fall 2009: legal issues with advising (academic dean)

- Increase the diversity of job applicants by having the AA/EEO officer invest more time in tracking the candidates and applications that the college receives for all positions. This tracking will allow the college to become aware of how it advertises job possibilities and what avenues it needs to expand upon.

- Systematically review and update all personnel manuals by Fall 2008. The administrative dean and personnel committee will oversee this review and then set manual reviews on a five-year review cycle.

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EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD TWO

Number	Exhibit Name
2.1	Annual reports
2.2	2005-2010 Strategic Plan
2.3	1997 Strategic Plan
2.4	2002 Title III Comprehensive Planning Proposal
2.5	2003 Campus Plan
2.6	Faculty meeting minutes
2.7	Faculty charter
2.8	Faculty retreat agendas
2.9	Goals of human ecological education
2.10	Teacher Certification Self- Study
2.11	State Review Team Report for teacher certification
2.12	Grant status reports
2.13	Governance Initiative Liaison Committee (GILC) Report
2.14	Priorities documents
2.15	Writing requirement update
2.16	Policy updates
2.17	Four-Seasons Report
2.18	Beech Hill Farm Strategic Plan and business plan
2.19	MELMAC planning and implementation grants
2.20	Admissions board reports
2.21	Initiation of year plan
2.22	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) portfolio
2.23	Alumni surveys
2.24	Pandemic and Emergency Response Plan
2.25	Web page planning group documents
2.26	ASAP report
2.27	Neuger Communications Group Report
2.28	Fergerson Reports
2.29	2005 Campus Landscape Plan
2.30	Campus environmental initiatives
2.31	Director of sustainability annual reports
2.32	Budget projections
2.33	Financial Sustainability Report
2.34	Gallant Report
2.35	Wayland Report
2.36	Hubbard Report
2.37	Committee charters
2.38	Strategic indicators or “dashboards”
2.39	Sustainability highlights

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD THREE

Number	Exhibit Name
3.1	Bylaws of the college
3.2	Student Handbook
3.3	Governance Initiative Liaison Committee Report (evidence stored in 2.13)
3.4	Comtrust binder
3.5	Job description of president
3.6	All college meeting reports
3.7	Charters of ACM standing committees (evidence stored in 2.36)
3.8	Job descriptions of academic administration
3.9	Board agendas and minutes
3.10	Steering committee minutes

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD FOUR

Number	Exhibit Name
4.1	Goals of human ecological education (evidence stored in 2.9)
4.2	Minutes from faculty meetings in which the goals were discussed
4.3	Competencies from earlier catalogs
4.4	Course catalog
4.5	Writing portfolio rubric
4.6	Selected internship proposals and reports
4.7	Selected human ecology essays
4.8	Selected senior project proposals
4.9	Selected senior projects
4.10	Selected group study proposals
4.11	List of group study titles, Fall 2001–Spring 2006
4.12	1997 NEASC Self-Study
4.13	Teacher Certification Self- Study (evidence stored in 2.10)
4.14	Five-year NEASC Progress Report (2002)
4.15	Report on 1999-2000 summer academic program
4.16	Sample student transcripts
4.17	Annual reports (evidence stored in 2.1)
4.18	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) portfolio (evidence stored in 2.22)
4.19	Retention rates (see 2.38 Strategic indicators or “dashboards”)
4.20	New course evaluation form, old course evaluation form
4.21	MELMAC planning and implementation grants (evidence stored in 2.19)
4.22	Course syllabi 2006-2007

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD FIVE

Number	Exhibit Name
5.1	Faculty appointment and reappointment since 1997
5.2	List of faculty with degrees, including adjuncts and lecturers
5.3	Student:faculty ratio
5.4	Academic affairs committee charter (evidence stored in 2.36)

5.5	Process for faculty searches
5.6	Faculty manual
5.7	Faculty contract and evaluation system
5.8	Best practices for faculty reviews
5.9	Faculty personnel committee charter (evidence stored in 2.36)
5.10	Faculty salary calculator with baseline
5.11	Faculty development funds report
5.12	Faculty compensation reports
5.13	Faculty workload study
5.14	Faculty workload guidelines
5.15, 5.15.1	Reports to faculty personnel committee and faculty on review of 10 years of reviews
5.16	Faculty FTE
5.17	Full-time faculty and lecturer curriculum vitae
5.18	Visiting and adjunct faculty curriculum vitae
5.19	Faculty emeritus policy
5.20	Faculty personnel committee self-evaluation questions
5.21	Faculty self-evaluations
5.22	Teaching excellence at College of the Atlantic
5.23	Faculty sabbatical reports and sabbatical policy
5.24	Faculty workload reports (2005-2006; 2006-2007)
5.25	Faculty contract letters
5.26	Faculty meeting minutes (evidence stored in 2.5)
5.27	Faculty salaries in relation to targets
5.28	Faculty medical leave policy
5.29	Steps to address faculty workload
5.30	Faculty personnel committee memorandum to financial sustainability committee

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD SIX

Number	Exhibit Name
6.1	Organizational chart for student services
6.2	Qualifications of key professional staff in student services
6.3	Admission criteria
6.4	Admission committee application evaluation
6.5	Master of Philosophy in Human Ecology brochure
6.6	Student demographic data
6.7	Financial aid criteria
6.8	College of the Atlantic Financial Aid Application
6.9	Student life philosophy
6.10	Student handbook (evidence stored in 3.2)
6.11	Community expectations of behavior
6.12	Community policies
6.13	FERPA information for parents
6.14	Orientation schedule Fall 2006
6.15	OOPs information
6.16	International student health plan
6.17	Domestic student health plan
6.18	Compilation of recent student activities from annual reports
6.19	Operating model
6.20	Resident advisor job description
6.21	Resident advisor application and interview materials
6.22	Pilot preparation program for independent international study

6.23	MELMAC planning and implementation grants (evidence stored in 2.19)
6.24	Admission data
6.25	Goals of human ecological education (evidence stored in 2.9)
6.26	Academic and social misconduct judiciary boards
6.27	COA celebrates proposal
6.28	Outdoor orientation retention data
6.29	OOPS leader training information
6.30	Resident advisor training information
6.31	Sea Urchins programming proposal
6.32	Retention rate data (evidence stored in 2.38)
6.33	Graduation rate data (evidence stored in 2.38)
6.34	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) portfolio (evidence stored in 2.22)

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD SEVEN

Number	Exhibit Name
7.1	Library timeline
7.2	Library mission statement
7.3	Staff resumes and job descriptions
7.4	Library subcommittee charter (evidence stored in 2.36)
7.5	Details of library collections
7.6	Archives mission and scope
7.7	Audiovisual equipment collection
7.8	Circulation statistics
7.9	Resource guides
7.10	Library policies
7.11	Resources supplementing library collections
7.12	2004 Student project on student research skills
7.13	Comparison of FY03 and FY07 library budgets
7.14	Library funds
7.15	Audiovisual budget
7.16	Comparative salaries information
7.17	Description of the campus network infrastructure
7.18	Computer usage policy
7.19	Description of servers and backup-up schedule
7.20	Description of the computer facilities (labs, public systems) available to students

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD EIGHT

Number	Exhibit Name
8.1	Campus map
8.2	Sustainability highlights (evidence stored in 2.39)
8.3	Campus environmental initiatives (evidence stored in 2.31)
8.4	Geddes Demshak Master Plan
8.5	2003 Campus Plan (evidence stored in 2.5)
8.6	Campus Center Architectural Plan
8.7	2005 Campus Landscape Plan (evidence stored in 2.29)
8.8	Turrets Engineering Plan

8.9	Beech Hill Farm Strategic Plan and business plan (evidence stored in 2.18)
8.10	Campus Housing Architectural Plans
8.11	Pandemic and Emergency Response Plan (evidence stored in 2.24)
8.12	Deferred maintenance assessment

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD NINE

Number	Exhibit Name
9.1	Excerpts from COA's audited financial statements
9.2	Comparison of COA's audited expenses: 1997 v. 2006
9.3	COA's Five-Year Budget Plan
9.4	Hubbard Report (evidence stored in 2.36)
9.5	Financial Sustainability Report (evidence stored in 2.33)
9.6	List of priorities (evidence stored in 2.14)

