



College of the Atlantic

Bar Harbor, Maine

2023 Interim Fifth-Year Report

SUBMITTED TO THE NEW ENGLAND COMMISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

AUGUST 11, 2023

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Introduction

Timing acknowledgement

College of the Atlantic received a one-year extension for submitting its five-year report in a letter from the Commission dated January 13, 2022. COA requested this extension because the intensity of the COVID-related workload had been placed on those in leadership positions who would also be the primary authors of this report. In addition, several key members of the leadership team had just transitioned into place (for example, the dean of institutional advancement, dean of student life, and administrative dean/CFO). COA believed they needed time to get oriented into these new roles before they could effectively respond to the fifth-year reporting needs. COA greatly thanks the Commission for this extension and recognizes that the extension does not alter the college's comprehensive self-study's due date of fall 2027.

Report development process

As with previous reports, this fifth-year report was coordinated by COA Provost Dr. Kenneth Hill and drafted by the senior leadership team with assistance of college staff. NECHE report team members are:

- President Dr. Darron Collins '92
- Provost Dr. Ken Hill
- Administrative Dean & Chief Financial Officer Bear Paul
- Dean of Institutional Advancement Shawn Keeley '00
- Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning Dr. Bonnie Tai
- Associate Academic Dean Dr. Jamie McKown
- Dean of Admission Heather Albert-Knopp '99
- Dean of Student Life Joshua Luce
- Director of Communications Rob Levin
- Executive Assistant to the President Kara Daul '99
- Academic Services Administrator Lothar Holzke '16
- Sustainable Business Program Manager Kerri Sands '02
- Registrar Krystal Poulin
- Institutional Researcher Kyle Shank '14
- Strategic Planning Consultant Sarah Strickland

The process of creating this fifth-year report to the Commission has intentionally overlapped with the new strategic planning process of the college. These processes often look at the same data, collect information through similar channels, use the same core set of individuals to draft the documents, set college goals, and make plans to achieve these goals. The strategic planning process has involved campus surveys, group forums, individual interviews, and numerous all-campus meetings, faculty meetings, and trustee meetings. The COA Board of Trustees has been kept abreast of the fifth-year reporting process through their committees that are linked to the on-campus committee structure (Enrollment Committee, Advancement Committee, Academic Policy Committee, Buildings and Grounds Committee, Committee on Student Experience, and Finance Committee). The final reports will also be shared with the campus community upon completion. As a result, we believe we have conducted a robust and inclusive planning and reporting process.

INTERIM REPORT FORMS GENERAL INFORMATION

Institution Name:

OPE ID:

		Annual Audit	
		Certified:	Qualified
Financial Results for Year Ending:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="2023"/>	Yes	Unqualified
Most Recent Year	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="2023"/>	Yes	Unqualified
1 Year Prior	2022	Yes	Unqualified
2 Years Prior	2021	Yes	Unqualified

Fiscal Year Ends on: (month/day)

Budget / Plans

Current Year	2024
Next Year	2025

Contact Person:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Kenneth Hill"/>
Title:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Provost"/>
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E-mail address	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="khill@coa.edu"/>

Institutional Overview

College of the Atlantic (COA) was founded in 1969 and welcomed its inaugural class in the fall of 1972. Our founding trustees envisioned a year-round educational institution as an engine for restoring the economic and cultural legacy of our place—Mount Desert Island (MDI), Maine. They also sought to seed the world with the brightest, most creative thinkers and doers to address the most pernicious problems facing the planet. Students, staff, faculty, and alumni would address those issues through the lens of human ecology, a self-directed liberal arts approach to ecological problem solving and the only major offered at COA.

Our first decade saw slow, but steady, growth in enrollment, services, ideas, and impact, but a devastating fire burned most of the campus infrastructure to the ground on July 25, 1983. So, although we recently celebrated our 50th anniversary, we are, in some sense, only 40 years old. We've accomplished so much across those four decades. Our enrollment has grown almost 200%, from 120 to 350. Now at 350 full-time-equivalent students (averaged across our three trimesters), we have found our economic and financial sweet spot and have no intention of growing beyond our current numbers; being intentionally small is key to our success. Across the three years of the pandemic, we saw strong application numbers from strong pools of students, giving us even more confidence that we are meeting a very real and increasingly important demand in the wider constellation of higher education.

We continue to be dependent on tuition, but have grown our endowment from \$0 in the mid-1990s to nearly \$80 million today. Our mission, dedicated as we are both to our specific location on MDI and the larger goal of planetary health, has led to a well-developed philanthropic machine, where 90% of our philanthropic resources come from outside our small, service-minded alumni base. We launched our *Broad Reach* capital campaign in 2017, with the ambitious goal of raising \$50 million in four years. We raised \$55 million in three years—perfectly timed, right before the pandemic struck in March 2020.

We continue to work to drive our discount rate down, and have done so gradually, but we remain laser-focused on providing scholarships so that we attract and enroll the right students for COA, regardless of their ability to pay. We fully recognize that our model is not for everyone. We continue to lean into our niche of a place-based, ecologically focused, experiential, small institution and are vigilant not to succumb to the all-too-common trend of trying to be everything to everyone.

In 2000, alongside Middlebury, Colby, and Wellesley colleges, and Princeton University, COA became one of the original five members of the Davis United World College Scholarship program. That program has helped us diversify our student demographics and has raised all boats for the school and larger community. The 80 Davis-UWC scholars currently at COA help make us a truly global institution. When almost 25% of a 350-student population originates from 45-50 countries, the impact is extraordinary. At the same time, the scholarship supports those students bring have a very real impact on our institutional financial strength. Also of importance, we draw students from 42 of the 50 US states, giving us some buffer against the declining college-age population in the Northeast US. Our focus on mission makes sense both intellectually and financially.

Throughout much of our history, off-campus housing was so easy to find that students would generally only live on campus their first year and find off-season homes for their remaining three years. The Airbnb world and other recent changes to the real estate market have completely altered

that reality. In response, we have built or acquired an additional 141 beds of student housing on and off campus over the past four years, and can now guarantee housing for 85% of COA students, a figure that meets the current demand. That revolution in housing has contributed to the cultural and intellectual health of our students and to the financial health of COA as an institution.

Our most important proof of concept is our alumni. They are heads of state, members of congress, leaders of non-governmental organizations, entrepreneurs, writers, artists, lawyers, and educators all working for change in the thorniest areas of our planetary health. Aligned with our mission, more than 250 alumni have made their home here on MDI and through their life work have created families and a creative, inspired community on the island we all love. And we've become a magnet for excellent scholars, as faculty and as guest lecturers. Across the 40 years since our fire we have built the number one school dedicated to ecological thought and practice in the country. The Princeton Review has verified this claim for seven years running by naming COA the #1 Green College and, as dubious as some of those rankings can be, such consistency must mean something.

Even with this positive news, we know we can never afford to coast. We must always be experimental. It will always be hard to be a small institution because, with an incoming class of around 100, every admission cycle is somewhat anxiety provoking. We are focused on the approaching demographic cliff and our dedication to our mission is our most important tool for buffering the blows that that cliff will rain down on the world of higher education. Our systems—campus information technology, student information system, and account management—are inefficient and outdated, and continue to hinder our ability to use data to our advantage. Our recent capital campaign allowed us to meet our growing space needs in terms of academics and living, but we have very real challenges in terms of deferred maintenance, both on our main campus and with our two island research stations and farms. Maybe the greatest challenge we face concerns the number of senior staff and faculty retirements we will see in the coming five years. We expect to see a third of our permanent, full-time faculty retire over the coming five years, and that is both logistically challenging and can be something of an ideological shock to the system at such a small school.

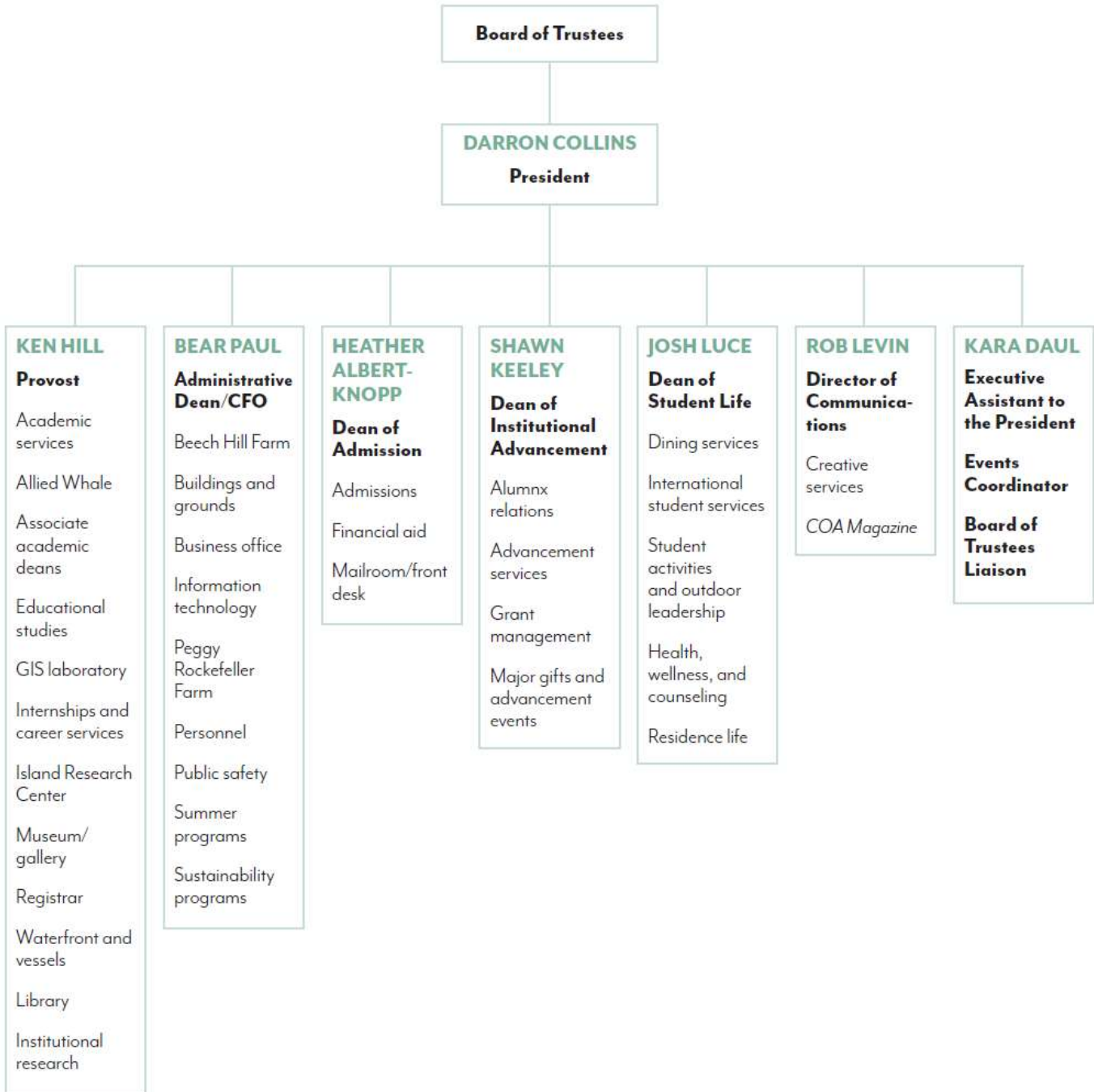
The six years that have passed since our ten-year review—we were granted a year-long extension to our five-year report as we wrestled with the pandemic—can provide us with quiet confidence that we will not only be able to meet those challenges, but will emerge from them stronger, more resilient, and more creative than ever. We appreciate the opportunity to outline some of the progress we've made during this time and look forward to your thoughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darron A. Collins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Darron" being the most prominent.

President Darron Collins '92

Organizational Chart



Response to Areas Identified for Special Emphasis

AREA OF SPECIAL EMPHASIS ONE: ACHIEVING GOALS FOR ENROLLMENT, NET TUITION REVENUE, AND FUNDRAISING

Enrollment

The college’s enrollment efforts of the past five years have focused largely on achieving the enrollment goal of 350 fiscal full-time equivalent (FFTE) undergraduate degree candidates. Our enrollment and admission teams have worked to refine our models, and more strategically target recruitment and yield activities, resulting in incoming classes (first-years and transfer students combined) at or above our incoming class target of 105-115 for three of the past five years. This success on the recruitment side, along with increased student persistence at the start of the pandemic, resulted in consistent growth in FFTE undergraduate enrollment. Fiscal years 2022 and 2023 are marked by the highest FFTE enrollment in the college’s history, and with this growth we have essentially, for two consecutive years, achieved the 350-student enrollment goal set in our most recent strategic plan and outlined in our 2017 reaccreditation self-study.

	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Fiscal full-time equivalent enrollment (FFTE)	309	330	342	348	349

Incoming class – Applications & Enrollments	Fall 2019 (FY20)	Fall 2020 (FY21)	Fall 2021 (FY22)	Fall 2022 (FY23)
Freshmen applicants	451	405	525	486
Number admitted	325	307	321	292
Acceptance rate	72%	76%	61%	60%
Number enrolled	105	83	93	96
Yield	32%	27%	29%	33%
Transfer applicants	50	38	39	40
Admitted	42	36	35	28
Acceptance rate	84%	95%	90%	70%
Number enrolled	22	19	24	17
Yield	52%	53%	69%	61%
Total applications	501	443	564	526
Yield overall (admits who enroll)	35%	30%	33%	35%
Incoming class size	127	102	117	113

For the first time in the college’s history, our aim now is not to increase enrollment, but to maintain present levels. Moving forward, our aim is to achieve consistent enrollment within a range of 10 FFTE above or below 350, with incoming classes ranging from 105-115 students. For the 2023-24 academic year we project enrollment slightly below 340, due to our largest-ever graduating class in spring ‘23. Like other colleges around the US, we also anticipate some significant headwinds and an increasingly competitive landscape with the coming “demographic cliff” and its accompanying changes in the racial/ethnic composition of the college-going population. We are working to proactively position ourselves to weather these challenges using new-to-us recruitment strategies, such as digital marketing campaigns, and expanded student support including more career

development programs. With new leadership in the student life office, our multi-departmental enrollment team is also looking to further assess, refine, and systematize our approaches to student retention and persistence. Please see additional detail in Standard Five, students.

Net tuition revenue

Our net tuition revenue has increased significantly since FY19, and our per-student net tuition revenue has also increased annually in FY21, 22, and 23. A summary of net tuition per student over the last five fiscal years is included in the table below. FY23, though not final as of the drafting of this report, shows continued growth.