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD TEN

Number	Exhibit Name
10.1	Viewbook
10.2	Life After COA
10.3	Focus area brochures
10.4	The Academic Program
10.5	Enriching the Community that Enriches Us
10.6	Course catalog (evidence stored in 4.4)
10.7	Student handbook (evidence stored in 3.2)
10.8	International Student Handbook
10.9	COA Magazine
10.10	Edge of Eden
10.11	Human Ecology Essays (evidence stored in 4.7)
10.12	Strategic indicators or "dashboards" (evidence stored in 2.38)

EXHIBITS FOR STANDARD ELEVEN

Number	Exhibit Name
11.1	Faculty manual (evidence stored in 5.6)
11.2	1992 teacher certification approval
11.3	Bylaws of the college (evidence stored in 3.1)
11.4	Administrative staff manuals
11.5	Support staff manual
11.6	Student handbook (evidence stored in 3.2)
11.7	Transcript authorization forms
11.8	Student information release consent form
11.9	FERPA parent letter
11.10	Advisor Handbook
11.11	Trustee annual conflict of interest letter

CIHE DATA FORMS

GENERAL INFORMATION

			Certified:	
			Yes	Qualified
Institution Name:		College of the Atlantic	No	Unqualified
FICE Code:	?	11385		
Carnegie Classification:	?	123		
Financial Results for Year Ending:	?	0630		
Most Recent Year	?	2007	no	n/a
1 Year Prior		2006	yes	yes
2 Years Prior		2005	yes	yes
Budget / Plans				
Current Year		2008		
Next Year		2009		

Contact Person: ? Andrew Griffiths

Title: Administrative Dean

Telephone No: 207-288-2944x205

E-mail address agriffiths@coa.edu

*WHEN ENTERING FINANCIAL DATA ON SUBSEQUENT FORMS, PLEASE ROUND TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

College of the Atlantic

	2005 2 Years Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Percent Change 2006 2005	 2007 2006
Audited:	yes	yes	no		
ASSETS					
Cash & Short Term Investments	2,318	6,801	9,508	193.4%	39.8%
Accounts Receivable, Net	278	295	167	6.1%	-43.4%
Contributions Receivable, Net	465	340	54	-26.9%	-84.1%
Inventory & Prepaid Expenses	55	41	103	-25.5%	151.2%
Long-Term Investments	14,188	17,065	20,214	20.3%	18.5%
Loans to Students	131	145	149	10.7%	2.8%
Funds held under Bond Agreement	97	93	90	-4.1%	-3.2%
Land, Building & Equipment, Net	13,025	12,711	12,500	-2.4%	-1.7%
Other Assets	1,447	1,993	2,000	37.7%	0.4%
Total Assets	32,004	39,484	44,785	23.4%	13.4%
LIABILITIES					
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	2,537	2,790	2,627	10.0%	-5.8%
Deferred Revenue & Refundable Advances	1,511	5,590	7,910	270.0%	41.5%
Annuity & Life Income Obligations	123	107	105	-13.0%	-1.9%
Amounts Held on Behalf of Others	-	-	-	-	-
Long Term Debt	3,305	3,195	3,080	-3.3%	-3.6%
Refundable Gov't Advances	119	119	119	0.0%	0.0%
Other Long-Term Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	7,595	11,801	13,841	55.4%	17.3%
NET ASSETS					
Unrestricted					
Avail for Operations, Plant & Other Trustee Designated Purposes	(879)	(879)	(879)	0.0%	0.0%
Accum. Gains & Losses (associated with Permanent Endowment)				-	-
Designated for Long-Term Investments				-	-
Net Investment in Plant	8,325	9,510	9,600	14.2%	0.9%
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	7,446	8,631	8,721	15.9%	1.0%
Temporarily Restricted					
Available for Operations				-	-
Accum. Gains & Losses	1,267	1,556	1,823	22.8%	17.2%
Designated for Long-Term Investments	2,898	2,666	3,200	-8.0%	20.0%
Total Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	4,165	4,222	5,023	1.4%	19.0%
Permanently Restricted Net Assets					
Total Permanently Restricted Net Assets	12,799	14,829	17,200	15.9%	16.0%
Total Net Assets	24,410	27,682	30,944	13.4%	11.8%
				-	-
TOTAL LIABILITES & NET ASSETS	32,005	39,483	44,785	23.4%	13.4%

STATEMENT OF UNRESTRICTED REVENUES AND EXPENSES

College of the Atlantic	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Most Recent Year	Current Year Budget
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Audited:	yes	yes	no	
FROM OPERATIONS				
Revenue				
Tuition & Fees	6,741	7,580	8,238	9,068
Less: Financial Aid	2,358	2,920	3,183	3,380
Net Tuition & Fees Revenue	4,383	4,660	5,055	5,688
Gov't Appropriations	-			
Contributions used in Operations (1)	941	827	1,000	1,365
Endowment Income used in Operations	470	740	1,242	1,200
Federal & State Student Aid	-	-	-	
Gov't & Private Sponsored Research	-	-	-	
Other Income	217	252	260	270
Auxiliary Enterprises	1,212	1,323	1,400	1,450
Sales & Services of Educ. Activities				
Independent Operations				
Total Revenues	7,223	7,802	8,957	9,973
Net Assets Released from Restrictions				
Total Revenues & Net Assets Released	7,223	7,802	8,957	9,973
Expenses				
Instruction	1,701	1,856	1,956	2,137
Research	-	-		
Public Service	-	-		
Academic Services	207	220	230	240
Student Services	1,000	1,005	1,039	1,231
Institutional Support	3,671	3,856	4,907	5,200
Other Expenses				
Total Education & General Expenses	6,579	6,937	8,132	8,808
Auxiliary Enterprises	673	866	825	865
Independent Operations	-			
Total Expenses	7,252	7,803	8,957	9,673
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets from Operations	(29)	(1)	-	300
NON OPERATING				
Gifts, Bequests & Contributions not used in Operations				
Restricted Equipment Purchases				
Reinvested Gains & Losses & Income from Investments				
Gains & Losses on Disposal of Property				
Other revenues and expenses, Net	129		-	
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets from NonOperating Activity	129	-	-	
Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted Net Assets	100	(1)	-	

Footnote:

(1) Includes receivables of:

☐ Check This Box if you have allocated a portion of Institutional Expenditures to other expense lines.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

College of the Atlantic		2 Years Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007
	Audited:	yes	yes	no
Increase (Decr) in Unrestricted Net Assets		100	(1)	-
Changes in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets:				
Contributions (1)			-	
Reinvested Endowment Income & Gains		-		
Net Assets Released from Restrictions				
Other		-	-	
Increase in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets		-	-	-
Changes in Permanently Restricted Net Assets:				
Contributions (2)		676	2,527	784
Reinvested Endowment Income & Gains		205	747	3,467
Other		-	-	(989)
Increase in Permanently Restricted Net Assets		881	3,274	3,262
Increase (Decrease) in Total Net Assets		981	3,273	3,262
Net Net Assets at Beginning of Year		23,428	24,409	27,682
Net Net Assets at End of Year		24,409	27,682	30,944

Footnote:
(1) Includes receivables of:
(2) Includes receivables of:

SUPPLEMENTAL DATA

College of the Atlantic

SECTION 1: FINANCIAL AID

Source of Funds:

	2 Years Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year Budget 2008
a) Unrestricted Institutional	2,358	2,920	3,183	3,380
b) Federal, State & Private Grants				
c) Restricted Endowment Funds				
TOTAL	2,358	2,920	3,183	3,380
% Discount of Tuition & Fees	35.0%	38.5%	38.6%	37.3%
% Unrestricted Discount	35.0%	38.5%	38.6%	37.3%

SECTION 2: CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE (most recent year)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
less than 1 year	54	0	0	54
1 year or greater				0
less: allowance				0
less: discount to present value				0
Total Contributions Receivable	54	0	0	54

SECTION 3: ENDOWMENT INCOME USED IN OPERATIONS (most recent year)

Please check source of funding:

	Formula:	Most Recent Yr. Amount 2007
☒ Spending Policy	5% of 4 trailing quarters+special unrestricted alloca	1,242
☐ Interest & Divideneds Only		
☐ Unrealized Gains & Losses		
Total Endowment income Used in Operations		1,242

SECTION 4: INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT COST ADJUSTMENTS (most recent year)