	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23 projected 5/31
FFTE enrollment	309	330	342	348.34	349.63
Tuition	\$42,993	\$42,993	\$42,993	\$42,993	\$44,280
Discount rate	60.92%	62.5%	60.09%	56.54%	55.44%
Net tuition	\$5,191,248	\$5,312,706	\$5,876,000	\$6,507,229	\$6,899,073
Net tuition per student	\$16,800	\$16,099	\$17,161	\$18,681	\$19,732

As discussed in our 2020 two-year report, we have implemented several strategies designed to increase net tuition revenue and allow for better data tracking, analysis, and modeling, including: implementation of PowerFAIDS software; the addition of a summer earnings expectation for returning students; and categories for merit scholarships to emphasize the college’s values and student achievements.

The primary driver of increased net tuition revenue has been a substantial change in the Davis United World College (UWC) Scholars Program. Through this program, which COA has been part of since its founding, COA receives a grant to provide need-based scholarships to international students who attended one of the 18 UWC high schools across the globe. When the Davis UWC Scholars Program launched in 2000, it provided grants of up to \$40,000 per student annually, based on the student’s need. But just over ten years ago, the grant amount was reduced to a maximum of \$20,000 per student annually. As reported in our 2020 two-year interim report to NECHE, for 2020 the grant amount was increased to up to \$25,000 per scholar, for scholars matriculating in the fall 2020 incoming class. Then, beginning in fall 2021 the program was further changed, and the grant amount is now based on the overall number of Davis UWC Scholars in the college’s cohort: we now receive up to \$40,000 per scholar, per year (need-based) for the entering class when we have 80 or more Davis UWC Scholars enrolled, and up to \$30,000 per scholar, per year for the entering class when we have 60-79 Davis UWC Scholars enrolled. There are also lesser grant amounts for schools with smaller cohorts.

Though COA is by far the smallest college participating in the Davis UWC Scholars Program, we have one of the larger cohorts—in both 2021 and 2022, our cohort numbered 80 or more, so our incoming Davis UWC Scholars received \$40,000 grants, replacing graduating classes that had received \$20,000 per student. Each incoming class at COA typically includes around 15-25 Davis UWC Scholars. Our goal is to maintain a cohort of between 70-90 total Davis UWC Scholars moving forward, to continue drawing the larger \$30-\$40,000 grant per student. As described here, these larger scholarships over the past three years have been the primary source of our increase in net tuition revenue, even in spite of somewhat reduced international student enrollment during the pandemic. Our student recruitment strategies include a focus on recruiting larger numbers of UWC

graduates to attend COA, though we are joined by many other colleges also seeking to increase their enrollment of these students.

Fundraising

Since our last report in 2020, COA has achieved success in both annual and capital fundraising while undergoing a leadership transition in the Office of Institutional Advancement. Long-time dean of institutional advancement Lynn Boulger retired from COA in January 2021 and was succeeded by alumnus Shawn Keeley '00 in March 2021.

The *Broad Reach* capital campaign, completed in the fall of 2020, was the most significant fundraising initiative ever undertaken by the college and has provided a level of financial stability on which we are building our future. The campaign exceeded the \$50M goal, raising \$55M a full year ahead of schedule. At the end of FY21 campaign funds raised included:

Campaign Element	Goal	Total Pledges & Commitments	Total cash in by end of FY21
Endowed Faculty Chairs (goal was 6 new)			
<i>Joanne Woodward & Paul Newman Chair in the Performing Arts</i>	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$767,201
<i>Kim M. Wentworth Chair in Environmental Studies</i>	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$868,634
<i>Andrew S. Griffiths Chair for the Dean of Administration</i>	\$1,250,000	\$638,813	\$449,296
<i>T.A. Cox Chair in Studio Arts</i>	\$1,250,000	\$1,241,620	\$1,238,852
<i>Cody Van Heerden Chair in Economics & Quantitative Social Sciences</i>	\$1,250,000	\$906,504	\$764,109
<i>McNally Family Chair in Philosophy and Human Ecology</i>	\$1,250,000	\$1,000,000	\$879,463
<i>Mitchell and Emily Rales Chair in Ecology</i>		\$1,000,000	\$286,602
<i>Lalage and Steven Rales Chair in Chemistry</i>		\$1,000,000	\$297,607
New Building Projects	\$22,000,000	\$11,737,611	\$8,186,464
Fossil Fuel Free Campus	\$3,500,000	\$82,868	\$70,067
Student Scholarships	\$8,000,000	\$3,073,658	\$2,339,634
New Student Residences	\$5,000,000	\$8,000,500	\$3,794,332
Writing for the Future	\$1,000,000	\$787,500	\$756,810
Waterfront Director Fund	\$1,000,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000
Visiting Fellows Program	\$1,000,000	\$37,556	\$37,525
Cost of the campaign	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
UNRESTRICTED		\$20,915,162	\$11,246,975
TOTALS	\$50,000,000	\$55,171,792	\$34,233,572

The scholarship funds, faculty chairs, and other endowment elements of the campaign such as the Waterfront Director Fund and Writing for the Future Fund represent budget-relieving investments that are providing long-term support to the operations of the college.

In March 2021, the Davis Center for Human Ecology, the most visible element of the *Broad Reach* campaign, opened for classes and has since become a hub of academic and social activities. In September 2022, the Mount Desert Center opened in Northeast Harbor providing housing for 15 students, one faculty or staff apartment, and a retail space which is occupied by The Salt Market, a

small cafe owned and operated by COA alumna Maude Kusserow '15. Currently, a 46-bed student residence, funded through the campaign, is under construction and scheduled to open for the 2024 winter term. The new student residence and the Mount Desert Center are helping to address the housing challenges students are facing in the community. In addition to these important new infrastructure improvements, the campaign has been the primary driver in our increased endowment. As of June 30, 2023 (the end of FY23) the endowment totaled \$78.8M, or approximately \$225,000 per student.

The COA Annual Fund, which provides unrestricted funding, has steadily increased over the past several years, from \$1,378,259 in FY21 to \$1,525,446 in FY22 to \$1,603,978 in FY23, exceeding our goals each year. The Champlain Society, which includes annual donors who contribute \$1,500 or more each year, has also grown—from 168 in FY21 to 185 in FY23. Our 24-Hour Challenge day of giving, held in February, has likewise seen growth from \$163,080 raised in FY21 to \$232,681 in FY23.

In addition to the success of capital and annual fundraising, COA has received the following significant philanthropic investments over the past several years:

- \$2.1M from three bequests providing scholarships and unrestricted support
- \$1M endowment for the Kippy Stroud Artists-in-Residence program that will bring artists and public events to COA during the academic year, benefiting both COA students and the local community
- \$375,000 to purchase North Woods Ways from COA alumni Alexandra Conover Bennett '77 and Garret Conover '78. This property, located about two hours from COA in the North Maine Woods has been used by the college for decades. The acquisition will enable the college to further integrate this property into our academic program, expand co-curricular activities such as outdoor leadership training to more students, and provide a platform for engaging with communities in northern Maine.
- \$200,000 in new investments in our student life staff and capacity to improve student health and wellbeing. We expect this funding to leverage \$500,000 in new funds from the Endeavor Foundation in FY24. Together these investments will lead to significant opportunities for improvement in the lives of our students, which will lead to strengthened retention and persistence rates.
- \$450,000 to create and endow four named scholarships

Looking forward, the strategic planning process underway will provide direction to institutional advancement priorities and the next major fundraising initiative, which will likely be a capital campaign.

AREA OF SPECIAL EMPHASIS TWO: DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A MORE SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO THE COLLECTION AND USE OF DATA, INCLUDING EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS, AND USING THE RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

COA continues to use internal and external data to set financial goals, improve operations, track student enrollment, persistence, and success, make curricular changes, assess short- and long-term market trends, and improve educational effectiveness. There are many internal and external sources which we glean information from and use as benchmarks for institutional planning. Key benchmarks and processes are detailed in Standard Two, planning and evaluation. Additionally, key educational assessments are described more thoroughly in our Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness. For this special emphasis section, we focus on five important updates pertaining to: 1) Integration of data

into the work of the Academic Affairs Committee; 2) COA² as a case study for data-informed planning and improvement; 3) Progress and challenges associated with our efforts to upgrade to a new student information system (SIS); 4) Our institutional research position; 5) The college's strategic planning process.

Academic Affairs Committee

The Academic Affairs Committee has taken a number of steps over the past several years to integrate data collection and analysis into their planning and review processes. The committee has now collected three successive years of data from the new student enrollment process that includes student course preferences at the start of their time at COA as well as a number of other factors. We hope in the coming year to begin analyzing that data and matching it against student performance and retention to determine if there are predictive variables we could identify and use to strengthen our current advising and course planning efforts. We have also augmented our predictive need models to ensure that there are adequate numbers of seats in high-demand classes prior to registration periods. We have also begun systematically collecting data around certain graduation requirements such as senior projects and the Human Ecology Essay. That preliminary data is now being utilized by faculty working groups who hope to better align those requirements with the updated goals of a COA education.

Data-informed planning and improvement: COA² as a case study

Through the continued process of implementing the COA College Opportunity and Access program (COA²), the college uses primarily qualitative data, including but not limited to student self-reports on success, needs, and achievements, and primarily quantitative data on retention, persistence, and graduation rates. Focusing on this group of students—both those who opt into the program as well as those who are eligible but choose not to participate—is itself a response to disaggregated quantitative data that showed gaps in retention, persistence, and graduation rates that parallel national trends impacting, in particular, Pell-eligible students and those who identify as first-generation college and/or BIPOC students. Qualitative data collected from student feedback on orientation and workshops as well as informal feedback collected by participants and their peer connections (formerly “mentors”) have informed additional programming based on student interest and needs. For example, a facilitated dialogue on discussing controversial topics with family members took place in response to student-expressed need, as did greater accessibility to accommodations for learning differences.

We discuss our quantitative data for the COA Class of 2023—the first class to have benefited from the COA² program—in relation to persistence and retention rates in more detail in the Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness. Here, we point out that the program proved more successful for Pell-eligible students as compared to BIPOC students. While the difference in average annual GPA between Pell-eligible and Pell-ineligible students decreased from the first to third year of the program, the average annual GPA difference between BIPOC and white students increased from the first to the second year and only decreased slightly in the third year. This data point shows us that our approach to ensuring BIPOC students enjoy an equally high-quality education at COA needs to be revisited.

At the programmatic level, in response to qualitative and quantitative data, we have shifted our strategy in inviting students to opt into this program and to eliminating race and ethnicity as eligibility criteria, acknowledging the enormous diversity among our students in terms of family household income, parents' highest educational attainment, and secondary school experiences. Thus, students will now be eligible for COA² if they are Pell-eligible and/or identify as a first-generation

college student. The documented need to allocate greater attention and resources to these groups has resulted in a 50% increase in budget for the program, supplemented by a grant awarded from the MELMAC foundation and dedicated employee time.

Disaggregated annual GPA

Class entering fall 2019 (Class of 2023)

Group	Cohort N	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year
First-generation (domestic)	9	3.481	3.519	3.566	3.615
Non-first generation	73	3.380	3.450	3.563	3.546
BIPOC	3	2.863	2.940	2.981	2.964
Non-BIPOC	79	3.412	3.479	3.592	3.581
Pell eligible	16	3.372	3.518	3.638	3.665
Non Pell eligible	66	3.396	3.442	3.547	3.527
First-gen/BIPOC/Pell	19	3.299	3.384	3.480	3.501
Non-first gen/BIPOC/Pell	63	3.420	3.476	3.586	3.567

We also observe a slight narrowing of the difference between mean annual GPAs between FGEN and CGEN, BIPOC and white, Pell-eligible, and Pell-ineligible students in the class entering fall 2020:

Group	Number	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
First generation (domestic)	19	2.887	3.181	3.229
Non first generation	64	3.315	3.381	3.388
BIPOC	12	2.770	3.000	3.147
Non-BIPOC	71	3.293	3.398	3.391
Pell eligible	27	3.276	3.471	3.493
Non Pell eligible	56	3.187	3.287	3.308
First gen/BIPOC/Pell	39	3.060	3.256	3.310

Student information system

As mentioned in our last report, COA had intended to transition from our old student information system (SIS), CAMS, to a new SIS, Anthology. We needed to make this shift for several reasons. First, CAMS announced it was near its end of life as a program and would cease being supported within three years. Second, CAMS has its shortcomings. After a review of products, the college selected Anthology as a replacement because of the reputation of the product, the added data analytics this product could afford us, and the price point.

The college signed a contract with Anthology in December of 2020 and started the departmental analysis of needs, data migration, and high-end user training. We paused the process two years into the SIS transition for three important reasons. First, we had a major turnover in several key departments working on the transition process (for example, new leadership in the following roles: director of information technology, dean of student life, registrar, administrative dean/CFO, director of financial aid, director of internships and career development, and academic services administrator). These new area leaders would be essential for the successful transition of the SIS and they needed time to better understand their respective areas before making critical decisions. Second, CAMS was purchased by a hedge fund and brought back to the market with the promise of an updated product in development. As described, the new CAMS SIS product, Thesis, would be easier to migrate our existing data to have a much lower learning curve for campus users, and be more cost

effective. We wanted time to assess if Thesis was a viable SIS alternative for the college given these promising new developments. Third, and possibly most importantly, several key administrators began to lose faith in the ability of Anthology to meet the college's SIS needs. Specifically, we identified that much of our historical data could not be ported over to Anthology (or, ported over without excessive cost and time) making this system essentially unviable. In addition, issues pertaining to registration, billing, and the use of narratives in evaluations continued to be unanswered to satisfactory levels by the parent company.

Even though COA was several hundred thousand dollars into the Anthology transition—as well as hundreds of staff work hours—we thought it essential to pause and reassess before we progressed any further on a system that seemed unlikely to meet our needs. To that end, we have established a cabinet level SIS review team consisting of the dean of advancement, the associate academic dean, the dean of student life, the administrative dean, and the provost to assess next steps. At the time of this writing, this team has asked an independent marketing assessment group that specializes in higher education SIS selections to provide a price quote for their services on selecting the best system for the college. The team has also consulted with 3D Technologies (a CAMS/Thesis support and consultation service) to do an independent analysis of the porting costs and capabilities of this new system. We are also sending our director of information technology to the CAMS/Thesis conference to meet with representatives and assess the new product. We look forward to updating the Commission on our progress as this process unfolds.

Institutional research position

Since our last report, Judy Allen, our full-time registrar, has retired from the college. Judy also served as our part-time (20%) director of institutional research (IR) during her time here. Judy was able to do both jobs because she had extensive (35+ years) experience with our SIS systems, wide-ranging experience working with data, and a keen understanding of computer programming—she had previously served as our director of information technology. When the replacement registrar was hired, the IR aspects of the job were removed from the work expectations for the new person. As such, COA created a new 40% position in IR to not only meet, but expand upon, the number of hours available for data gathering, analysis, and reporting. Post-retirement, Judy agreed to stay on as an hourly IR director as we searched for this part-time IR position. After three months of searching, the college did successfully secure a highly qualified IR replacement with a great deal of collegiate research and data experience. Unfortunately, this replacement left the position after just three weeks to take on a new role elsewhere. We subsequently hired Kyle Shank '14, a data specialist for both Meta and The Hershey Company and a local COA alumnus, to fill the role starting summer 2023. With Kyle's onboarding and Judy's continued support and training, we have begun to build limited IR redundancy in several existing positions on campus to help with critical reporting and research needs (for example, IPEDS, Common Data Set, and other national/regional reporting needs).