Cost reported on CIHE Form 2	4,907
Add: costs previously allocated:	
Auxiliary Services	
Independent Operations	
Sales & Services of Educ. Activities	
Other	
Total Institutional Support Costs	4,907
% of Total Revenues & Net Assets Released from Restrictions	54.8%

SECTION 5: FACILITY COST ALLOCATIONS (most recent year)

Breakout costs allocacated to all lines on CIHE Form 2-1.	2 Years Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year 2008
Operations & Maintenance	530	580	680	683
Depreciation & Amortization	598	636	650	700
Interest Expense	98	105	198	210
Total Facility Costs	1,226	1,321	1,528	1,593
Percent of Total Revenues & Net Assets Released from Restrictions				
Operations & Maintenance	7.3%	7.4%	7.6%	6.8%
Depreciation & Amortization	8.3%	8.2%	7.3%	7.0%
Interest Expense	1.4%	1.3%	2.2%	2.1%
Total Facility Costs	17.0%	16.9%	17.1%	16.0%

STATEMENT OF UNRESTRICTED OPERATING REVENUES AND EXPENSES

College of the Atlantic	Most Recent Year 2007	Most Recent Budget 2007	Current Year Budget 2008	Next Year Forward 2009	Two Years Forward 2010
FROM OPERATIONS					
Revenue					
Tuition & Fees	8,238	8,145	9,068	9,763	10,509
Less: Financial Aid	3,183	3,040	3,380	3,574	3,756
Net Tuition & Fees Revenue	5,055	5,105	5,688	6,189	6,753
Gov't Appropriations	0		0		
Contributions used in Operations (1)	1,000	1,300	1,365	1,433	1,504
Endowment Income used in Operations	1,242	1,335	1,200	931	958
Federal & State Student Aid	0		0		
Gov't & Private Sponsored Research	0		0		
Other Income	260	260	270	270	280
Auxiliary Enterprises	1,400	1,380	1,450	1,420	1,500
Sales & Services of Educ. Activities	0		0		
Independent Operations	0		0		
Total Revenues	8,957	9,380	9,973	10,243	10,995
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	0		0		
Total Revenues & Net Assets Released	8,957	9,380	9,973	10,243	10,995
Expenses					
Instruction	1,956	1,998	2,137	2,198	2,309
Research	0		0		
Public Service	0		0		
Academic Services	230	225	240	250	260
Student Services	1,039	1,030	1,231	1,084	1,116
Institutional Support	4,907	5,350	5,200	4,200	4,400
Other Expense	0		0		
Toal Education & General Expenses	8,132	8,603	8,808	7,732	8,085
Auxiliary Enterprises	825	777	865		
Independent Operations	0		0		
Total Expenses	8,957	9,380	9,673	7,732	8,085
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets from Operations	-	-	300	2,511	2,910
Footnote:					
(1) Includes receivables of:	0		0		
Tuition and Mandatory Fee Charges					
Tuition and Fee Discount	35%	39%	39%	37%	

STATEMENT OF CAPITAL CASH FLOWS

College of the Atlantic	2 Years Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year Budget 2008	Next Year Forward 2009
SOURCES OF FUNDS:					
Cash flow from Depreciation	598	636	650	700	1,200
Cash from Gifts/Grants	319	1,727	1,000	4,500	-
Debt Proceeds	-	-	-	6,000	-
Other					
Total Sources	917	2,363	1,650	11,200	1,200
USES OF FUNDS					
Renovation & Maintenance	917	1,000	1,650		1,200
Space Alterations				1,000	-
New Construction	-	-	-	10,000	-
Equipment & Furnishings					
Total Uses	917	1,000	1,650	11,000	1,200
NET CAPITAL CASH FLOW	-	1,363	-	200	-
INDEBTEDNESS ON PHYSICAL PLANT					
Beginning Balance on Principal	3,415	3,305	3,190	3,070	2,945
Additional Principal Borrowed	-				
Principal Payments Made During Year	110	115	120	125	130
Extraordinary Balloon Pymts / Refinancings	-	-	-	-	-
Ending Balance on Principal	3,305	3,190	3,070	2,945	2,815
Interest Payments Made During Year	171	165	160	154	147
Accumulated Depreciation	8,156	8,767	9,417	10,117	11,317

Maximum expected annual debt service obligation (principal & interest) on all outstanding debt (exclude balloon payments expected to be refinanced from external funds)

Year: 2009 Amount: 550

Form 6

?

STUDENT ADMISSIONS DATA

(Fall Term)

Credit Seeking Students Only - Including Continuing Education

College of the Atlantic		2 Years Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year 2008	Next Year Forward 2009
Freshmen - Undergraduate	?					
Completed Applications	?	255	280	300	348	
Applications Accepted	?	171	185	199	344	
Applicants Enrolled	?	68	81	73	83	
% Accepted of Applied		67.1%	66.1%	66.3%	98.9%	-
% Enrolled of Accepted		39.8%	43.8%	36.7%	24.1%	-
Percent Change Year over Year						
Completed Applications		-	9.8%	7.1%	16.0%	-100.0%
Applications Accepted		-	8.2%	7.6%	72.9%	-100.0%
Applicants Enrolled		-	19.1%	-9.9%	13.7%	-100.0%
Aptitude Indicator: (Define Below)	?					
Transfers - Undergraduate	?					
Completed Applications		32	27	45	45	
Applications Accepted		25	22	34	36	
Applications Enrolled		15	14	23	21	
% Accepted of Applied		78.1%	81.5%	75.6%	80.0%	-
% Enrolled of Accepted		60.0%	63.6%	67.6%	58.3%	-
Master's Degree	?					
Completed Applications		10	7	4	6	
Applications Accepted		5	3	4	5	
Applications Enrolled		3	3	1	3	
% Accepted of Applied		50.0%	42.9%	100.0%	83.3%	-
% Enrolled of Accepted		60.0%	100.0%	25.0%	60.0%	-
First Professional Degree - All Programs	?					
Completed Applications						
Applications Accepted						
Applications Enrolled						
% Accepted of Applied		-	-	-	-	-
% Enrolled of Accepted		-	-	-	-	-
Doctoral Degree	?					
Completed Applications						
Applications Accepted						
Applications Enrolled						
% Accepted of Applied		-	-	-	-	-
% Enrolled of Accepted		-	-	-	-	-

Form 7

?

STUDENT ENROLLMENT DATA

(Fall Term)

Credit Seeking Students Only - Including Continuing Education

College of the Atlantic			2 Years Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year 2008	Next Year Forward 2009
UNDERGRADUATE		?					
First Year	Full-Time Headcount	?	92	103	107	132	
	Part-Time Headcount	?	-	2	-	-	
	Total Headcount		92	105	107	132	-
	Total FTE	?	92.0	104.0	107.0	132.0	
Second Year	Full-Time Headcount		74	84	96	94	
	Part-Time Headcount		3	1	2		
	Total Headcount		77	85	98	94	-
	Total FTE		76.0	84.7	97.0	94.0	
Third Year	Full-Time Headcount		70	72	71	78	
	Part-Time Headcount		3	1	1		
	Total Headcount		73	73	72	78	-
	Total FTE		72.0	72.7	71.7	78.0	
Fourth Year	Full-Time Headcount		20	29	39	22	
	Part-Time Headcount			3	4	5	
	Total Headcount		20	32	43	27	-
	Total FTE		20.0	31.0	41.7	24.7	
Unclassified	Full-Time Headcount	?	4	8	8	6	
	Part-Time Headcount		6	7	7	1	
	Total Headcount		10	15	15	7	-
	Total FTE		6.7	10.0	11.7	6.3	
Total Undergraduate Students							
	Full-Time Headcount		260	296	321	332	-
	Part-Time Headcount		12	14	14	6	-
	Total Headcount		272	310	335	338	-
	Total FTE		266.7	302.4	329.1	335.0	-
% Change FTE Undergraduate			-	13.4%	8.8%	1.8%	-100.0%
GRADUATE		?					
	Full-Time Headcount	?	9	6	3	4	
	Part-Time Headcount	?	1	2	1	3	
	Total Headcount		10	8	4	7	-
	Total FTE	?	10.0	7.0	3.3	5.3	
% Change FTE Graduate			-	-30.0%	-52.9%	60.6%	-100.0%
GRAND TOTAL							
Grand Total Headcount			282	318	339	345	-
Grand Total FTE			276.7	309.4	332.4	340.3	-
% Change Grand Total FTE			-	11.8%	7.4%	2.4%	-100.0%
UNDERGRADUATE RETENTION RATES							
First Yr Stdts Returning for Second Yr			85%	87%	82%	90%	
6 Year Graduation Rate			62%	64%	54%		

FACULTY PROFILE, PART 1

College of the Atlantic

		2 Years Prior 2005		1 Years Prior 2006		Most Recent Year 2007		Current Year 2008	
		FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Number of Faculty (Male/Female)									
Professor	Male	17	4	17	4	18	4	17	4
	Female	8	2	8	2	8	2	9	2
Associate	Male								
	Female								
Assistant	Male								
	Female								
Instructor	Male								
	Female								
Other	Male		4		5		3		5
	Female		4		4		4		4
Total	Male	17	8	17	9	18	7	17	9
	Female	8	6	8	6	8	6	9	6
Total Faculty									
Professor		25	6	25	6	26	6	26	6
Associate		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistant		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Instructor		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other		-	8	-	9	-	7	-	9
Total		25	14	25	15	26	13	26	15
Age (Minimum/Maximum/Mean)									
Professor	Minimum	35	43	36	44	37	45	38	46
	Maximum	67	64	68	65	69	66	70	67
	Mean	49	56	50	57	51	58	52	59
Associate	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Mean								
Assistant	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Mean								
Instructor	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Mean								
Other	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Mean								
Years at this Institution (Minimum/Maximun/Median)									
Professor	Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Maximum	32	32	33	33	34	34	35	35
	Median	14	23	15	24	16	25	17	26
Associate	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Median								
Assistant	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Median								
Instructor	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Median								
Other	Minimum								
	Maximum								
	Median								

FACULTY PROFILE, PART 2

College of the Atlantic

	2 Years Prior 2005		1 Years Prior 2006		Most Recent Year 2007		Current Year 2008	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Highest Degree Earned: Doctorate ?								
Professor	21	5	21	5	22	5	22	5
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other		1		1		1		1
Total	21	6	21	6	22	6	22	6
Highest Degree Earned: Masters								
Professor	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other		3		4		3		4
Total	3	4	3	5	3	4	3	5
Highest Degree Earned: Bachelor's								
Professor								
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other		3		3		3		3
Total	-	3	-	3	-	3	-	3
Highest Degree Earned: Professional License								
Professor								
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other								
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Teaching Load, fall term in credit hrs ?		
Professor	Minimum	
	Maximum	
	Median	
Associate	Minimum	
	Maximum	
	Median	
Assistant	Minimum	
	Maximum	
	Median	
Instructor	Minimum	
	Maximum	
	Median	
Other	Minimum	
	Maximum	
	Median	

FACULTY PROFILE, PART 3

College of the Atlantic

			2 Year Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year 2008
Base Salary for Academic Year		?				
Professor, Full Time	Minimum		40,242	42,480	44,784	47,128
	Maximum		67,943	71,012	74,172	77,397
	Mean		51,766	54,349	57,009	59,719
Professor, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Associate, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Associate, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Assistant, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Assistant, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Instructor, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Instructor, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Other, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Other, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Fringe Benefits		?				
Professor, Full Time	Minimum		12,073	12,744	13,435	14,138
	Maximum		20,383	21,303	22,252	23,219
	Mean		15,530	16,305	17,103	17,916
Professor, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Associate, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Associate, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Assistant, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Assistant, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Instructor, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Instructor, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Other, Full Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					
Other, Part Time	Minimum					
	Maximum					
	Mean					

FACULTY PROFILE, PART 4

College of the Atlantic

	2 Years Prior 2005		1 Years Prior 2006		Most Recent Year 2007		Current Year 2008	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Number of Faculty Appointed ?								
Professor					2	2	1	-
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other								
Total	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	-
Number of Faculty in Tenured Positions ?								
Professor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other								
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Faculty Departing ?								
Professor					1	-	-	-
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other								
Total	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Number of Faculty Retiring ?								
Professor							1	
Associate								
Assistant								
Instructor								
Other								
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

FACULTY PROFILE, PART 5

College of the Atlantic

Number of Faculty by Department (or comparable academic unit)	2 Years Prior 2005 FT	2 Years Prior 2005 PT	1 Years Prior 2006 FT	1 Years Prior 2006 PT	Most Recent Year 2007 FT	Most Recent Year 2007 PT	Current Year 2008 FT	Current Year 2008 PT
Arts & Design	6	1	6	1	6		6	1
Educational Studies	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Environmental Studies	7	5	7	5	7	6	7	5
Human Studies	11	7	11	8	12	6	12	8
Total	25	14	25	15	26	13	26	15

STUDENT HEADCOUNT BY UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR

College of the Atlantic Fall Term		2 Year Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year 2008
Certificate					
?					
	Total	-	-	-	-
Associate					
?					
? Undeclared					
	Total	-	-	-	-
Baccalaureate					
? Human Ecology		262	295	320	331
Undeclared					
	Total	262	295	320	331
? Total Undergraduate		262	295	320	331

Form 9-2

STUDENT HEADCOUNT BY GRADUATE PROGRAM

College of the Atlantic	2 Year Prior	1 Year Prior	Most Recent Year	Current Year
Fall Term	2005	2006	2007	2008
Master's				
Human Ecology	11	8	4	7
Total	11	8	4	7
Doctorate				
Total	-	-	-	-
First Professional				
Total	-	-	-	-
Other				
Total	-	-	-	-
Total Graduate	11	8	4	7

Form 10

CREDIT HOURS GENERATED BY DEPARTMENT OR COMPARABLE ACADEMIC UNIT

? ?

College of the Atlantic	2 Year Prior 2005	1 Year Prior 2006	Most Recent Year 2007	Current Year 2008
Undergraduate				
? Environmental Sciences	577	604	594	224
Arts & Design	388	454	402	123
Human Studies	730	802	823	358
Educational Studies	96	95	132	26
Other	583	606	726	292
Total	2,374	2,561	2,677	1,023
Graduate				
Summer Graduate courses	100	90	96	95
Environmental Sciences	10	4	3	6
Arts & Design	1	7	1	1
Human Studies	13	9	7	1
Educational Studies	4	1	7	
Other	52	34	27	15
Total	180	145	141	118

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE YEARS ENDED

JUNE 30, 2006 AND 2005

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

September 20, 2006

Board of Trustees
College of the Atlantic
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of the College of the Atlantic at June 30, 2006 and 2005 and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the College's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College of the Atlantic at June 30, 2006 and 2005, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United State of America.

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The Schedules of Operating Revenues and Expenses on pages 11 - 13 are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole.

Horton, McFarland & Veysey

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AT JUNE 30,

	Operations	*Invested in Plant*	*Long-Term Investment*
Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3,707,882	1,210,480	1,814,379
Tuition & Fees Receivable (Net of Reserve For Bad Debts of $1,347 for 2006 and $2,063 for 2005)	9,447		
Accounts & Notes Receivable- Other	260,251		25,000
Contributions Receivable (Note 8)	53,568	261,430	24,811
Inventories	1,918		
Prepaid Expenses	38,853		
Due From Other Funds	1,038,918	369,604	574,519
Student Loans Receivable (Net of Reserve for Bad Debts of $85,000 in 2006 and 2005.)			
Premium on Bond		92,827	
Investments (Note 2)	1,000,000	352,631	15,443,013
Land, Buildings, Equipment and Library Books, at Cost			
Accumulated Depreciation of $8,767,625 (Note 3)		12,710,591	
Assets Held for Resale	0		-
Total Assets	6,110,837	14,997,563	17,881,722
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	164,240		
Prepaid Tuition	20,287		
Medical Insurance Reserve	98,500		
Deferred Revenues	5,244,862	345,526	
Annuities Payable	0		
Due To Other Funds	954,622	652,216	386,371
Federal Portion of Student Loan Funds			
Notes Payable-Line of Credit	507,343		
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt		115,000	
Obligations under capital leases		5,413	
Long-Term Debt (Note 4)		3,080,000	
Total Liabilities	6,989,854	4,198,155	386,371
Net Assets			
Unrestricted	(879,017)	9,510,178	
Temporarily Restricted		1,289,230	2,666,435
Permanently Restricted			14,828,916
Total Net Assets	(879,017)	10,799,408	17,495,351
	0	0	0
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	6,110,837	14,997,563	17,881,722