Strategic planning

Perhaps most notable of our efforts to collect and use data for our future planning can be found in our current strategic planning process. The college engaged the services of Strategic Wisdom Partners—an organizational consulting practice founded to serve nonprofit, health care, public, and education agencies in the state of Maine—to lead us in this endeavor. Our consultant, Sarah Strickland, has over 30 years of experience in helping organizations create strategic plans with data-driven approaches that yield measurable results. With the help of the president, Sarah formed a strategic planning task force comprising students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees.

Sarah and the team examined an extensive set of external reports to identify trends that are likely impacting COA today and anticipate trends that could be troubling or encouraging to COA's future. Some of these external reviews include the examination of:

- Data on the impending “demographic cliff” in higher education (admission)
- Overviews on equity and accessibility in higher education for underrepresented groups (diversifying the campus)
- Reviews of the emotional and mental challenges for current middle and high school students (admission, student life)
- Data on the generational transfer of wealth (advancement)
- Data on increased attention to skills-based education in higher education (admission, curriculum)
- Information on the change in perceived value of a liberal arts degree in the US (admission, advancement, and curriculum)
- Political projections (finance, admission)
- Projections about climate change in the US and globally (curriculum, facilities, finance)
- Data on competitors’ recruitment and retention approaches and yields (admission)

In addition, Sarah and the planning team looked internally at:

- COA assets that can be used to advance the mission
- COA’s challenges and liabilities, and why they exist
- Key metrics to illuminate how COA has performed against earlier strategic goals and priorities
- An understanding and appreciation of COA’s legacy and academic distinctiveness, and how it could be built on over the next ten years
- Plans and proposals that have been completed over the past five years or are currently underway, including:
 - Trustee meeting dossiers: 2017-2023
 - COA MAP (previous strategic plan)
 - Academic Priorities Working Group reports:
 - Short list of academic priorities
 - 2019 Memo
 - 2017 Draft report
 - 2009 Academic priorities and directions
- Advancement Annual Report 2022
- Phase One DEI Strategic Plan, Spring 2021
- DEI recommendations, Spring 2022
- COA Audited Financials, FY21, 22

Various campus survey data was also solicited and reviewed including:

- Fall 2022
 - Alumni survey
 - Faculty/staff interviews
 - Focus forum reports
- Winter 2023
 - Community-wide online survey
 - Cabinet/department head interviews

- Trustee interviews

We believe the strategic planning process shows the college's commitment to inclusive, data-driven planning processes. We anticipate the final report to be presented to the All College Meeting in November of 2023 and, following campus approval, ratified by the Trustees in January 2024.

In addition to the current strategic planning process, we have become more deliberate about collecting information to document our progress on the COA MAP. We appreciate the Commission's past feedback on this topic, and we are pleased to share details of our MAP status in Standard Two, planning and evaluation.

AREA OF SPECIAL EMPHASIS THREE: ENHANCING FINANCIAL STABILITY

Here, we address financial information system improvements, efforts to increase net revenue, efforts to protect enrollment, fundraising success, timely borrowing, and institutional research. Please see Area of Special Emphasis One, enrollment, net tuition revenue, and fundraising, for a discussion of net tuition revenue, and Standard Seven, institutional resources, for a discussion of overall financial resources.

Financial information system improvements

COA has placed special emphasis on developing detailed, transparent, easy-to-understand budgeting and communications systems in order to promote greater comprehension of our financial situation and afford more accurate decision making. In 2022-23, the institution moved from a cash-accrual hybrid budgeting/statement of activities model to a full accrual-based budget. In this new format, we explain and clarify net ordinary income (NOI) from operations, cash flows generated (or used) by operations, cash flows after operations and financing (bond principal payments), and cash flows after operations, financing activities, and investing activities (capital projects). Having made this conversion, the college is drafting an out-year model examining projections for the next five fiscal years. These drafts of the annual budget(s) have sought greater input from departmental budget holders to assess the needs of the college more deeply. The end goal of this process has been to move to a more participative, zero-based budget. The FY24 full accrual-based budget was distributed to the COA Finance Committee and full Board of Trustees at the July 2023 meeting. With these documents, the Finance Committee of the Board and the entire body will have a framework through which they will be able to examine the impacts on the financial performance of the institution based on the manipulation of a number of important factors, namely enrollment, financial aid, employee compensation changes, and endowment returns.

Additionally, the college has developed a facilities condition analysis (FCA), which we are refining, that will provide a sense of coming facilities improvements. Through the development of this FCA, the college examined the state of the physical assets (buildings and equipment) and has developed a replacement schedule, complete with cost estimates of buildings and grounds. We now have a yearly assessment of the financial needs of the school for capital improvements and maintenance. We have also developed a periodic cash dashboard, which we continue to redraft, so that the Finance Committee and Board members have a fuller sense of the financial picture of the institution. Our next step, beyond refining all the financial documents listed above, is to develop a periodic cash flow statement so that we better understand the arrival and need for cash by the institution. This document may take some time due to the diversity of the inflows and outflows of finances at College of the Atlantic.

Increasing net revenue

COA's largest revenue stream is tuition and fees. In recent years, the college has edged closer to our self-imposed enrollment cap of 350, finishing the 2022-2023 (FY23) academic year with an enrollment of roughly 349.5. The Davis Scholars program's increased funding over the past three years has helped decrease the college's reliance on need-based financial aid. Since the college's last full accreditation process, the discount rate—percentage of tuition allowed for financial support—has progressively decreased. We will likely close the 2022-2023 (FY23) academic year with a discount rate of roughly 55.5%, after finishing the previous academic year (2021-2022) with a discount rate of approximately 56.4%. Each percentage point of discount rate represents roughly \$160,000 in revenue.

Protecting enrollment and increasing revenue

In order to protect enrollment from the year-round housing scarcity in the region, the college has moved to both build and acquire a significant amount of student housing. The success of the *Broad Reach* capital campaign allowed the college to purchase six connected townhouse units nearly adjacent to campus, build 15 units of student housing and one unit of faculty/staff housing in four apartment-style units in the nearby Town of Mount Desert, and begin construction of a 46-bed, on-campus residence hall. Within the last two years, the college purchased additional units of nearby, off-campus housing in the Town of Bar Harbor, as well as two units of faculty/staff housing. These additions to the COA housing stock have significantly reduced, if not eliminated, housing scarcity for our students during the academic year. Moving into 2023-2024, all returning students who requested housing from the college in spring have been offered housing for the fall (first-year students automatically live on campus).

These housing moves will have a positive effect on the college's bottom line, generating hundreds of thousands of dollars of additional annual net revenue. By using smart financing for some of our acquisitions (described below), we were able to free up available cash for other uses. To maximize financial resources available to the college, the 18 off-campus units in Bar Harbor are made available for summer vacation rentals for an 8–9-week period during the summer. This allows the college to keep academic year rent levels as low as possible while fully covering the debt services, operational expenses, and need for return on investment in these housing units.

Success of capital campaign feeds the COA endowment

The success of the *Broad Reach* capital campaign significantly impacted the COA endowment, increasing held financial assets by more than \$20M. These holdings will provide additional annual draw for operations of approximately \$1M each year moving forward. We are set to draw \$3,445,000 from the endowment for the FY24 budget. Of this, roughly 30% is attributable to the capital campaign.

Timely borrowing

To finance the purchase of the off-campus units, the College participated in a bond offering through the Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority. Realizing our opportunity to capitalize on historically low interest rates and our need for deferred maintenance work on campus, we took out bonds for significantly more than what the need would be for the purchases. We have been using the additional funds to undertake significant deferred maintenance work and energy efficiency improvements. Much of the deferred maintenance work has been to replace aging mechanical systems. We have been replacing oil-burning heating systems with efficient electric heat pump systems, driving down operating costs and moving the college toward meeting our Energy Policy and being fossil fuel-free by 2030. Our use of borrowed funds allows us to sink unrestricted monies into

the endowment, thereby increasing investment returns while driving down operating costs and refreshing the campus’s physical plant.

Institutional research

By investing in a new institutional research role, we expect that a deepening understanding and use of data will lead to the consistent implementation of changes geared toward student wellbeing and success. Focusing on the factors that lead to student perseverance, we expect to progressively improve student experience in ways that increase graduation rates and retention, and help protect enrollment in sustainable ways.

AREA OF SPECIAL EMPHASIS FOUR: ACHIEVING GOALS FOR PERSISTENCE AND GRADUATION RATES, INCLUDING THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COA² AND DAVIS GRANT INITIATIVES

It is hard to over-emphasize the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student wellbeing and persistence, both nationally and at COA. While our efforts to improve student persistence during this time period have had positive impacts, it is challenging to fully assess the influence of these programs in isolation from the larger impacts of the pandemic on academics, mental health, and other needs. From fall 2019 to fall 2020, we saw extremely high first- to second-year persistence, as COA returned to in-person learning while most other colleges were fully online and options outside of higher education were more limited. In subsequent years those rates have fallen to more normal (or slightly lower) levels.

Similarly, our graduation rates are just beginning to show the effects of the pandemic, with the fall 2016 cohort showing a four-year (2020) graduation rate on track with trends, but a six-year rate notably lower than recent years. The chart below shows the overall first- to second-year persistence rates for the most recent five years.

First- to second-year persistence	‘17-’18	‘18-’19	‘19-’20	‘20-’21	‘21-’22
	81%	79%	89%	81%	74%

Graduation rate data, below, shows that Pell grant recipients have typically graduated at lower rates than the full cohort. It should be noted that the majority of non-Pell/Stafford students are international students, and nearly all of those students receive strong full-need scholarships through the Davis UWC Scholars program. COA’s Davis Scholars have long had higher graduation rates than our domestic student cohort. Please also note that, as identified in our most recent NECHE interim report, COA’s fall 2013 cohort had anomalously low graduation rates, as admission standards were dramatically lower that year to yield a larger incoming class. Lowering admission standards is no longer considered to be a viable strategy for boosting enrollment.

Graduation rates (by cohort)	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Four-year graduation rate	53%	45%	53%	53%	52%
Six-year graduation rate	67%	52%	66%	67%	58%
Pell grant recipient, six-year graduation rate	71%	47%	61%	52%	52%
Stafford loan recipient, six-year graduation rate	61%	50%	67%	63%	47%
Non-Pell/Stafford six-year graduation rate	65%	65%	69%	79%	70%

The College of the Atlantic College Opportunity and Access (COA²) program was initially developed as a strengths-based program to better serve a more socioeconomically, educationally, and culturally diverse student body. The program has been particularly focused on students who self-identify with the experiences of minoritized, first-generation, and/or low-income college students, groups with historically lower persistence and graduation rates at COA. Now moving into its fifth year, COA² includes an early move-in and orientation program, as well as peer mentoring and year-round workshops on topics such as budgeting (for personal or grant objectives), procrastination and time management, tenant rights and responsibilities, study abroad opportunities, and more.

The college graduated its first cohort of COA² participants in June 2023. Retention rates for COA² participants are discussed in more detail in the Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness, Section C. Importantly, relative to their numbers in the student body, a disproportionate share of COA² program participants assume student leadership roles, including as resident advisors, Outdoor Orientation Program leaders, Peer Connections (mentors), chairs of student organizations, and as moderator of All College Meeting. Moving forward this program will be shifted to focus on first-generation and Pell-eligible students, with a different approach for students of color.

Support from the Davis Educational Foundation (DEF) has been used to augment COA² by offering professional learning opportunities for faculty. In fall 2021 we used DEF grant funds to offer two workshops by Dr. Rita Kumar on guiding principles and examples of ways to make syllabi and assignments more inclusive for low-income, first-generation, and culturally and linguistically diverse students. As a result of Dr. Kumar's workshop, faculty have begun to incorporate language that better supports student wellbeing and academic success, such as providing information regarding mental health support and help-seeking strategies. Dr. Margo Okazawa-Rey facilitated faculty sharing and discussion in winter 2022 to reach common ground on shared principles and effective practices for inclusive and equitable learning environments that welcome, support, and challenge students from all walks of life. Dr. Beth Leonard offered a presentation in spring 2022 on decolonizing curriculum to provide historical and cultural information on ways to critically assess curricular materials that represent social identities and cultures, specifically Indigenous experiences and representations, that are historically and culturally accurate and unbiased. Finally, Dr. V.A. Young offered an impactful workshop at the start of the 2022-2023 academic year on teaching writing skills while respecting and sustaining students' voices and languages, including both primary English and non-English speakers, while building their academic English proficiency. Through these workshops and other professional development efforts, we aim to build faculty capacity to support an increasingly diverse student body.

We continue to be challenged by the need to accommodate both increasing physical and mental health needs and the many ways student health and wellness impact learning in terms of attendance, time management, focus, and task completion. We have added contracted mental health providers as well as a term-long, weekly resilience-building group (see detail in Standard Five, students). Student housing availability and food insecurity have also been identified as factors that influence student persistence. With the purchase of several off-campus housing units and the construction of our new on-campus residence fall, we've made considerable progress on addressing student housing needs (See Standard Five, students, and Area of Special Emphasis Three, enhancing financial stability). With additional investments into the newly established community fridge, along with closer examination of our food service program, we see opportunities to make similar progress on food insecurity in the coming years. A reinvigorated task force on student persistence is revising the procedures for leave-taking and withdrawals, and has begun a deeper dive into student persistence data. We foresee student persistence and graduation rates as a continued vital area of focus moving forward.

AREA OF SPECIAL EMPHASIS FIVE: CONTINUING TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT THAT, IN LINE WITH THE MISSION, CONNECTS STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES WITH INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES

The College of the Atlantic faculty have been involved in a multi-year process that will result in more systematic, institution-wide, skills-based assessments of COA's stated educational effectiveness. A major element of that work was completed in May 2023 when faculty approved a revised version of COA's learning goals, known as "What You Should Learn at COA." These revised learning goals and the many ways they inform our assessments of student outcomes are highly relevant to Standard Eight, educational effectiveness; in order to avoid duplication, we refer the Commission to the Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness, Sections A and B in particular, for detailed discussion.