See accompanying notes

Life Income	*Student Loans*	*Totals 2006*	*2005*
	68,298	6,801,039	2,317,906
		9,447	7,592
		285,251	270,023
		339,809	464,520
		1,918	1,512
		38,853	53,858
	10,500	1,993,541	1,446,441
	145,166	145,166	131,346
		92,827	97,047
197,282	72,260	17,065,186	14,188,445
		12,710,591	11,289,361
		0	1,735,807
197,282	296,224	39,483,628	32,003,858
		164,240	126,784
		20,287	27,658
		98,500	98,500
		5,590,388	1,511,236
107,387		107,387	123,585
	332	1,993,541	1,446,441
	119,304	119,304	119,872
		507,343	800,000
		115,000	110,000
		5,413	35,537
		3,080,000	3,195,000
107,387	119,636	11,801,403	7,594,613
		8,631,161	7,445,738
89,895	176,588	4,222,148	4,164,158
		14,828,916	12,799,349
89,895	176,588	27,682,225	24,409,245
0	0	0	0
197,282	296,224	39,483,628	32,003,858

to financial statements.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
YEARS ENDED JUNE 30,

	Unrestricted	*Temporarily Restricted*	*'Total Operating*
Revenues			
Tuition and Fees	7,580,477		7,580,477
Contributions	833,372	2,340,125	3,173,497
Investment Income			0
Endowment Earnings Transfers	546,506	0	546,506
Government and Other Grants		798,749	798,749
Auxiliary Activities	781,805		781,805
Summer Programs	481,612		481,612
Museum, Summer Field Studies & Blum Gallery	61,434		61,434
Research and Projects		467,041	467,041
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Investments			
Net Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments			
Other Sources	252,283		252,283
Total Revenues	10,537,489	3,605,915	14,143,404
Expenses			
Program Services			
Instruction and Student Activities	2,585,572		2,585,572
Library	219,802	5,619	225,421
Auxiliary Activities	544,230		544,230
Summer Programs	275,299		275,299
Museum , Summer Field Studies & Blum Gallery	178,611		178,611
Beech Hill Farm	144,520		144,520
Financial Aid	2,919,612	2,445,878	5,365,490
Total Program Services	6,867,646	2,451,497	9,319,143
Supporting Services			
General and Administration	986,803	189,916	1,176,719
Payroll Taxes and Fringe Benefits	1,290,805		1,290,805
Institutional Advancement	893,114	38,584	931,698
Buildings and Grounds	579,847	6,588	586,435
Interest	105,255		105,255
Grants, Research and Projects		819,428	819,428
Earnings Distributed			
Depreciation & Amortization			
Total Supporting Services	3,855,824	1,054,516	4,910,340
Total Expenses	10,723,470	3,506,013	14,229,483
Change in Net Assets Before Transfers	(185,981)	99,902	(86,079)
Transfers			
To (From)	185,981	(99,902)	86,079
Change in Net Assets	0	0	0
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	(879,017)		(879,017)
Net Assets at End of Year	(879,017)	0	(879,017)

See accompanying notes

Invested in Plant	*Long-Term Investment*	*Life Income*	*Student Loans*	*Totals 2006*	*2005*
				7,580,477	6,740,998
496,865	2,029,566			5,699,928	4,151,707
41,536	310,381	3,002	3,358	358,277	242,953
21,549				568,055	490,666
				798,749	805,634
				781,805	712,832
				481,612	432,399
				61,434	67,546
				467,041	419,019
1,925	546,306	3,129	98	551,458	127,906
649	149,009		(702)	148,956	1,008,407
1,163,999		16,198		1,432,480	207,175
1,726,523	3,035,262	22,329	2,754	18,930,272	15,407,242
				2,585,572	2,269,075
				225,421	207,492
				544,230	512,024
				275,299	274,490
				178,611	158,516
				144,520	160,995
				5,365,490	4,728,246
				9,319,143	8,310,838
448	135,335	365	3,124	1,315,991	1,239,921
				1,290,805	1,196,794
				931,698	1,104,515
				586,435	529,964
				105,255	97,666
				819,428	806,347
	650,002	2,566		652,568	543,037
635,969				635,969	597,579
636,417	785,337	2,931	3,124	6,338,149	6,115,823
636,417	785,337	2,931	3,124	15,657,292	14,426,661
1,090,106	2,249,925	19,398	(370)	3,272,980	980,581
391,754	(451,437)	(26,396)	0	0	
1,481,860	1,798,488	(6,998)	(370)	3,272,980	980,581
9,317,548	15,696,863	96,893	176,958	24,409,245	23,428,664
10,799,408	17,495,351	89,895	176,588	27,682,225	24,409,245

to financial statements.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30,

	Operations	*Invested in Plant*	*Long-Term Investment*
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Change in Net Assets	0	1,481,860	1,798,488
Adjustments to Reconcile Change in Net Assets to			
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Operating Activities:			
Provision For Depreciation and Amortization		640,189	
Depreciation (Appreciation) of Investments		(649)	(149,009)
Decrease (Increase) in:			
Tuition and Fees Receivable	(1,855)		
Accounts Receivable	9,772		(25,000)
Contributions Receivable	235,082	(110,371)	
Inventories	(406)		
Prepaid Expenses	15,005		
Due from Other Funds	(302,867)	(244,232)	
Student Loans Receivable			
Increase (Decrease) in:			
Accounts Payable	37,456		
Deferred Amounts	3,726,255	345,526	
Due to Other Funds	260,256	87,674	199,597
Federal Portion of Student Loan Funds			
Notes Payable-Line of Credit	(292,657)		
Annuities Payable	0		
Cash Provided (Used) by Operating Activities	3,686,041	2,199,997	1,824,076
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Net Investment (Purchases) Sales	(1,000,000)	(2,521)	(1,745,504)
Net Purchase of Land, Buildings,			
Equipment and Library Books		(2,057,199)	1,735,807
Cash Provided (Used) by Investing Activities	(1,000,000)	(2,059,720)	(9,697)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
Proceeds of Loans			
Repayment of Bonds & Loans		(140,124)	
Cash Provided (Used) by Financing Activities	0	(140,124)	0
Increase (Decrease) in Cash	2,686,041	153	1,814,379
Cash Beginning of Year	1,021,841	1,210,327	0
Cash End of Year	3,707,882	1,210,480	1,814,379

See accompanying notes

Life Income	Student Loans	Totals 2006	2005
(6,998)	(370)	3,272,980	980,581
		640,189	597,579
	702	(148,956)	(1,008,407)
		(1,855)	(2,070)
		(15,228)	(153,228)
		124,711	(33,264)
		(406)	(113)
		15,005	(28,773)
		(547,099)	(156,614)
	(13,820)	(13,820)	10,635
		37,456	(58,450)
		4,071,781	769,521
	(428)	547,099	156,614
	(568)	(568)	(264)
		(292,657)	326,800
(16,198)		(16,198)	9,394
(23,196)	(14,484)	7,672,434	1,409,941
23,196	(2,956)	(2,727,785)	(73,962)
		(321,392)	(447,300)
23,196	(2,956)	(3,049,177)	(521,262)
		0	
		(140,124)	(159,659)
0		(140,124)	(159,659)
	(17,440)	4,483,133	729,020
	85,738	2,317,906	1,588,886
0	68,298	6,801,039	2,317,906

to financial statements.

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Nature of Activities

The College of the Atlantic is a four-year liberal arts college located in Bar Harbor, Maine.

Basis of Presentation

The financial statements of the College of the Atlantic have been prepared on the accrual basis. The significant accounting policies followed are described below to enhance the usefulness of the financial statements to the reader.

Under these provisions, net assets and revenues, expenses, gains, and losses are classified based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Accordingly, net assets of the College and changes therein are classified and reported as follows:

Unrestricted net assets - Net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed stipulations.

Temporarily restricted net assets - Net assets subject to donor-imposed stipulations that may or will be met either by actions of the College and/or the passage of time.

Permanently restricted net assets - Net assets subject to donor-imposed stipulations that they be maintained permanently by the College. Generally, the donors of these assets permit the College to use all or part of the income earned on related investments for general or specific purposes.