In brief, following the endorsement of the revised learning goals, faculty formed six working groups that have or will convene this summer to develop processes and criteria, including rubrics, through which degree requirements might assess or document growth of some if not all of the skills described in the learning goals. Here are some examples of the work currently underway:

- The working group focusing on the community service degree requirement has drafted a proposal for a process through which this degree requirement could assess community engagement through guided reflection and assessment between student and community partner or advisor. This draft proposal includes a recommendation to change the language of the degree requirement to better reflect the community engagement skills we expect students to gain and demonstrate.
- A group of four faculty and a library staff member who archives senior projects are reviewing the senior project evaluation process to see how it might more systematically assess student learning goals as evidenced in these culminating projects.
- A group of four faculty are exploring ways to develop an advising guide and the use of portfolios to assess growth in skills at key points in the student experience in an effort to improve the support advisors can offer to students as they devise their own areas of concentration within the single human ecology major.
- The chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, members of that committee, and an additional new faculty in human studies will review the internship experience and report requirements and ways that skills might be assessed, evaluated, and documented in this process.
- A pair of faculty will consider how the Human Ecology Essay approval process might assess some, if not all, of the skills described in the learning goals.
- Finally, a teaching staff member is convening a working group to review how these skills might be assessed by work-study supervisors.

Faculty have identified additional areas for continued discussion and have agreed to an iterative process in which these working groups will bring proposals for faculty meeting review and ultimate approval.

Standard One: Mission and Purpose

There have been no significant changes to the College of the Atlantic mission or purpose since our 2017 ten-year reaccreditation. In fact, as we mark the occasion of our 50th commencement ceremony in 2023, we are proud that COA has reaffirmed its focus on its mission “to enrich the liberal arts tradition through the study and practice of human ecology,” which “guides all aspects of education, research, activism, and interactions among the college’s students, faculty, staff, and trustees.”

Our 2015-2020 MAP of institutional priorities (the MAP) reaffirmed our commitment to teaching and practicing human ecology. Following the three-year pause on long-term planning brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have embarked on a new long-term strategic plan that will also reaffirm that same commitment. The formal mission has been periodically evaluated by the COA community and has been formally adopted by the COA Board of Trustees and appears in all relevant print and digital publications.

Our commitment to human ecology as our sole major is one of the three key elements that defines our institutional character, alongside the importance of our location on Mount Desert Island and the strategically small size of the campus community (350 full-time-equivalent students). As the world of higher education becomes increasingly competitive and the viability of smaller institutions becomes more tenuous with the impending demographic changes in the country, we feel strongly that we will survive and thrive through this commitment to human ecology. We cannot be everything to everyone, and our focus is what will stand out in an increasingly homogenized landscape.

With the massive impacts of climate change, global biodiversity loss, income inequality, and other complicated problems that plague our planet and humanity as a whole, there is no doubt that the brand of education we practice wholeheartedly addresses the needs of society and is, in the mind of younger people, increasingly relevant.

There is widespread agreement and understanding that human ecology is a place-based approach to teaching and learning: where we are as an institution shapes who we are. Part of the inspiration for our institutional foundation was to help revitalize Mount Desert Island (MDI)—economically, culturally, and otherwise—following a devastating fire that burned 40% of the island in 1947. In so doing, MDI was meant to be a key laboratory for the practice of human ecology. We have been tremendously successful in serving the MDI community and that service is also core to our philanthropic success: MDI residents and guests now consider COA a cornerstone institution of MDI and, even if they didn’t attend COA, they support us because of our commitment to place.

There is also widespread agreement that human ecology is an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the relationships between humans and their environment. As such, we do not have academic departments, and COA faculty work as a unified group, making connections between disciplines in their teaching and scholarship—the mission, therefore, helps define the structure of the institution. Our mission statement describes that “environment” as “...our social and natural communities.” There is some tension in that, given the relatively large sweep of those communities and our necessarily small number of faculty. Our curriculum will be defined by the interests of our faculty and, when we are limited financially to employing a relatively small number of people in that role, we have to be increasingly vigilant in answering the question, “how is the whole more than the sum of parts?” Looking ahead, our current strategic planning process will help provide more of a strategic curricular direction to our human-ecological degree and will help us communicate that mission and purpose with increased precision.

COA's mission is very clear in terms of outcomes: Our purpose is not just to understand the relationship between humans and their social and natural communities, but to improve upon them. There is a widely understood acceptance of the utilitarian nature of our work: COA students, faculty, staff, and alumni are seeded in the wider world with the passion and the ability to make measurable improvements in the communities they inhabit, from the most local (in families and towns, for instance) to the most global (in national and international fora). This commitment to service provides a scaffolding for the activities of the college and provides some direction for our curriculum.

Related to our commitment to service, our mission and purpose also calls for students, staff, faculty, and alumni to be problem solvers: "The College of the Atlantic community encourages, prepares, and expects students to gain expertise, breadth, values, and practical experience necessary to achieve individual fulfillment and to help solve problems that challenge communities everywhere." Where problem solving can be a useful framing, it can also be somewhat demoralizing to view the world as an endless problem set. Looking forward, we anticipate our next strategic plan will continue to highlight our commitments to experiential and field-based learning.

Finally, there is widespread understanding that a human-ecological education is self-directed. Students are at the reins of their education and work collaboratively with faculty, staff, and student peers to build a portfolio of work that sets them up for success during their years here and afterward. Given the pandemic and the mental health issues so pervasive among younger people, our current strategic planning process also underscores the need to outline a more precise scaffolding to guide students through that process. This scaffolding will find a hold in our recently revised "What you should learn at COA" document.

Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

As mentioned in the Area of Special Emphasis Two, systematic approach to the collection and use of data, COA is currently developing a new, comprehensive strategic plan that defines and outlines tactics for achieving institutional goals based on internal and external benchmarks, coordinates and links existing and future planning initiatives, and uses inclusive input from students, faculty, staff, trustees, and alumni. The college has also expanded our institutional research capacity by replacing a .20 institutional research position with a .40 institutional research position. Our new strategic plan will be the cornerstone for coordinating the college's other planning initiatives and be used as the primary tool to help prioritize needs, implement action plans, and monitor progress. The college looks forward to discussing the new strategic plan goals and objectives (and progress made towards them) in our next accreditation update to the Commission.

A second major planning effort began in fall 2019 when COA President Darron Collins convened the COA DEI Strategic Plan Task Force, bringing together 12 students, two staff, seven faculty, four alumni and two external consultants to build the college's plan to create an anti-racist human ecology. We recognized that such work is integral to our mission and began with the following definition: An anti-racist human ecology is one that considers a more complete diversity of human relationships, is one that includes the ideas and perspectives of those who have too often been excluded, and is one that works to bring more equitable access to the benefits of life on Earth while actively reducing the burdens of the most burdened. Following 25 sessions with focus groups, four alumni listening sessions, and a campus climate survey completed by 245 community members, we arrived at a vision: All College of the Atlantic students, staff, and faculty feel welcomed and valued, fully seen and respected, and have equal access to opportunities to grow and flourish, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, educational background, gender, ability, sexuality, national origin, citizenship, or religion.

In spring of 2021 we formally adopted the DEI Strategic Plan Phase One, which includes seven specific goals:

- Capacity building around DEI work for the COA community
- Improved community accountability
- Greater transparency in decision making
- Improved accessibility
- Widening the curriculum and expanding inclusive pedagogy
- Increasing the diversity of faculty, staff, students, and trustees
- Reckoning with our history and traditions.

In the 2022/23 academic year we realized several specific outcomes to help address those goals, including:

- Launching a full tuition, room, and board fee waiver for Wabanaki students
- Funding and fixing a set of high priority accessibility obstacles on campus
- Creating and staffing a bias-response program for incidents of bias and microaggression on campus
- Bringing two BIPOC to our full time faculty within our three most recent hires

Other work on the DEI Strategic Plan remains ongoing, and the strategic planning team is working to integrate the goals and objectives of the plan into the 2024-34 strategic plan.

The MAP (COA’s previous strategic plan)

The MAP was an ambitious, wide-ranging plan that mixed traditional strategic planning objectives with broader aspirational objectives. The MAP served as our strategic plan from 2015-2023 (the five-year plan was extended through the COVID-19 pandemic). Through the MAP, COA identified 29 areas for improvement. The college realizes that prioritizing so many goals made it difficult to make progress on them all. The strategic planning team has used this insight to make our upcoming strategic plan more focused, with fewer and more accessible deliverables. Even with the ambitious nature of the MAP, the college has some key successes to report:

MAP CARDINAL DIRECTION 1: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Review and revise curriculum/degree requirements (Goal 1)

The faculty reviewed and revised the curriculum’s core educational goals, “What you should learn at College of the Atlantic.” Faculty have identified the key learning goals of a COA education and are now working on a comprehensive plan to assess these goals throughout the curriculum. This process is discussed in more detail in the Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness.

Strengthen communication skills across disciplines (Goal 2)

While there are several key forms of communication that a student must master for collegiate success, writing was deemed the most important form to address first under the MAP plan. COA has focused our efforts on this area by developing “college seminars,” which are discipline-based writing classes that meet the COA first-year writing requirement. College seminars have been widely adopted—over one-half of our students now meet their writing requirement this way. The writing center director has also overhauled our writing tutor program and refocused English as a Second Language writing support to be more consistent with current research and applied findings for success; 17–22% of COA students speak a language other than English as their first language. More detail is provided in the Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness.

Maintain a 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio (Goal 3)

This goal has been maintained even in the face of multiple retirements. The Common Data Set for 2022 again shows this trend (367 students and 35 FTE faculty).

Develop faculty hiring and academic priorities through two planning major initiatives (Goal 4):

- ***The four pathways.*** This document outlined a new process to be used for faculty replacement hires (either through retirement or transition). The process ranges from rehiring using an identical job ad to rehiring in a completely different disciplinary focus. This process also allows for the faculty to decide to not rehire at all, and instead redistribute the resources for other academic needs. This document has been successfully implemented on three recent faculty hires and is being used to guide six upcoming replacement hires.
- ***The academic priorities.*** This document identifies new faculty line priorities (additive to the existing curriculum, not simply replacement hires) as well as a prioritized group of institutional resources needed to support existing curricular needs. The document identifies three additional desired faculty hires: Indigenous studies, public health, and interdisciplinary arts, in addition to support for various curricular needs including transportation, field support, theater facility, and increased course budgets.

Revise fall orientation (Goal 6)

Student Life and Academic Services have redesigned portions of the new student orientation to include increased coverage of Title IX and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues, and to

reduce redundancies within the academic program. The college has also created a team to coordinate the numerous emails new students receive prior to arrival. Previously each office would contact students individually; now emails originate from a single source. This practice reduces the volume of communication new students receive and helps to identify one source for critical information.

Build a new teaching facility (Goal 11)

The college successfully envisioned, designed, fully funded (through the *Broad Reach* capital campaign), and built the Davis Center for Human Ecology (CHE), a 29,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art structure overlooking Frenchman Bay and housing science laboratories, classrooms, flexible lecture halls, faculty offices, art and design studios, and a teaching greenhouse. The Passive House design and construction highlight the college's fossil fuel-free commitment and consistent use of sustainable and innovative building materials. The conception and design of the building involved a multi-term, community-wide process that engaged architects, sustainability specialists, students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

Continue progress on our comprehensive energy framework to eliminate fossil fuel use on campus and to enhance the energy future of the surrounding community (Goal 12)

COA was named #1 Green College in 2022 by The Princeton Review, and has held that title for seven straight years since 2016. The Princeton Review bases their ranking on items such as campus energy use reductions, commitments to renewable energy, sustainable building and operational practices, curricular commitments to sustainability, and community outreach. Concurrent with the passage of the COA Energy Policy at the All College Meeting in November 2022, which commits to eliminating fossil fuel use by 2030, COA completed a number of energy systems improvements on campus, replaced 25 dated heating systems with heat pumps, insulating 22 buildings both on and off campus, holding community window dresser (insulation) workshops with over 70 volunteers, and conducting blower door testing for campus and community projects. As a result of these efforts, the college realized a 9% reduction in heating oil consumption and a 20% decrease in propane use.

Offer language learning support for COA programs (Goal 13)

COA appointed a full-time faculty member to serve as director of the Yucatán Spanish immersion program (previously this was a contingent faculty position). We have also increased the financial support for the immersion program to better serve students. The changes allow for consistent Spanish language instruction in fall and winter terms, and greater access to the Yucatán field station, which has increased student access to Spanish language learning by 35%.

MAP CARDINAL DIRECTION 2: ENROLLMENT

Many of the enrollment planning and retention highlights can be seen in Standard Five, students, and in Area of Special Emphasis One, enrollment, net tuition revenue, and fundraising. Of note has been the college's commitment to increasing student housing, addressing a key student need and area of institutional vulnerability. Prior to 2020 we had 160 beds in campus housing for a student body of 350, which for many years was sufficient. However, as a result of changes to the real estate market, many students lost access to reliable and affordable accommodations. COA has responded by building two new housing facilities—the Mount Desert Center (15 beds, off campus), and a new residence hall (46 beds, on campus). In addition, the college purchased 18 housing units in Bar Harbor (75 beds, off campus). In sum, housing capacity has been increased to provide for 85% of the student body. Doing so was, and is, understood as essential for both student retention and revenue generation. COA now has zero students reporting that they are withdrawing for housing reasons, and sees a net revenue increase due to the new housing (see Standard Seven, institutional resources, and Area of Special Emphasis Three, enhancing financial stability).

MAP CARDINAL DIRECTION 4: ALUMNI

Strengthen opportunities for alumni engagement (Goal 23)

We made the strategic decision to move our alumni weekend to June, beginning in 2022, and invite all alumni to stay on campus without personal cost. The results were tremendously positive. In summer 2022 we celebrated the institutional 50-year anniversary along with the first summer alumni weekend, and with that change in time and venue we more than tripled alumni participation in that event. Although early figures for 2023 have decreased slightly from the 50th summer as one might expect, this year's figures are still double those of pre-pandemic. Importantly, we also focused less on alumni giving percentage and, instead, on meaningful alumni engagement. This tactic was implemented by our communications and advancement teams to the warm welcome of alumni.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Emphasize a campus culture based on respect for each other and address violence in all its forms (Goal 28). As mentioned earlier in this section, COA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan was approved by the All College Meeting in May 2021 after a lengthy and involved community engagement process, and was endorsed unanimously by the college's Board of Trustees at their annual meeting in July 2021. This plan comprised processes to build capacity for DEI work and ways to improve climate and accountability. Some action steps that have been taken include:

- The ongoing allocation of financial resources for addressing DEI issues at the college
- Standardizing DEI as a significant part of new student orientation
- Developing and articulating procedures, formal and informal, for reporting and responding to incidents of discrimination and identity-based bias involving students, faculty, and staff including but not limited to microaggressions
- Continuing to support and strengthen the COA College Opportunity and Access (COA²) program, a strengths-based program designed for students who self-identify with the experiences of minoritized, first-generation, and/or low-income college students
- Providing training in mediation, conflict resolution, and means for addressing bias to all staff supervisors and work-study supervisors

Develop a 50th anniversary fundraising campaign (Goal 29)

The *Broad Reach* capital campaign began in October 2017 with the ambitious fundraising goal of \$50 million for scholarships, fossil fuel-free upgrades, student housing, endowed faculty chairs, and improvements to both the waterfront and writing programs. This campaign was built upon identified institutional needs, had a focused development plan to achieve the goals, and used both internal and external benchmarks for donor prospects, timeline, and giving expectations. COA is delighted to report that we not only met our goal but exceeded it, raising a total of \$55,151,205 to date.

General planning note

The COVID-19 pandemic caused the COA administration to refocus many of our planning and assessment efforts to respond to the three-year crisis. The college led several planning and implementation efforts associated with the pandemic, including preparation and training to shift to online classes, a structure and format to provide virtual student support (prior to the pandemic, COA did not offer distance learning and had few online academic services) and numerous details associated with disruptions to meal service and living arrangements, management of pandemic quarantine spaces, creation, dissemination, updating, and management of scientifically based protocols around

COVID-19, extensive communications, implementation of special cleaning and behavioral protocols, and the like. The COA COVID-19 Response Team met daily for the first few months of the pandemic and then weekly thereafter until spring 2023, when the federal and regional states of emergency were lifted.

Standard Three: Organization and Governance

The College of the Atlantic operating model is based on participatory governance and collective decision making, and this model is, in part, what helps differentiate COA from the thousands of other small liberal arts institutions in the constellation of colleges and universities. Students, staff, and faculty play a role in shaping new policy and, rather than maintaining a separate student governing body, students participate and vote in policy decisions alongside faculty and staff, and in doing so develop strengths in institutional management across their years at the college. The campus governance works in parallel with a dedicated volunteer Board of Trustees. Administrative units of the college (finance, advancement, enrollment, for example) implement policies and are free to develop unit-specific tactics for realizing their goals. This collective decision making was markedly easier when the entire campus community numbered 150. At 500, there are times when the college's decision making can seem slow and inefficient; nevertheless, the learning outcomes of our governance model have so far outweighed the difficulties of working within a larger community.

COA has made significant changes to regularize and professionalize the onboarding, orientation, and committee structures of the Board of Trustees. Looking ahead, we need to communicate often and more clearly to the larger community about the division of roles and responsibilities of the board, administrative units, and campus governance. The data-gathering phases of our current strategic planning process has shown that too many students have a lack of clarity regarding their role in governance, which can lead to frustration and low morale on campus.

The governing board

The governing Board of Trustees was constituted as a single campus system in 1969. There are 24 voting members of the board, including five officers. None of the 24 have any personal or immediate familial or financial interest in the college. There are 13 non-voting emeriti and three non-voting life trustees; members of each of those categories can, however, vote in committee. The president serves on the board in an ex officio capacity. Since our 2017 reaccreditation, we have eliminated any new memberships to the life trustee category and are phasing that category out entirely. We have also moved to a term limit system of four 3-year terms, where we once used a system of three 3-year terms, followed by a year away, followed by the possibility of a fourth 3-year term. That system was extremely cumbersome. The executive assistant to the president serves as the chief board liaison and manages the logistical work associated with terms, offices, and committee responsibilities.

The number of board members has been relatively consistent since 2017 and can never be more than 27 voting members. The college has made small but important steps to diversify the board by increasing the representation of individuals from historically minoritized backgrounds and identities. Fifteen of the 24 voting members are women, but only three are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). The average age of board members has dropped by approximately 10 years over the past 15 years, and we continue to cultivate an appropriate level of diversity that reflects the mission of the college and our need to manage unforeseen challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic placed severe challenges on COA from 2020-2023, but thanks in part to the strength of our board, COA not only survived through those difficult years, but thrived.

Beyond the pandemic, the board played a significant role in helping the administration finance the acquisition and construction of student housing. Since the 2017 NECHE self-study, the college has moved from housing 45% of students to 85% of students. Through fundraising and the acquisition of

very low-interest debt through the Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority, COA's student housing stock now meets or exceeds the demand of students.

Internal governance

The president is the primary liaison between the volunteer board and the campus community and is supported by a cabinet that consists of the provost, two associate academic deans, administrative dean, dean of institutional advancement, dean of student life, dean of admission, director of communications, and executive assistant. Four members of that cabinet have onboarded since the 2017 self-study, and they have brought new ideas, creativity, and efficacy to not only their own administrative unit but to the cabinet and campus as a whole.

While the bylaws of the Board of Trustees clearly designate the final authority to the board and president for the college's overall governance and management, administrative units implement policies and design tactics to realize their work. The decisions that broadly affect the daily operation of the college are made collaboratively via the All College Meeting (ACM) and its committee structure. Students, staff, and faculty serve on committees with the same voting authority, and these committees report back to the ACM weekly on Wednesdays during the term. In general, Wednesdays are dedicated to campus governance, although our growing student body has required that some classes meet then.

With no academic departments, the faculty meet as a whole on Wednesdays as well, and are charged with defining educational programs, faculty personnel, and other aspects of institutional policy. The college curriculum is subdivided into three academic resource areas that, broadly speaking, represent three distinct ways of practicing human ecology: arts and design, human studies, and environmental science. These resource areas help organize institutional resources and provide the necessary short- and mid-term planning for courses.

The age demographic of our core faculty has brought about a significant number of retirements over the past four years and indicates that we will continue to see more retirements in the near future. As governance structures manage faculty hiring—and hiring practices in general—through the creation of hiring committees comprising faculty, staff, and students, recent shifts in the demographic makeup of the COA faculty have placed a burden on the community in terms of advising and participation in campus governance.

In the current strategic planning process, COA is reviewing some of our organizational structures and information management systems with an eye toward creating efficiencies in hiring policies without undercutting the college's commitment to thoughtful, collaborative decision making.

Standard 1: Mission and Purposes

Attach a copy of the current mission statement.

Document	Website Location	Date Approved by the Governing Board
www.coa.edu/about/mission-history	www.coa.edu	1969

Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation

PLANNING

Strategic Plans

- Immediately prior Strategic Plan
- Current Strategic Plan
- Next Strategic Plan

Year approved by governing board	Effective Dates	Website location
?	?	?
2011	2011-2015	
2015	2015-2023	
2024	2024-2030	

Other institution-wide plans*

- Master plan
- Academic plan
- Financial plan
- Technology plan
- Enrollment plan
- Development plan

Year completed	Effective Dates	Website location
	2006-2022	

Plans for major units (e.g., departments, library)*

?	DEI strategic plan

2021	2021-2025	https://www.coa.edu/about/dei/dei-plan/

EVALUATION

Academic program review

- Program review system (colleges and departments). System last updated:
- Program review schedule (e.g., every 5 years)

Website location
?

*Insert additional rows, as appropriate.

Standard 3: Organization and Governance (Board and Internal Governance)

Please attach to this form:

- 1) A copy of the institution's organization chart(s).

If there is a "sponsoring entity," such as a church or religious congregation, a state system, or a corporation, describe and document the relationship with the accredited institution.

- Name of the sponsoring entity
- Website location of documentation of relationship

Governing Board

- By-laws
- Board members' names and affiliations

Website location
https://www.coa.edu/policies
https://www.coa.edu/about/administration/board-of-trustees

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard 3: Organization and Governance (Locations and Modalities)

Campuses, Branches and Locations Currently in Operation (See definitions in comment boxes)

(Insert additional rows as appropriate.)

	Location (City, State/Country)	Date Initiated	Enrollment*		
			2 years prior	1 year prior	Current year
			(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main campus	Bar Harbor, Maine, USA	9/1/1972	418	419	411
<input type="checkbox"/> Other principal campuses					
<input type="checkbox"/> Branch campuses (US)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Other instructional locations (US)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Branch campuses (overseas)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Other instructional locations (overseas)					

Educational modalities

	Number of programs	Date First Initiated	Enrollment*		
			2 years prior	1 year prior	Current year
			(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)
Distance Learning Programs					
Programs 50-99% on-line	0				
Programs 100% on-line	0				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence Education	0				
Low-Residency Programs	0				
Competency-based Programs	0				
Dual Enrollment Programs	0				
the award of credit	NOLS, SeaMester, CELL	2005, 2011, 2012	0	1	2

*Enter the annual unduplicated headcount for each of the years specified below.

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard Four: The Academic Program

Academic quality and major

The college continues to offer a single, self-directed major in human ecology. We gauge our degree requirements against more than 250 programs worldwide specifically offering programs/degrees in human ecology. COA is seen as an educational leader in the field of human ecology by many of these organizations, and we are often asked to provide program reviews for existing and emergent programs. This year, because of our reputation in the field, we were asked to join memorandums of understanding with The University of the Philippines Los Baños College of Human Ecology, The Setouchi Global Academy of Human Ecology in Japan, and the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. In addition, COA hosts the International Society for Human Ecology on campus; through this affiliation we plan and participate in conferences (dealing with both teaching and research associated with human ecology) and help publish a professional journal, *The Human Ecology Review*. Faculty of the college also publish regularly in their respective fields, continue to do active research, and present/exhibit at regional, national, and international conferences and galleries. As such, we are confident in the academic quality of our program.

The college publishes learning goals in our course catalog under the heading “What you should learn at COA.” These learning goals have been reassessed, revised, and updated over numerous faculty meetings, a faculty survey, and two All College Meetings, with the ultimate goal to align our degree requirements with clearer and more consistent methods for assessing these goals. For details, please see the Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness (Sections A and B in particular).

Graduate degree programs

The college’s Master of Philosophy program remains small, admitting only 2–5 students per year. This degree is also self-directed and in human ecology. Because of the small size and intensive one-on-one oversight from the advising team, master’s students often get directly involved with faculty research and publications. Master’s students complete two years of academic work—the second year largely focusing on their thesis. The college does not have the disposition or capacity to increase the program at the present time.

Transfer credits

Most aspects of this category remain the same as described in the 2017 self-study. COA still accepts up to one half of degree credits from outside institutions toward the degree. COA recently changed our internal credit/no credit policy; previously our policy was to award credit for the grade equivalent of a C- or higher. To be consistent with what we accept externally for credit (grade equivalent of C or higher), we have changed our internal policy to mirror this threshold as well. COA continues to accept academic credit from fully accredited institutions, IB HL scores of 5 or higher, and AP scores of 4 or higher. We no longer accept CLEP scores.

Integrity of the award of credit

All aspects pertaining to the integrity of the award of credit have largely remained consistent since our last report to the Commission. Students continue to need 36 credits to earn a bachelor’s degree. One COA credit equates to 3.3 semester-based credits (requiring a demonstrated 150 hours of academically engaged work). Students take three credits per trimester and have a structured set of graduation requirements—core course in human ecology, writing, history, quantitative reasoning, two art/design, two environmental sciences, two humanities, qualifying internship, Human Ecology Essay, writing portfolio, community service, and senior project. Faculty ensure the integrity of the

award of credit through grading based clearly on defined learning objectives through exams, papers, presentations, and projects. Learning objectives are consistently and effectively applied.

COA had to adapt many of our academic support services for online access during the pandemic. A number of these services that have shown themselves to be more accessible in this format (for example, study skills assistance, tutoring, some TA support, and academic advising), will continue to be made available online. Students and faculty have found the ability to connect remotely can boost both convenience and connectivity.

Students feeling improperly assessed may submit a formal appeal to the Review and Appeals Committee with supporting documentation. Review and Appeals consists of faculty, staff, and student members. In an effort to ensure that identity-based bias was not affecting the equity of the educational experience at the college, COA has instituted a new bias response policy and will soon be appointing a confidential resource advisor, bias response team, and team coordinator.

**Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Headcount by UNDERGRADUATE Program Type)**

	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	(Fall 2020)	(Fall 2021)	(Fall 2022)	(Fall 2023)	(Fall 2024)
For Fall Term, as of Census Date					
Certificate					
Associate					
Baccalaureate	343	364	369	372	
Total Undergraduate	343	364	369	372	0

**Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Headcount by GRADUATE Program Type)**

	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	(Fall 2020)	(Fall 2021)	(Fall 2022)	(Fall 2023)	(Fall 2024)
For Fall Term, as of Census Date					
Master's	4	4	2	3	
Doctorate					
First Professional					
Other					
Total Graduate	4	4	2	3	0

**Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Credit Hours Generated at the Undergraduate and Graduate Levels)**

	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	(Fall 2020)	(Fall 2021)	(Fall 2022)	(Fall 2023)	(Fall 2024)
Undergraduate	3470	3583	3640	3666	
Graduate	43	33	13	30	
Total	3,513	3,616	3,653	3,696	0

**Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Information Literacy sessions)**

Main campus	8	6	7	7	
Sessions embedded in a class					
Free-standing sessions					
Branch/other locations					
Sessions embedded in a class					
Free-standing sessions					
Online sessions					
URL of Information Literacy Reports					

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

**Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Summary - Degree-Seeking Enrollment and Degrees)**

Fall Enrollment* by location and modality, as of Census Date

Degree Level/ Location & Modality	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	Clinical doctorates (e.g., Pharm.D., DPT, DNP)	Professional doctorates (e.g., Ed.D., Psy.D., D.B.A.)	M.D., J.D., DDS	Ph.D.	Total Degree-Seeking
Main Campus FT		358	3					361
Main Campus PT		14	0					14
Other Principal Campus FT								0
Other Principal Campus PT								0
Branch campuses FT								0
Branch campuses PT								0
Other Locations FT								0
Other Locations PT								0
Overseas Locations FT								0
Overseas Locations PT								0
Distance education FT								0
Distance education PT								0
Correspondence FT								0
Correspondence PT								0
Low-Residency FT								0
Low-Residency PT								0
Unduplicated Headcount Total	0	372	3	0	0	0	0	375
Total FTE		367.04	3.00					370.04
Enter FTE definition:	3 or more credits = 1.00	2 credits = 0.67, 1 credit = 0.33						
Degrees Awarded, Most Recent Year								0

Notes:

- 1) Enrollment numbers should include all students in the named categories, including students in continuing education and students enrolled through
- 2) Each student should be recorded in only one category, e.g., students enrolled in low-residency programs housed on the main campus should be
- 3) Please refer to form 3.2, "Locations and Modalities," for definitions of locations and instructional modalities.

* For programs not taught in the fall, report an analogous term's enrollment as of its Census Date.

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

**Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Summary - Non-degree seeking Enrollment and Awards)**

Fall Enrollment* by location and modality, as of Census Date

Degree Level/ Location & Modality	Title IV-Eligible Certificates: Students Seeking Certificates	Non-Matriculated Students	Visiting Students	Total Non-degree-Seeking	Total degree-seeking (from previous page)	Grand total
Main Campus FT		2	2	4		4
Main Campus PT		1		1		1
Other Principal Campus FT				0		0
Other Principal Campus PT				0		0
Branch campuses FT				0		0
Branch campuses PT				0		0
Other Locations FT				0		0
Other Locations PT				0		0
Overseas Locations FT				0		0
Overseas Locations PT				0		0
Distance education FT				0		0
Distance education PT				0		0
Correspondence FT				0		0
Correspondence PT				0		0
Low-Residency FT				0		0
Low-Residency PT				0		0
Unduplicated Headcount Total	0	3	2	5		5
Total FTE		2.33	2.00	4		4.33
Enter FTE definition: Recent Year						

Notes:

- 1) Enrollment numbers should include all students in the named categories, including students in continuing education and students enrolled through any contractual relationship.
- 2) Each student should be recorded in only one category, e.g., students enrolled in low-residency programs housed on the main campus should be recorded only in the category "low-residency programs."
- 3) Please refer to form 3.2, "Locations and Modalities," for definitions of locations and instructional modalities.