Contributed Services

The College does not recognize any support, revenue or expense from services contributed by volunteers.

Inventories

Inventories are stated at the lower of cost or market and consist of items sold in the museum.

Fair Value of Financial Instruments

The Financial Accounting Standards Board issued Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 107, "Disclosures About Fair Value of Financial Instruments" (SFAS No. 107). The standard requires all entities to disclose the fair value of financial instruments for which it is practicable to estimate fair value.

The carrying amount of cash and cash equivalents, accrued interest receivable, and contributions receivable approximates fair value because of the short maturity of these financial instruments. The carrying value which is the fair value of investments, funds held in trust by others, remainder interest trusts, deferred compensation asset, and the deferred compensation liability is based upon values provided by an external investment manager or quoted market values. In the limited cases where such values are not available, historical cost is used as an estimate of market value.

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

A reasonable estimate of the fair value of the notes receivable from students under government loan programs and advances from Federal government for student loans could not be made because the notes receivable are not salable and can only be assigned to the U.S. government or its designees; the fair value of notes receivable from students under College loan programs approximates carrying value.

The carrying amount of notes and bonds payable approximates fair value because these financial instruments bear interest at variable rates, which approximate current rates for notes with similar maturity's and credit quality.

Income Tax Status

The College is recognized as an organization exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") whereby only unrelated business income, as defined by Section 512(a)(1) of the Code, is subject to Federal income tax.

Promises to Give

Contributions are recognized when the donor makes a promise to give to the College that is, in substance, unconditional. Contributions that are restricted by the donor are reported as increases in unrestricted net assets if the restrictions expire in the fiscal year in which the contributions are recognized. All other donor-restricted contributions are reported as increases in temporarily or permanently restricted net assets depending on the nature of the restrictions. When a restriction expires, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets.

The College uses the allowance method to determine uncollectible unconditional promises receivable. The allowance is based on prior years' experience and management's analysis of specific promises made.

Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

Long-lived Assets

It is the College's policy to imply a time restriction on gifts of long-lived assets (or gifts of cash or other assets restricted for acquisition of long-lived assets) such that the gifts are reported as restricted support, with the related restrictions expiring over the useful lives of the donated assets.

Note 2 - Investments

Investments are stated at fair market value. Securities not publicly traded are stated at cost, which approximates market. The net realized and unrealized gains (losses) on investments are reflected in the Statements of Activities.

The historical cost of the College's investments at June 30, 2006 was $15,241,261 and $11,737,911 at June 30, 2005.

Note 3 - Plant Assets and Depreciation

The College follows the policy of establishing a provision for annual amounts of depreciation, which allocates the cost of the plant, property, and equipment over its estimated useful life. The ranges of estimated useful lives and methods of depreciation used are:

	Years	Method
Buildings & Improvements	33 - 39	Straight Line
Library Books	8	Straight Line
Furniture	10	Straight Line
Vehicles	3-5	Straight Line

The cost, accumulated depreciation, and book value of the plant, property and equipment at June 30, 2005 are:

	Cost	*Accumulated Depreciation*	*Book Value*
Land	2,185,746		2,185,746
Construction in Progress	558,044		558,044
Buildings & Improvements	15,126,314	5,811,000	9,315,314
Furniture & Equipment	2,344,957	2,000,805	344,152
Library Collection	739,179	660,233	78,946
Vehicles & Boats	543,976	315,587	228,389
Total Plant, Property & Equipment	21,498,216	8,787,625	12,710,591

Note 4 - Long-Term Debt

Long-term debt at June 30 consisted of the following:

	2006	*2005*
Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority Revenue Bond, College of the Atlantic Issue, Series 1998, with interest ranging from 3.7% to 5% . Interest payments are made monthly and payments of one-twelfth of the year's principal are payable monthly to an escrow account. Principal Is paid yearly from this escrow account, with the final payment due in 2024.	3,195,000	3,305,000

Maturities of long-term debt are as follows:

Year Ending June 30,	*Amount*
2007	115,000
2008	120,000
2009	125,000
2010	135,000
2011	140,000
Thereafter	2,560,000
	3,195,000

Note 5 - Pension Plan

The College's pension plan is funded through TIAA-CREF. The College policy is to fund pension costs accrued. A total of $242,755 was paid for pension costs during the year ended June 30, 2006 and $203,311 was paid for the year ended June 30, 2005.

Note 6 - Cash Flow Information

The College considers all short-term investments with an original maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents. Cash paid for interest and income taxes for 2006 and 2005.

	2006	*2005*
Interest	183,980	181,458
Income Taxes	-0-	-0-

Note 7 - Line of Credit

The College has a maximum bank line of credit of $800,000 secured by College real estate at June 30, 2006, $507,343 was owed on this line.

The College also has a maximum bank line of credit of $1,500,000 secured by College investments at June 30, 2006, nothing was owed on the line.

Note 8 - Contributions Receivable - Non Current

The College is engaged in a campaign to raise funds to increase its' endowment funds.

The College's endowment contributions receivable consists of unconditional promises receivable as follows:

	2006	**2005**
Receivable in less than one year	24,812	24,812
Receivable in 1 to 4 years (future value)		
	24,812	24,812
Less amount to reduce to present value (discount rate - 6%)		
Less allowance for uncollectible promises		
Contributions Receivable - Net	24,812	24,812

NOTE 9 - Museum Construction Funds Due to Operating

At December 31, 2006 and 2005 the Museum Construction Fund owed the Operating Fund $390,786 for construction costs not covered by the museum capital fund raising. The College anticipates that future bequests will repay this debt to the Operating Fund.

NOTE 10 - LEASE

Capital Leases

Minimum future payments under capital leases as of June 30, 2006 are:

2007	5,563
Less Amount representing interest	150
Net	5,413

Interest rates on capitalized leases are 14.6% per annum.

The capital leased assets consist of computer equipment and these assets are being depreciated in the plant fund.

NOTE 11 - DEFERRED REVENUE - OPERATING

Operating Deferred Revenue consisted of the restricted operating contributions received for future scholarships and operating expenses. The detail of operating deferred revenue was:

	2006	2005
Davis United World Scholars Program	4,612,043	904,920
All Others	632,819	606,316
	5,244,862	1,511,236

NOTE 12 - CONCENTRATION OF REVENUE

Contributions from the Davis United World College Scholars Program represent 15% of the total operating revenue of the College for 2006 and 13% of the total operating revenue of the College for 2005. The Foundation has made a five year rolling commitment to this program.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
SCHEDULE OF OPERATING REVENUES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30,

	2006		
	Unrestricted	***Restricted***	***Total***
Revenues:			
Contributions	833,372	2,340,125	3,173,497
Tuition	7,405,709		7,405,709
Student Housing	434,463		434,463
Food Service	347,342		347,342
Fees & Other Charges	174,768		174,768
Endowment Earnings Transfers	546,506		546,506
Government & Private Grants		798,749	798,749
Summer Programs	481,612		481,612
Museum, Blum Gallery & Summer Field Stuc	61,434		61,434
Special Projects & Sponsored Research		467,041	467,041
Beech Hill Farm	136,684		136,684
All Other Income	115,599		115,599
	10,537,489	3,605,915	14,143,404

2005		
Unrestricted	*Restricted*	*Total*
941,485	2,533,937	3,475,422
6,575,447		6,575,447
400,489		400,489
312,343		312,343
165,551		165,551
470,293		470,293
	805,634	805,634
432,399		432,399
67,546		67,546
	419,019	419,019
134,664		134,664
82,235		82,235
9,582,452	3,758,590	13,341,042

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
SCHEDULE OF OPERATING EXPENSES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30,