* For programs not taught in the fall, report an analogous term's enrollment as of its Census Date.

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard Five: Students

Admission & financial aid

As discussed in more detail in Area of Special Emphasis One, enrollment, net tuition revenue, and fundraising, the college's admission efforts of the past five years have largely focused on bringing in strong, right-sized incoming classes to achieve the enrollment goal of 350 fiscal full-time equivalent (FFTE) undergraduate degree candidates. Our efforts have yielded consistent growth in FFTE undergraduate enrollment:

- 309 (2018-19)
- 330.31 (2019-20)
- 342.49 (2020-21)
- 348.34 (2021-22)
- 349.29 for 2022-23 (estimated, as of June 28, 2023).

We have now achieved the enrollment goal from our last strategic plan and our 2017 NECHE self-study, and our aim for the next five years is to maintain overall enrollment within a range of 10 FFTE above or below 350, with incoming classes ranging from 105 to 115 students.

In addition to the progress on our overall enrollment goals, we have taken significant steps on the strategies identified in our 2017 NECHE self-study. We successfully implemented new software in both the Admission and Financial Aid offices: Slate for admissions (in place of our student information system, CAMS, as our default database and makeshift customer relationship manager), and PowerFAIDS for financial aid (in place of no online financial aid packaging system). This has significantly increased efficiencies across our operations including communications, events, and application processing/review, as well as our capacity for making data-informed decisions on recruitment strategy and activities, yield, enrollment goal setting, and financial aid packaging. In the next five years we will continue to build and refine our models to better predict and leverage yield, net tuition, and enrollment changes over time.

In order to achieve our enrollment goals, we added a temporary (two-year) admission counselor position in 2018, growing our recruitment staff from two (plus the dean) to three, a significant increase in capacity. This allowed us to test an expanded pre-pandemic recruitment travel program and implement higher-touch communications strategies. When the pandemic hit, we quickly transitioned from all in-person recruitment and yield events to all online, including a particularly successful online Fall Fly-In. Post-pandemic, we have returned to in-person events but continue to offer online interviews and multiple online events each year to better reach students from a diverse range of backgrounds and geographies.

As part of the Endeavor Group, a collaboration with other very small colleges, we worked with Human Capital Research Corporation on two projects: a more robust admitted student survey and a feeder school analysis. Both projects provided us with new insights and opportunities to tailor our recruitment strategies. Beginning in 2024 we will add an Early Action application round to better align ourselves with what has become standard practice at most other peer institutions. We continue to offer two rounds of Early Decision (binding) and one round of Regular Decision for fall enrollments.

Diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging are areas of ongoing focus for the college as a whole. Beginning in 2019, the dean of admission and a faculty member co-lead an institution-wide task force to develop a DEI Strategic Plan for the college, which was ultimately approved by All College Meeting in May 2021. As tasked in the plan, in 2022 the admission staff developed a diversity recruitment plan and goals which were designed to focus efforts on building the racial and ethnic diversity of the college's domestic student population so that it is increasingly aligned with the racial and ethnic diversity of the US high school student population. Our goal for strengthening the diversity of our student body remains unchanged in light of the recent US Supreme Court decision on affirmative action, but we will revisit our strategies to ensure adherence to the law. Related to our DEI priorities, in 2018 we established and signed a memorandum of understanding with the US Department of Defense and joined the Yellow Ribbon program to allow servicemembers and their designees to use tuition assistance benefits toward their studies at the college. In 2023, after conversations with several stakeholders and the chiefs of two of Maine's Wabanaki tribes, we are launching a tuition waiver program for Wabanaki students to attend the college without tuition fees.

We continue to maintain strong standards for admitting students who will thrive at COA; the average high school GPA of our entering class ranges from 3.6-3.8, and most entering students have participated in a rigorous high school course load that includes multiple honors, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate courses. Our holistic application review process also maintains flexibility for students who may have struggled during the pandemic, who are stronger in some areas than others, or who seem exceptionally well suited to our unique academic environment. COA continues to look for creative, curious, compassionate students who are self-directed, have multiple interests, want to make a difference in the world, and who are drawn to our small size, remote coastal location, and interdisciplinary program.

Student life

Since the submission of the 2017 NECHE self-report, the college has worked to address several ongoing challenges. In late 2022, the college secured donor funding to kickstart the enhancement of mental health support services provided to students during the academic year. With these new resources, we increased the maximum number of weekly counseling sessions available from 20 to 40 in fall 2023. As we bring on new counselors to add capacity, we are focusing on counselors who specialize in working with BIPOC and transgender students, as well as counselors who are trained in EMDR therapy. In addition to individual counseling, we have added a weekly anxiety support group, serving 15 students in the spring 2023 term. With the success of this group offering, we intend to explore other group counseling opportunities in the future.

The college has been able to dedicate more funding toward proactive wellness programming, including guest speakers and facilitators, online resources, and a weekly wellness newsletter. These programming efforts are driven by a student group called the Student Wellness Advisory Team (SWAT). SWAT was created in 2020 to bring more student voices and ownership into wellness initiatives. The group has been a success and serves as a model for future student-driven programs.

Housing continues to be one of the key concerns for the COA student body, as well as a major challenge for the college's surrounding community. The college has reached our goal of providing housing for approximately 85% of our student body, with the understanding that a subset of our population will want to continue to live in off-campus, non-COA housing. To meet this goal, the college's recently completed *Broad Reach* capital campaign included the funding of a new student residence hall, which is currently under construction. Anticipated to open in winter 2024, the new

building will house 46 students, bringing our on-campus housing capacity to 204 beds. Those students are being supported in temporary housing in fall 2023.

In addition to on-campus housing, the college has also purchased 18 off-campus units, housing approximately 75 students. These residents experience a more traditional tenant-landlord relationship with the college, while also providing the stability of these units being consistently available to our students. The college additionally opened a new off-campus facility called the Mount Desert Center, which provides 15 student beds. In total, these new facilities bring COA student housing up to 299 beds, covering approximately 85% of our student body. In 2023-2024 we anticipate being able to house all students who would like to live in COA housing.

To support the new housing, the college has created the full-time position of director of residence life and student experience. This new student life team member will support the residential program, mental health and crisis response, and student conduct issues.

In an effort to separate the support systems for those involved in Title IX cases from the team responsible for adjudication, the Title IX coordinator position has been moved from the student life department and now reports to the administrative dean. An additional staff member has been hired in this role, providing new capacity for the management of cases and proactive educational programming for the community. A deputy coordinator has been appointed to work with the coordinator, allowing for cross-training and improved workflow.

Standard 5: Students
(Admissions, Fall Term)

Complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (see Standard 5.1)

?

Credit Seeking Students Only - Including Continuing Education

	3 Years Prior (FY 2020)	2 Years Prior (FY 2021)	1 Year Prior (FY 2022)	Current Year (FY 2023)	Goal (specify year) (FY 2027)
Freshmen - Undergraduate					
Completed Applications	451	405	525	486	550
Applications Accepted	325	307	321	292	320
Applicants Enrolled	105	83	93	96	95
% Accepted of Applied	72.1%	75.8%	61.1%	60.1%	58.2%
% Enrolled of Accepted	32.3%	27.0%	29.0%	32.9%	29.7%
Percent Change Year over Year					
Completed Applications	na	-10.2%	29.6%	-7.4%	13.2%
Applications Accepted	na	-5.5%	4.6%	-9.0%	9.6%
Applicants Enrolled	na	-21.0%	12.0%	3.2%	-1.0%
Average of statistical indicator of aptitude of enrollees: (define below)					
Average high school GPA	3.58	3.65	3.69	3.8	3.7
Transfers - Undergraduate					
Completed Applications	50	38	39	40	45
Applications Accepted	42	36	35	28	35
Applications Enrolled	22	19	24	17	20
% Accepted of Applied	84.0%	94.7%	89.7%	70.0%	77.8%
% Enrolled of Accepted	52.4%	52.8%	68.6%	60.7%	57.1%
Master's Degree					
Completed Applications	4	2	1	2	4
Applications Accepted	3	1	1	2	3
Applications Enrolled	2	1	0	2	2
% Accepted of Applied	75.0%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	75.0%
% Enrolled of Accepted	66.7%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	66.7%
First Professional Degree					
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	-	-	-	-	-

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard 5: Students (Enrollment, Fall Term)

Complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (see Standard 5.1)

?

Credit-Seeking Students Only - Including Continuing Education

		3 Years Prior (Fall 2020)	2 Years Prior (Fall 2021)	1 Year Prior (Fall 2022)	Current Year (Fall 2023)	Goal (specify year) (Fall 2024)
UNDERGRADUATE	?					
First Year Full-Time Headcount	?	114	115	113	104	
Part-Time Headcount	?	2	3	2	1	
Total Headcount		116	118	115	105	0
Total FTE	?	115	117	114	105	
Second Year Full-Time Headcount		91	95	103	89	
Part-Time Headcount		1	3	5	5	
Total Headcount		92	98	108	94	0
Total FTE		92	97	106	92	
Third Year Full-Time Headcount		88	86	95	97	
Part-Time Headcount		3	3	2	1	
Total Headcount		91	89	97	98	0
Total FTE		90	88	96	98	
Fourth Year Full-Time Headcount		50	53	46	68	
Part-Time Headcount		1	6	3	7	
Total Headcount		51	59	49	75	0
Total FTE		50	57	47	72	
Unclassified Full-Time Headcount	?	1	1	3	4	
Part-Time Headcount		2	1	2	1	
Total Headcount		3	2	5	5	0
Total FTE		2	1	4	4	
Total Undergraduate Students						
Full-Time Headcount		344	350	360	362	0
Part-Time Headcount		9	16	14	15	0
Total Headcount		353	366	374	377	0
Total FTE		349	360	368	371	0
% Change FTE Undergraduate		na	3.2%	2.1%	0.9%	-100.0%
GRADUATE	?					
Full-Time Headcount	?	4		1	3	
Part-Time Headcount	?	1	3	1	0	
Total Headcount		5	3	2	3	0
Total FTE	?	4	3	1	3	
% Change FTE Graduate		na	-23.1%	-60.1%	125.6%	-100.0%
GRAND TOTAL						
Grand Total Headcount		358	369	376	380	0
Grand Total FTE		353	363	369	374	0
% Change Grand Total FTE		na	2.8%	1.6%	1.4%	-100.0%

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard 5: Students (Financial Aid, Debt, Developmental Courses)

Complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (see Standard 5.1)

? Where does the institution describe the students it seeks to serve?

	(FY 2017)	(FY 2018)	(FY 2019)
? Three-year Cohort Default Rate	1.80%	3.20%	0%
? Three-year Loan repayment rate (from College Scorecard)	98.2% (108)	96.8% (92)	100% (77)

3 Years	2 Years	Most	Current	Goal
(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)	(FY 2027)

	3 Years	2 Years	Most	Current	Goal
	(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)	(FY 2027)
? Student Financial Aid					
Total Federal Aid	\$2,046,000	\$2,082,000	\$2,125,000	\$2,122,000	\$2,200,000
Grants	\$496,000	\$558,000	\$546,000	\$561,000	\$600,000
Loans	\$1,101,000	\$1,053,000	\$1,095,000	\$1,098,000	\$1,100,000
Work Study	\$449,000	\$471,000	\$484,000	\$463,000	\$500,000
Total State Aid	\$58,000	\$59,000	\$89,000	\$73,000	\$80,000
Total Institutional Aid	\$9,125,000	\$10,409,000	\$10,666,000	\$10,882,000	\$11,200,000
Grants	\$9,125,000	\$10,409,000	\$10,666,000	\$10,882,000	\$11,200,000
Loans					
Total Private Aid	\$214,000	\$369,000	\$462,000	\$479,000	\$475,000
Grants	\$48,000	\$131,000	\$149,000	\$127,000	\$150,000
Loans	\$166,000	\$238,000	\$313,000	\$352,000	\$325,000

Student Debt

Percent of students graduating with debt (include all students who graduated in this calculation)

Undergraduates	59%	57%	55%	51%	50%
Graduates	50%		0%	100%	50%
First professional students					

For students with debt:

Average amount of debt for students leaving the institution with a degree

Undergraduates	\$27,831	\$26,823	\$25,178	\$24,491	\$24,000
Graduates	\$44,000			\$37,185	\$40,000
First professional students					

Average amount of debt for students leaving the institution without a degree

Undergraduates	\$11,250	\$11,944	\$6,970	\$8,890	\$10,000
Graduate Students					
First professional students					

Percent of First-year students in Developmental Courses (courses for which no credit toward a degree is granted)

English as a Second/Other Language					
English (reading, writing, communication skills)					
Math					
Other					

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard Six: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

Faculty and academic staff

College of the Atlantic continues to employ well-qualified faculty and academic staff who ensure excellence of instruction and provide ample academic support. The college is confident in our hiring and evaluation systems for faculty and academic support staff. In both the hiring and evaluation processes, we use open community involvement, rely on best hiring/review practices supported by research in the field, and assess our processes often to ensure legal/ethical compliance, efficiency, and effectiveness.

The most significant change in this standard since our last report to the commission relates to the considerable turnover the college has seen in our faculty and professional staff over the last four years. Most of the turnovers were due to long-anticipated retirements, but some individuals elected to retire earlier than anticipated due to the pandemic. The pandemic made the rehiring process more difficult than it had been in the past. Candidates were interviewed and vetted by the community entirely online during the pandemic—this was a new approach for the COA community as previously all finalists engaged with community members face-to-face during campus visits. Even though all finalists continued to visit campus, we held all-community presentations, question-and-answer sessions, informal drop-ins, and community feedback sessions entirely online. This temporary alteration of the search process nevertheless yielded excellent candidates, finalists, and new faculty hires. We have now returned to our in-person interview processes, but have kept a hybrid element to some of these sessions for those who cannot, or choose not to, attend in person.