		2006	
	Unrestricted	***Restricted***	***Total***
Administration			
Personnel	536,167	88,314	624,481
Other Costs	450,636	101,602	552,238
	986,803	189,916	1,176,719
Admissions			
Personnel	175,587		175,587
Other Costs	214,666	30,584	245,250
	390,253	30,584	420,837
Development			
Personnel	260,446		260,446
Other Costs	183,285	8,000	191,285
	443,731	8,000	451,731
Federal Relations			
Personnel	58,726		58,726
Other Costs	404		404
	59,130		59,130
Academic Program			
Personnel	1,818,786		1,818,786
Other Costs	221,780		221,780
	2,040,566		2,040,566
Library			
Personnel	153,294		153,294
Other Costs	66,508	5,619	72,127
	219,802	5,619	225,421
Financial Aid			
Scholarships	2,768,533	329,561	3,098,094
Davis UWC Scholarships		2,022,877	2,022,877
Workstudy	151,079	93,440	244,519
	2,919,612	2,445,878	5,365,490
Student Services			
Personnel	287,181		287,181
Other Costs	257,825		257,825
	545,006		545,006
Food Service			
Personnel	128,186		128,186
Other Costs	182,577		182,577
	310,763		310,763
Dormitories			
Personnel	59,162		59,162
Interest	78,725		78,725
Other Costs	95,580		95,580
	233,467		233,467

Unrestricted	*2005 Restricted*	*Total*
487,432	47,250	534,682
456,060	112,984	569,044
943,492	160,234	1,103,726
154,765	21,731	176,496
339,160	79,089	418,249
493,925	100,820	594,745
195,886	57,202	253,088
218,996	1,901	220,897
414,882	59,103	473,985
35,200		35,200
585		585
35,785		35,785
1,666,268	3,055	1,669,323
209,962		209,962
1,876,230	3,055	1,879,285
151,220		151,220
56,272		56,272
207,492		207,492
2,244,728	287,402	2,532,130
	1,983,244	1,983,244
113,031	99,841	212,872
2,357,759	2,370,487	4,728,246
256,390		256,390
133,400		133,400
389,790		389,790
115,332		115,332
162,948		162,948
278,280		278,280
50,743		50,743
83,792		83,792
99,209		99,209
233,744		233,744

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
SCHEDULE OF OPERATING EXPENSES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30,

	2006		
	Unrestricted	***Restricted***	***Total***
Summer Programs			
Personnel	143,361		143,361
Other Costs	131,938		131,938
	275,299		275,299
Buildings & Grounds			
Personnel	277,633		277,633
Other Costs	302,214	6,588	308,802
	579,847	6,588	586,435
Payroll Taxes & Fringe	1,290,805		1,290,805
Interest	105,255		105,255
Museum			
Personnel	95,824		95,824
Other Costs	27,504		27,504
	123,328		123,328
Blum Gallery			
Personnel	50,918		50,918
Other Costs	4,365		4,365
	55,283		55,283
Federal Research & Projects			
Personnel		152,352	152,352
Other Costs		240,267	240,267
Transfers to Plant Fund		59,670	59,670
		452,289	452,289
Sponsored Research & Projects			
Personnel		119,027	119,027
Other Costs		307,782	307,782
Transfers to Plant Fund		40,232	40,232
		467,041	467,041
Beech Hill Farm			
Personnel	63,429		63,429
Other Costs	81,091		81,091
	144,520		144,520
Total			
Personnel	4,108,700	359,693	4,468,393
Other Costs	6,614,770	3,246,222	9,860,992
	10,723,470	3,605,915	14,329,385

2005		
Unrestricted	***Restricted***	***Total***
142,273		142,273
132,217		132,217
274,490		274,490
267,042		267,042
262,922		262,922
529,964		529,964
1,154,828	41,966	1,196,794
97,666		97,666
76,482		76,482
26,225		26,225
102,707		102,707
47,179		47,179
8,630		8,630
55,809		55,809
	156,569	156,569
	250,360	250,360
	97,006	97,006
	503,935	503,935
	155,853	155,853
	243,565	243,565
	19,601	19,601
	419,019	419,019
85,186		85,186
75,809		75,809
160,995		160,995
3,731,398	441,660	4,173,058
5,876,440	3,216,959	9,093,399
9,607,838	3,658,619	13,266,457

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

MANAGEMENT LETTER

JUNE 30, 2006

HORTON, McFARLAND & VEYSEY, LLC
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
P.O. BOX 543
ELLSWORTH, MAINE 04605
207-667-5529 • 1-800-499-9108 • FAX 207-667-9915

M.R. Horton, Jr., CPA
James E. McFarland, CPA
Floyd S. Veysey, CPA

Amy J. Billings, CPA
Annette L. Gould, CPA
Ruth W. Wilbur, EA

November 1, 2006

College of the Atlantic
Eden Street
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

In planning and performing the audit of the financial statements for the College of the Atlantic for the year ended June 30, 2006, we considered the College's internal control structure to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the financial statements and not to provide assurance on the internal control structure.

The memorandum that accompanies this letter summarizes our comments and suggestions. We previously reported on the Organization's internal control in our report dated September 20, 2005. This letter does not affect our report dated September 20, 2006 on the financial statements of the College of the Atlantic.

We will review the status of these comments during our next audit engagement. We have already discussed these comments and suggestions with various College personnel, and we will be pleased to discuss them in further detail at your convenience, to perform any additional study of these matters, or to assist you in implementing the recommendations.

Sincerely,

Horton, McFarland & Veysey

Horton McFarland & Veysey, CPA's

PRIOR YEAR COMMENTS

BEECH HILL FARMS

It was noted during our expenditure test that documentation and accounting procedures for Beech Hill Farms need improvement.

Recommendations

The College should make someone responsible for the internal accounting and documentation of Beech Hill Farm. The person should be trained by the business office as to what documentation is required and what procedures are required.

Follow-up

The record keeping of Beech Hill Farms is improving and the recommendations we made in our Beech Hill Farms procedures review dated October 6, 2003 are being implemented.

CONTINUING COMMENTS

ACCOUNTING MANUAL

The College should continue to update its accounting manual. A well-devised accounting manual can help to ensure that all similar transactions are treated consistently, that accounting principles used are proper and that records are produced in the form desired by management. A good accounting manual should aid in the training of new employees and allow for cross training of employees.

We wish to thank the staff for their support and assistance during our audit.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Trustees, management, and others within the College.

Horton, McFarland & Veysey CPA's

ACORD CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

CSR COLLE-1 | DATE (MM/DD/YYYY) 07/20/07

PRODUCER
The Swan Agency
P.O. Box 63
43 Cottage Street
Bar Harbor ME 04609
Phone: 207-288-5044

THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW.

INSURED
College of the Atlantic
Melissa Cook, Controller
105 Eden Street
Bar Harbor ME 04609

INSURERS AFFORDING COVERAGE	NAIC #
INSURER A: Acadia Insurance Co.	31325
INSURER B: Maine Employers Mutual Ins Co	
INSURER C:	
INSURER D:	
INSURER E:	

COVERAGES

THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. AGGREGATE LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.

INSR LTR	ADD'L INSRD	TYPE OF INSURANCE	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE (MM/DD/YY)	POLICY EXPIRATION DATE (MM/DD/YY)	LIMITS	
A		GENERAL LIABILITY X COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY CLAIMS MADE X OCCUR GEN'L AGGREGATE LIMIT APPLIES PER: POLICY PROJECT LOC	CPA006252016	07/14/07	07/14/08	EACH OCCURRENCE DAMAGE TO RENTED PREMISES (Ea occurrence) MED EXP (Any one person) PERSONAL & ADV INJURY GENERAL AGGREGATE PRODUCTS - COMP/OP AGG	$ 1000000 $ 250000 $ 5000 $ 1000000 $ 2000000 $ 2000000
A		AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY ANY AUTO ALL OWNED AUTOS X SCHEDULED AUTOS X HIRED AUTOS X NON-OWNED AUTOS	CAA0062504-17	07/14/07	07/14/08	COMBINED SINGLE LIMIT (Ea accident) BODILY INJURY (Per person) BODILY INJURY (Per accident) PROPERTY DAMAGE (Per accident)	$ 1000000 $ $ $
		GARAGE LIABILITY ANY AUTO				AUTO ONLY - EA ACCIDENT OTHER THAN AUTO ONLY: EA ACC AGG	$ $ $
A		EXCESS/UMBRELLA LIABILITY OCCUR CLAIMS MADE DEDUCTIBLE X RETENTION $10000	CUA006251017	07/14/07	07/14/08	EACH OCCURRENCE AGGREGATE	$ 4000000 $ 4000000 $ $ $
B		WORKERS COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ANY PROPRIETOR/PARTNER/EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEMBER EXCLUDED? If yes, describe under SPECIAL PROVISIONS below	1810011096	06/05/07	06/05/08	WC STATU-TORY LIMITS OTH-ER E.L. EACH ACCIDENT E.L. DISEASE - EA EMPLOYEE E.L. DISEASE - POLICY LIMIT	 $ 100000 $ 100000 $ 500000
		OTHER					

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS / LOCATIONS / VEHICLES / EXCLUSIONS ADDED BY ENDORSEMENT / SPECIAL PROVISIONS

CERTIFICATE HOLDER

College of the Atlantic

CANCELLATION

SHOULD ANY OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED POLICIES BE CANCELLED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE THEREOF, THE ISSUING INSURER WILL ENDEAVOR TO MAIL _____ DAYS WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER NAMED TO THE LEFT, BUT FAILURE TO DO SO SHALL IMPOSE NO OBLIGATION OR LIABILITY OF ANY KIND UPON THE INSURER, ITS AGENTS OR REPRESENTATIVES.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE
Deborah Foster

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ACORD EVIDENCE OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY INSURANCE

OP ID DP | DATE (MM/DD/YYYY) 07/20/2007

THIS IS EVIDENCE THAT INSURANCE AS IDENTIFIED BELOW HAS BEEN ISSUED, IS IN FORCE, AND CONVEYS ALL THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES AFFORDED UNDER THE POLICY.