Since 2020 we have seen eight faculty members retire and be replaced, two faculty members leave COA for different opportunities and be replaced, added two new faculty positions, and had two additional teaching staff members appointed. This is significant since COA has 33 full-time-equivalent faculty in total; hence, about 1/3 of the faculty have turned over in the last four years. In addition, we anticipate another 3–5 faculty members will be retiring in the next three years. This level of transition is unprecedented at the college. It has, however, allowed the faculty to re-evaluate and restructure many curricular areas, to re-assess and improve hiring and onboarding processes, and to be more intentional in increasing diversity within the faculty (four of the new hires increased the racial/ethnic diversity). All new faculty have terminal degrees in their discipline, are highly competitive in the market, and represent excellence in teaching. As a result of these numerous faculty transitions, the college has:

- Revised the faculty emeriti policy.
- Started to restructure the new faculty onboarding process.
- Reviewed and revised faculty hiring processes (for example, reviewed our opportunistic hiring policy, developed a cohort hiring process, reviewed/revised general search procedures, and restructured faculty categories).
- Reaffirmed a commitment to increase the diversity within the faculty as part of the DEI Strategic Plan and faculty meeting discussions.

Many essential positions within the academic support and student life staff have similarly transitioned over the past four years. These positions include the registrar, assistant registrar, director of internships and career development, dean of student life, international student services coordinator, director of the library, director of information technology, writing program director, and academic services administrator. Though all positions have successfully been refilled with highly qualified candidates, the institutional memory that was lost with the retirees cannot be understated. There is a transition time for the new hires to become familiar with the college's unique operating

model. The college sees this as an opportunity to modernize and to make institutional changes within these critical academic service and student life offices. We have seen a great deal of positive restructuring with the new teams and created many efficiencies in student support services. We have also found that our new hires bring in new tools for collaboration and new ways of thinking from their previous employment. Some improvements made by the new cohort include:

- All classroom and campus spaces are reserved online.
- All registrar forms are available online and with digital signatures.
- Writing tutors receive additional training to better serve multilingual and neurodiverse students.
- Faculty, staff, and students have better access to high quality online FERPA and Title IX training, and are routinely prompted to utilize such training.
- Requesting and tracking of teaching assistants is now fully digital.
- Faculty have an updated information sheet covering teaching assistant responsibilities, limitations, and pay structures.
- Internship proposals can now be submitted and tracked digitally.
- We have established a bank of student support tutorials for Google classroom.
- We have streamlined student access to accommodations for learning differences such as Natural Reader and training for student notetakers.

Faculty and staff are offered on-campus professional development opportunities pertaining to advising, teaching, and learning, including a new adjunct orientation each term focused on syllabus development, assessment, and student support services. The associate dean of teaching and learning has coordinated grant-funded professional development opportunities associated with supporting students with disabilities, supporting the development of student executive function, understanding and supporting first-generation and low-income students, understanding what it means to decolonize the curriculum to avoid harmful stereotypes of Indigenous students and others impacted by colonization, and understanding how to work effectively with linguistic diversity including diversity among native English speakers and writers. Additionally, a one-year, grant-funded DEI fellow organized a series of workshops addressing topics such as disability and neurodivergence, class and capitalism, whiteness and white supremacy, and transforming allyship with LGBTQ+ students. These workshops were recorded and together with supplemental materials are available to all employees and students to spark, inform, and facilitate discussions and enhance understanding of diverse student and employee experiences in US higher education contexts.

All faculty are afforded annual professional development funds (\$4,000–\$5,000), which they use to attend and present at conferences, assist with research and publication costs, invite guest speakers, support sabbatical work, assist with class field trips, and buy additional classroom equipment. The college is committed to keeping the faculty current in their fields and well supported in their research and professional development.

Our salary and benefits packages still yield excellent candidates, though the college would like to find the means to increase salary levels across the board. Of note, we were able to raise the contingent faculty rate per course by 68% for adjuncts (from \$2,500 per course to \$4,200 per course) and by 34% for lecturers (from \$3,600 per course to \$4,830 per course). This places COA contingent faculty salaries above the national average according to published data from the American Association of University Professors regarding faculty compensation rates.

Over the past two years, we have made a number of sweeping changes to improve the working conditions for contingent instructors at COA (documented in Standard Seven, institutional resources). We believe these will have long-term positive effects on the quality of our curricular offerings. One notable change is the phasing in of a new planning and approval system for visiting adjunct courses, particularly heavy-rotation adjunct courses which are taught on a relatively predictable schedule. We hope that this will dramatically help students work with their advisors to map out a long-range curricular plan for their classes.

Annual workload reports and formal review processes help assure the administration that the faculty have adequate time to invest in excellent instruction, solid advising, personal scholarship, and campus service. Faculty committee assignments and campus service activities are based on requests from the faculty within their annual workload reports. COA faculty have an annual five-course teaching load, spread over three trimesters, in addition to campus service obligations. Faculty may elect to teach a sixth course in lieu of campus service. Each faculty member also has an advising load of 10–30 students. Considering what is conventional at other teaching colleges, COA is confident our faculty workload is manageable. Of note, however, is a noticeable rise in post-pandemic, self-reported fatigue levels among faculty and academic staff. The Personnel Committee and the Faculty Development Group are monitoring this situation closely to see if any workload adjustments might be appropriate moving forward.

In 2020 the faculty adopted a new process that would significantly change how faculty positions would be rehired in cases of retirement or departures. A working group addressing this issue brought forward a recommendation to help the college avoid curricular stagnation and status quo maintenance that may have inadvertently been generated by the previous procedure. As a result, the Faculty Meeting and Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) adopted a new model for replacing vacancies, “The four pathways.” The crucial change is that the first conversation to take place regarding a vacancy is in a full faculty meeting (rather than a small nucleus of professors from the vacancy's resource area) and is led by the chair of AAC and the faculty meeting moderator. Faculty then discuss the impact of the looming vacancy and the implications of various “paths” for replacing it before coming to consensus on the general contours of how the position should be replaced. From there a small working group is tasked to refine and provide detail for final faculty approval. Since its adoption in 2020, the faculty have used this process to come to consensus addressing nine different vacancies, all successfully completed. While there are still kinks to work out, we are hopeful that this new model will open a space for greater curricular adaptation and innovation.

The faculty and staff handbooks are currently being updated to reflect many of the policy changes approved by the Personnel and Faculty Development committees since 2017. Updates to search processes, family medical and parental leave policies, faculty review procedures, emeriti policy, and grievance and termination processes have all been updated since 2017. Although these changes are applied currently, the college needs to make certain these updates are officially reflected in the current employment manuals. This work is being done over the summer and fall of 2023.

Teaching and learning

COA prides itself on applied learning. Though many courses do cover traditional theory and textual analysis, the ultimate goal is to guide students in using this information in real-world settings. Our goal is to help students understand and improve the world we live in for humans and the environment. To that end, about one-third to one-half of our classes have performative, field-based, community, or other applied components that are experiential and action oriented. This approach is directly tied to our mission statement and educational ethos.

COA educators believe that students learn best by experiencing different bioregions and different cultures. In order to support this, the college has successfully endowed a fund to provide each student with \$1,800 of direct support for expeditionary learning. This fund can be used by students to cover travel-based expenses for classes, internships, independent studies, conference attendance, and residencies. The Expeditionary Fund ensures that all COA students have the opportunity to experience at least one travel experience regardless of financial means.

We implemented a new summer registration process for incoming students, both first-time freshmen and transfer students, in 2020. This includes the use of a new algorithmic method that maximizes the allocation of student course preferences in the most equitable manner. This has produced a better system of distribution that ensures that all new students are able to take courses in their first term that align with their interests.

The Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness provides additional detail on learning goals, assessment, and achievement.

**Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship
(Faculty by Category and Rank; Academic Staff by Category, Fall Term)**

3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year
(FY 2020)	(FY 2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY 2023)

? Number of Faculty by category

Full-time	25	27	27	26
Part-time	26	27	29	26
Adjunct	24	55	66	52
Clinical				
Research				
Visiting	1	1	2	3
Other; specify below:				
Total	76	110	124	107

Percentage of Courses taught by full-time faculty

61.00%	52.00%	48.00%	51.00%
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? Number of Faculty by rank, if applicable

Professor	0	0	0	0
Associate	0	0	0	0
Assistant	0	0	0	0
Instructor	0	0	0	0
Other; specify below:	52	55	58	55
All COA faculty are unranked				
Total	52	55	58	55

? Number of Academic Staff by category

Librarians	3	3	3	4
Advisors	6	8	8	9
Instructional Designers				
Other; specify below:				
Total	9	11	11	13

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

**Standard 6: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship
(Appointments, Tenure, Departures, Retirements, Teaching Load Full Academic Year)**

3 Years Prior		2 Years Prior		1 Year Prior		Current Year	
(FY 2020)		(FY 2021)		(FY 2022)		(FY 2023)	
FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT

Number of Faculty Appointed

Professor							
Associate							
Assistant							
Instructor							
No rank	2	1	2		2	2	3
Other							
Total	2	1	2	0	2	2	3

Number of Faculty in Tenured Positions

Professor							
Associate							
Assistant							
Instructor							
No rank	25	26	27	27	27	29	26
Other							
Total	25	26	27	27	27	29	26

Number of Faculty Departing

Professor							
Associate							
Assistant							
Instructor							
No rank	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Other							
Total	0	0	1	1	1	1	1

Number of Faculty Retiring

Professor							
Associate							
Assistant							
Instructor							
No rank	1	0	2	0	1	0	4
Other							
Total	1	0	2	0	1	0	4

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard Seven: Institutional Resources

Human resources

Since the time of College of the Atlantic's decennial accreditation process in 2017, COA has seen a relatively significant number of retirements and departures amongst both the faculty and staff ranks. The pandemic stressed the college, both our systems and individual members. COA struggled to hire new employees through late 2021 and early 2022. The financial pressure of inflation in 2022 squeezed the purchasing power of the college and our constituencies. In summer 2022, the Board of Trustees approved the largest pool of funds for salary increases in the college's history: 5% of salaries. The Board also approved moving retirement matching back to the pre-pandemic level of 8% from the reduction to 2% in the early months of 2020. These measures helped stabilize morale and stem departures. In the last year we have been able to hire sufficiently to rebuild the most depleted teams on campus.

Beginning in 2021, COA undertook a comprehensive review of the status of contingent instructors, leading to a number of changes including: improved spaces to work on campus, dramatically increased salary for all contingent faculty, improved planning cycle for adjunct classes, adequate and sustained IT support, an enhanced onboarding process, and clarifications to previously ambiguous policies differentiating between adjuncts and other less-frequently utilized contingent instructor categories such as lecturers and teaching staff. We have endorsed, and are working through the details of, a new contingent faculty compensation structure that considers length of service and contribution to senior projects and independent studies. As detailed in Standard Six, teaching, learning, and scholarship, we raised per-course rates by 68% for adjuncts and by 34% for lecturers, placing our COA contingent faculty salaries above the national average. The Academic Affairs Committee also has plans in the coming year to review and strengthen the current mentor/liaison system for adjuncts. We expect these changes to both improve the work experience and have positive effects on the quality of instruction.

The college's human resources system continues to be handled through a network of governance and other structures (Personnel Committee, individual search committees, the business office, and the administrative dean/CFO) rather than a separate department. The college has recently hired a Title IX coordinator and human resources support role with the aim of bolstering our human resource management.

Financial resources

The success of the *Broach Reach* capital campaign has materially improved College of the Atlantic's financial outlook. The campaign materially improved the resources available to college operations, although it did not provide guaranteed long-term financial sustainability. The campaign raised roughly \$55M in gifts and pledges against a \$50M goal.

Some of the highlights of the campaign include:

- Roughly \$48M of cash receipts by March of 2023
- Roughly \$21.7M in funds moved into the school's endowment
 - Just under \$80M in total assets as of summer 2023
- Campaign gifts provided \$13.5M towards a new academic building, completed in 2021
- Campaign gifts provided \$5M towards the building of an on-campus, 46-bed dormitory, under construction

- Campaign gifts provided \$2.5M toward the construction of housing for 15 students and a faculty/staff member unit in the nearby town of Mount Desert, completed in 2022

Within the last two years, the college has purchased and renovated 14 off-campus housing units (12 for students, two for faculty or staff). These units were partially financed through the Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority (MHHEFA). In conversations with the MHHEFA organization, we found a way to structure our borrowing such that it permits these units to be offered to vacationers during the summer season. The rent we collect in the summer allows these units to be offered at affordable rates to students during the academic year while earning a return on investment at or above our endowment draw percentage.

Over the first six months of the 2023 calendar year, the college restructured the budget documents from the cash-accrual hybrid format to a full accrual presentation. In this format, the college accounts for the annual draw as revenue within a given fiscal year. Though technically the endowment draw is a balance sheet transaction, the movement of funds impacts our debt service coverage ratio. The college feels presenting the statement of activities/income statement to the Finance Committee and Board members in this manner reflects well the financial performance of the institution. In this new format, the following details are delineated to provide the Board with more nuanced data:

- Net ordinary outcome
- Cash flows from operations
- Cash flows after operating and financing activities
- Cash flows after operation, financing, and investing activities.

Additionally, the college has assembled:

- An out-years document projecting budget over the next five years
- A periodic cash balance dashboard/balance sheet to provide the Finance Committee and Board with a snapshot of available funds and major liabilities
- A facilities condition analysis to provide a projection of campus facilities needs.

The next document to be assembled is a periodic cash flows statement to project a more nuanced view of how money moves through the institution.

College of the Atlantic's financial statements are audited by the firm Baker Newman Noyes with audit management services provided by the college's former auditor, Nicholson, Michaud & Company. The Audit Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Trustees and receives the management letter comments.

Additional detail on the college's financial resources is discussed in Area of Special Emphasis One, enrollment, net tuition revenue, and fundraising, and Area of Special Emphasis Three, enhancing financial stability.

Information, physical, and technological resources

The library has remained a vibrant resource for the COA community. Long-time librarian Jane Hultberg retired at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 academic year. Her successors come from a handful of internal promotions, a dual appointment of co-directors. The library is well positioned to continue to be a strong center of information and data for the college.

The college has begun the process of documenting the physical plant in a facilities condition analysis. The director of buildings, grounds, and campus safety, in conjunction with the

administrative dean/CFO, has led his team through the process of examining the physical assets of the college, campus, farms, and island buildings and equipment to document each asset, assess each asset's remaining useful life, and estimate a replacement cost and time horizon for the asset's replacement. By doing so, the college is building an ongoing capital budget.

The college has begun undertaking a number of projects to refresh the campus. Having begun in early April, we are in the middle of replacing \$1M worth of roofs. Additionally, we have made significant progress on the COA Energy Policy, which sets 2030 as our goal to become fossil fuel free. Multiple oil-burning heating and hot water systems have been replaced by electric heat pump systems, and plans to replace more and install a number of solar arrays to drive down operating costs are underway. The college is making great strides in improving the condition and operating efficiency of our stock of capital assets.

This past year we overhauled the process for how students and other community members could reserve spaces on campus for one-time and ongoing uses (such as senior projects and independent studies). In the past this process was spread across various offices on campus and often done manually. It is now centralized and accessible digitally. At the same time, we also undertook a systematic review of space needs for seniors completing senior projects, in order to get a clearer picture of existing needs and how we can better accommodate them. That work has allowed for better planning and accommodation of those needs and will, going forward, be integrated into long-range college building and landscape plans.