PRODUCER NAME, CONTACT PERSON AND ADDRESS

The Swan Agency
P.O. Box 63
43 Cottage Street
Bar Harbor ME 04609

PHONE (A/C, No, Ext): 207-288-5044
FAX (A/C, No):
E-MAIL ADDRESS:

CODE: 1410 SUB CODE:
AGENCY CUSTOMER ID #: COLLE-1

COMPANY NAME AND ADDRESS

Acadia Insurance Co.
One Acadia Commons
P.O. Box 9010
Westbrook ME 04098-5010

NAIC NO:

IF MULTIPLE COMPANIES, COMPLETE SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH

NAMED INSURED AND ADDRESS

College of the Atlantic
Melissa Cook, Controller
105 Eden Street
Bar Harbor ME 04609

LOAN NUMBER

POLICY NUMBER: CPA006252016

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/14/07 EXPIRATION DATE: 07/14/08 CONTINUED UNTIL TERMINATED IF CHECKED

ADDITIONAL NAMED INSURED(S)

THIS REPLACES PRIOR EVIDENCE DATED:

PROPERTY INFORMATION (Use additional sheets if more space is required)

LOCATION/DESCRIPTION

College of the Atlantic
001
105 Eden Street
Bar Harbor ME 04609

COVERAGE INFORMATION

CAUSE OF LOSS FORM: [ ] BASIC [ ] BROAD [X] SPECIAL [ ] OTHER

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY COVERAGE AMOUNT OF INSURANCE: $ 27798575 DED: 1000

	YES	NO	
BUSINESS INCOME / RENTAL VALUE			If YES, LIMIT: 1050000 [ ] Actual Loss Sustained # of months:
BLANKET COVERAGE			If YES, indicate amount of insurance on properties identified above: $
TERRORISM COVERAGE			Attach signed Disclosure Notice / DEC
IS COVERAGE PROVIDED FOR "CERTIFIED ACTS" ONLY?			If YES, SUB LIMIT: DED:
IS COVERAGE A STAND ALONE POLICY?			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
DOES COVERAGE INCLUDE DOMESTIC TERRORISM?			If YES, SUB LIMIT: DED:
COVERAGE FOR MOLD			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
MOLD EXCLUSION (If "YES", specify organization's form used)			
REPLACEMENT COST	X		
AGREED AMOUNT			
COINSURANCE			If YES, %
EQUIPMENT BREAKDOWN (If Applicable)			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
LAW AND ORDINANCE - Coverage for loss to undamaged portion of building			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
- Demolition Costs			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
- Incr. Cost of Construction			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
EARTHQUAKE (If Applicable)			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
FLOOD (If Applicable)			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
WIND / HAIL (If Separate Policy)			If YES, LIMIT: DED:
PERMISSION TO WAIVE SUBROGATION PRIOR TO LOSS			

REMARKS - Including Special Conditions (Use additional sheets if more space is required)

CANCELLATION

THE POLICY IS SUBJECT TO THE PREMIUMS, FORMS, AND RULES IN EFFECT FOR EACH POLICY PERIOD. SHOULD THE POLICY BE TERMINATED, THE COMPANY WILL GIVE THE ADDITIONAL INTEREST IDENTIFIED BELOW _____ DAYS WRITTEN NOTICE, AND WILL SEND NOTIFICATION OF ANY CHANGES TO THE POLICY THAT WOULD AFFECT THAT INTEREST, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY PROVISIONS OR AS REQUIRED BY LAW.

ADDITIONAL INTEREST

NAME AND ADDRESS

College of the Atlantic

LENDER SERVICING AGENT NAME AND ADDRESS

[ ] MORTGAGEE
[ ] LOSS PAYEE

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Deborah Parker

© ACORD CORPORATION 2003

graph	Information	Web addresses
10.2	How can inquiries be made about the institution? Where can questions be addressed?	http://www.coa.edu/html/contact.htm or http://www.coa.ed
10.2	Notice of availability of publications and of audited financial statement or fair summary	
10.3	Institutional catalog	http://www.coa.edu/html/academics.htm
10.3	Obligations and responsibilities of students and the institution	http://www.coa.edu/html/acaddinfo.htm
10.3	Information on admission and attendance	http://www.coa.edu/html/admissions.htm
10.5	Institutional mission and objectives	http://www.coa.edu/html/mission.htm
10.5	Expected educational outcomes	http://www.coa.edu/html/huecoskills.htm
10.5	Requirements, procedures and policies re: admissions	http://www.coa.edu/html/applytocoa.htm
10.5	Requirements, procedures and policies re: transfer credit	http://www.coa.edu/html/acdmcstand.htm
10.5	Student fees, charges and refund policies	http://www.coa.edu/html/costs.htm
10.5	Rules and regulations for student conduct	
10.5	Other information re: attending or withdrawing from the institution	http://www.coa.edu/html/acdmcstand.htm
10.5	Academic programs	http://www.coa.edu/html/academics.htm
10.5	Courses currently offered	http://www.coa.edu/html/registrationmaterials.htm
10.5	Other available educational opportunities	http://www.coa.edu/html/academics.htm
10.5	Other academic policies and procedures	http://www.coa.edu/html/acaddinfo.htm
10.5	Requirements for degrees and other forms of academic recognition	http://www.coa.edu/html/degreerequirements.htm
10.6	List of current faculty, indicating department or program affiliation, distinguishing between full- and part-time, showing degrees held and institutions granting them	http://www.coa.edu/html/faculty.htm
10.6	Names and positions of administrative officers	http://www.coa.edu/html/staff.htm
10.6	Names and principal affiliations of members of the governing board	http://www.coa.edu/html/boardoftrustees.htm
10.7	Locations and programs available at branch campuses, other instructional locations, and overseas operations at which students can enroll for a degree, along with a description of programs and services available at each location	http://www.coa.edu/html/acoffcampusstudy.htm
10.8	Programs, courses, services, and personnel not available in any given academic year.	http://www.coa.edu/html/registrationmaterials.htm
10.9	Size and characteristics of the student body	http://www.coa.edu/html/quickfacts.htm

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Para-graph	Information	Web addresses
10.9	Desription of the campus setting	http://www.coa.edu/html/campuslife.htm
10.9	Availability of academic and other support services	http://www.coa.edu/html/advisng.htm
10.9	Range of co-curriclar and non-academic opportunities available to students	http://www.coa.edu/html/campuslife.htm
10.9	Institutional learning and physical resources from which a student can reasonably be expected to benefit	http://www.coa.edu/html/acacademicfacilities.htm
10.10	Institutional goals for students' education	http://www.coa.edu/html/huecoskills.htm
10.11	Success of students in achieving institutional goals including rates of retention and graduation and other measure of student success appropriate to institutional mission. Passage rates for licensure exams, as appropriate	http://www.coa.edu/html/institutionalresearch.htm
10.11	Total cost of education, including availability of financial aid and typical length of study	http://www.coa.edu/html/financialaid.htm
10.11	Expected amount of student debt upon graduation	
10.13	Statement about accreditation	http://www.coa.edu/html/accred.htm

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