In terms of information technology, the college is assessing our needs and preparing to move toward refreshing the IT infrastructure as necessary. Making significant strides on this front will take significant investment and calls for thorough examination of our needs so we may be able to maximize our return on investment.

**Standard 7: Institutional Resources
(Headcount of Employees by Occupational Category)**

	3 Years Prior			2 Years Prior			1 Year Prior			Current Year		
	(FY 2019-20)			(FY 2020-21)			(FY 2021-22)			(FY 2022-23)		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
Instructional Staff	26		26	27		27	26		26	28		28
Research Staff			0			0			0	4		4
Public Service Staff			0			0			0			0
Librarians	3	2	5	3	2	5	3	2	5		1	1
Library Technicians staff			0			0			0			0
Student and Academic Affairs	1	3	4	1	1	2	2	1	3		2	2
Management Occupations	5		5	4		4	5		5	5		5
Operations	8	1	9	7	1	8	6	1	7	5	1	6
Computer, Engineering and Science	5		5	5		5	5		5	4		4
Community, Social Service, Legal, Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	8	1	9	8	1	9	7		7	6	2	8
Technical			0			0			0			0
Service Occupations	10	6	16	11	3	14	9	7	16	8	7	15
Occupations			0			0			0			0
Support	19	1	20	19	3	22	16	3	19	16	2	18
Construction, Maintenance	3	1	4	3	4	7	3	4	7	3	8	11
Material Moving		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1

Total	88	16	104	88	16	104	82	19	101	79	24	103
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Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard 7: Institutional Resources
(Statement of Financial Position/Statement of Net Assets)

Fiscal Year ends - month & day: (06/30)	2 Years Prior (FY 20)	1 Year Prior (FY 21)	Most Recent Year - FY22	Percent Change 2 yrs-1 yr prior 1 yr-most recent		
ASSETS (in 000s)						
?	Cash and Short Term Investments	\$9,377,466	\$5,206,961	\$8,287,255	-44.5%	59.2%
?	Cash held by State Treasurer	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
?	Deposits held by State Treasurer	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
?	Accounts Receivable, Net	\$197,954	\$157,440	\$269,325	-20.5%	71.1%
?	Contributions Receivable, Net	\$20,239,070	\$17,233,709	\$7,980,271	-14.8%	-53.7%
?	Inventory and Prepaid Expenses	\$96,855	\$143,104	\$84,604	47.8%	-40.9%
?	Long-Term Investments	\$61,575,783	\$81,831,154	\$67,786,884	32.9%	-17.2%
?	Loans to Students	\$205,686	\$163,889	\$115,478	-20.3%	-29.5%
?	Funds held under bond agreement	\$1,102,935	\$1,114,183	\$6,386,459	1.0%	473.2%
?	Property, plants, and equipment, net	\$28,245,595	\$34,399,577	\$42,532,695	21.8%	23.6%
?	Other Assets	\$687,712	\$897,104	\$233,057	30.4%	-74.0%
	Total Assets	\$121,729,056	\$141,147,121	\$133,676,028	16.0%	-5.3%
LIABILITIES (in 000s)						
?	Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$1,485,322	\$1,177,084	\$1,184,407	-20.8%	0.6%
?	Deferred revenue & refundable advances	\$539,329	\$374,110	\$443,251	-30.6%	18.5%
?	Due to state				-	-
?	Due to affiliates				-	-
?	Annuity and life income obligations				-	-
?	Amounts held on behalf of others				-	-
?	Long-term investments				-	-
?	Refundable government advances	\$111,609	\$111,609	\$81,209	0.0%	-27.2%
?	Other long-term liabilities	\$7,976,495	\$5,701,555	\$14,010,553	-28.5%	145.7%
	Total Liabilities	\$10,112,755	\$7,364,358	\$15,719,420	-27.2%	113.5%
NET ASSETS (in 000s)						
	Unrestricted net assets					
	Institutional	\$32,470,217	\$43,094,855	\$44,267,492	32.7%	2.7%
?	Foundation				-	-
	Total	\$32,470,217	\$43,094,855	\$44,267,492	32.7%	2.7%
	Temporarily restricted net assets					
	Institutional	\$79,146,084	\$90,687,908	\$73,689,116	14.6%	-18.7%
?	Foundation				-	-
	Total	\$79,146,084	\$90,687,908	\$73,689,116	14.6%	-18.7%
	Permanently restricted net assets					
	Institutional				-	-
?	Foundation				-	-
	Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-
	Total Net Assets	\$111,616,301	\$133,782,763	\$117,956,608	19.9%	-11.8%
	TOTAL LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS	\$121,729,056	\$141,147,121	\$133,676,028	16.0%	-5.3%

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard 7: Institutional Resources
(Statement of Revenues and Expenses)

Fiscal Year ends - month& day: (06 / 30)	3 Years Prior (FY20)	2 Years Prior (FY21)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 22)	Unaudited Current Year (FY 23)	Next Year Forward Budgeted (FY 24)
OPERATING REVENUES (in 000s)					
Ⓟ Tuition and fees	\$13,386,328	\$13,792,152	\$13,661,773	\$14,207,205	\$15,776,502
Ⓟ Room and board	\$1,137,668	\$1,229,911	\$1,594,230	\$1,612,985	\$1,822,783
Ⓟ Less: Financial aid	\$10,696,191	\$10,714,623	\$10,878,153	\$10,582,378	\$8,534,715
Net student fees	\$3,827,805	\$4,307,440	\$4,377,850	\$5,237,812	\$9,064,570
Ⓟ Government grants and contracts	\$290,740	\$836,746	\$1,029,074		
Ⓟ Private gifts, grants and contracts	\$3,220,623	\$4,581,761	\$2,973,898	\$1,605,000	\$3,481,332
Ⓟ Other auxiliary enterprises	\$2,160,166	\$1,940,584	\$2,526,312	\$2,378,898	\$491,936
Endowment income used in operations	\$2,513,552	\$2,001,766	\$2,557,532	\$3,742,935	\$3,445,000
Ⓟ Other revenue (misc and off campus housing):	\$450,256	\$311,387	\$450,931	\$906,424	\$953,469
Other revenue (specify):					
Net assets released from restrictions	\$6,164,308	\$6,861,677	\$6,747,406	\$6,710,000	\$6,720,000
Total Operating Revenues	\$18,627,450	\$20,841,361	\$20,663,003	\$20,581,069	\$24,156,307
OPERATING EXPENSES (in 000s)					
Ⓟ Instruction	\$3,597,123	\$3,158,406	\$3,329,251	\$3,684,693	\$4,336,599
Ⓟ Research	\$290,740	\$836,746	\$1,029,074		
Ⓟ Public Service					
Ⓟ Academic Support	\$1,399,047	\$1,196,967	\$1,280,349	\$1,336,307	\$1,620,281
Ⓟ Student Services	\$817,285	\$942,063	\$1,065,707	\$1,220,343	\$1,576,538
Ⓟ Institutional Support	\$5,291,397	\$4,917,414	\$5,066,227	\$6,122,517	\$6,182,366
Fundraising and alumni relations	\$1,070,464	\$755,727	\$936,918	\$651,711	\$953,025
Ⓟ Operation, maintenance of plant (if not allocated)					
Ⓟ Scholarships and fellowships (cash refunded by public institution)					
Ⓟ Auxiliary enterprises	\$1,597,703	\$1,845,995	\$2,472,616	\$2,679,675	\$332,800
Ⓟ Depreciation (if not allocated)	\$1,113,347	\$1,319,580	\$1,551,627	\$1,555,000	\$1,600,000
Ⓟ Other expenses (off campus housing):	\$0	\$62,637	\$180,224	\$396,045	\$346,322
Other expenses (specify):	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,600,000
Total operating expenditures	\$15,177,106	\$15,035,535	\$16,911,993	\$17,646,291	\$19,547,931
Change in net assets from operations	\$3,450,344	\$5,805,826	\$3,751,010	\$2,934,778	\$4,608,376
NON OPERATING REVENUES (in 000s)					
Ⓟ State appropriations (net)	\$0				
Ⓟ Investment return	\$209,381	\$2,929,812	-\$2,982,062	\$2,448,955	
Ⓟ Interest expense (public institutions)					
Gifts, bequests and contributions not used in operations			\$403,689		
Ⓟ Other (specify):					
Other (gain on sale of property):	\$1,400				
Other (PPP forgiveness):		\$1,889,000			
Net non-operating revenues	\$210,781	\$4,818,812	-\$2,578,373	\$2,448,955	\$0
Income before other revenues, expenses, gains, or losses	\$3,661,125	\$10,624,638	\$1,172,637	\$5,383,733	\$4,608,376
Ⓟ Capital appropriations (public institutions)					
Ⓟ Other (specify):					
TOTAL INCREASE/DECREASE IN NET ASSETS	\$3,661,125	\$10,624,638	\$1,172,637	\$5,383,733	\$4,608,376

**Standard 7: Institutional Resources
(Statement of Debt)**

FISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day (/)		3 Years Prior (FY20)	2 Years Prior (FY21)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 22)	Unaudited Current Year (FY 23)	Next Year Forward Budgeted (FY 24)
	Long-term Debt					
	Beginning balance	\$6,458,435	\$6,087,495	\$5,701,555	\$14,010,553	\$13,770,553
	Additions			\$8,930,000		
	Reductions	\$370,940	\$385,940	\$621,002	\$240,000	\$250,000
	Ending balance	\$6,087,495	\$5,701,555	\$14,010,553	\$13,770,553	\$13,520,553
	Interest paid during fiscal year	\$252,256	\$226,532	\$363,788	\$585,363	\$577,863
	Current Portion					
	Bond Rating					
	Debt Service Coverage Operating Income / (Annual Interest + Current Portion of Debt)	5.54	9.48	6.19	3.56	5.57
	Debt to Net Assets Ratio Long-tem Debt / Total Net Assets	0.0545	0.0426	0.1188		
	Debt to Assets Ratio Long-term Debt / Total Assets	0.0500	0.0404	0.1048	Do not yet have audited data	
Debt Covenants: (1) Describe interest rate, schedule, and structure of payments; and (2) indicate whether the debt covenants are being met. If not being met, describe the specific covenant violation (i.e., requirement of the lender vs. actual achieved by the institution). Also, indicate whether a waiver has been secured from the lender and/or if covenants were modified.						
(1) Long-term Debt is all through MHHEFA (state bond program), coupon rates range between 2% and 5%, comprised of 2 tranches a 2017 issues issuance (approximately \$5M, maturing in 2037, retirable in 2027) and a 2021 tranche (apprx \$8.93M, maturing in 2051, retirable in 2031), (2) covenants are being met						
Line(s) of Credit: List the institutions line(s) of credit and their uses.						
We have a \$4M line of credit with a local bank secured by investments						
Future borrowing plans (please describe).						
We have no future borrowing plans.						

**Standard 7: Institutional Resources
(Supplemental Data)**

FISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day (06 / 30)		3 Years Prior (FY20)	2 Years Prior (FY21)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY22)	Unaudited Current Year (FY 23)	Next Year Forward Budgeted (FY 24)
NET ASSETS						
	Net assets beginning of year	\$107,333,531	\$111,616,301	\$133,782,763	\$117,956,608	\$123,340,341
	Total increase/decrease in net assets	\$4,282,770	\$22,166,462	(\$15,826,155)	\$5,383,733	\$4,608,376
	Net assets end of year	\$111,616,301	\$133,782,763	\$117,956,608	\$123,340,341	\$127,948,717
FINANCIAL AID						
	Source of funds					
	Unrestricted institutional	\$6,570,700	\$6,562,796	\$6,478,194	\$6,235,330	\$6,084,715
	Federal, state and private grants	\$2,244,492	\$2,147,380	\$1,928,743	\$2,307,776	\$2,400,000
	Restricted funds	\$59,792	\$75,181	\$61,681	\$39,272	\$50,000
	Total	\$8,874,984	\$8,785,357	\$8,468,618	\$8,582,378	\$8,534,715
	% Discount of tuition and fees	62.50%	59.66%	56.54%	55.44%	55.50%
?	% Unrestricted discount	74.0%	74.7%	76.5%	72.7%	71.3%
	Net Tuition Revenue per FTE	\$16,099	\$17,346	\$18,684	\$19,740	\$20,304
?	FEDERAL FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMPOSITE SCORE					
Please indicate your institution's endowment spending policy:						
The draw is 4.8% of the trailing 12 quarter average						
Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below.						

**Standard 7: Institutional Resources
(Liquidity)**

FISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day (/)	3 Years Prior (FY20)	2 Years Prior (FY21)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 22)	Unaudited Current Year (FY 23)	Next Year Forward Budgeted (FY 24)
CASH FLOW					
Cash and Cash Equivalents beginning of year	\$7,109,299	\$9,198,041	\$5,027,536	\$8,107,830	\$6,413,642
Cash Flow from Operating Activities	\$2,203,807	\$827,008	\$3,882,203	\$865,812	(\$897,000)
Cash Flow from Investing Activities	(\$4,793,090)	(\$9,449,766)	(\$9,880,648)	(\$2,200,000)	(\$2,800,000)
Cash Flow from Financing Activities	\$4,678,025	\$4,452,253	\$9,078,739	(\$360,000)	\$5,000,000
Cash and Cash Equivalents end of year	\$9,198,041	\$5,027,536	\$8,107,830	\$6,413,642	\$7,716,642
LIQUIDITY RATIOS					
Current Assets	\$9,877,749	\$5,671,394	\$8,756,662	Audit in not yet complete	
Current Liabilities	\$2,496,260	\$2,042,803	\$1,708,867		
Current Ratio	3.96	2.78	5.12	0.00	0.00
Days Cash on Hand (((Cash and Cash Equivalents / [Operating Expenses + Depreciation and other noncash expenses]) / 365)	238.72	133.79	192.66		
Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below that may impact the institution's cash flow.					
We building a building over the FY20 and FY21 totaling roughly \$13.5M and are beginning to build a new dormitory on campus. A \$8.93M MHHEFA bond was taken out in FY22.					
Has the institution needed to access its restricted net assets or liquidate other financial assets to fund operations? If so, please describe and indicate when approvals (if required) were obtained from the stat's authority.					
We have only taken an endowment draw from use retriected assets to funbd operations.					
Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below.					

Standard Nine: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure

College of the Atlantic calls on its members to conduct themselves with integrity, responsibility, honesty, and fairness. The close-knit nature of a school with approximately 350 full-time-equivalent students and 100 staff and faculty, the college's system of community governance and open and frequent information sharing through the website, social media, community email, and on-campus vectors provides an open, equitable setting for decision making and accountability.

Faculty, staff, and trustees are expected to, and trained in, maintaining ethical behavior regarding sexual/gender/discriminatory harassment, misconduct, conflicts of interest, and use of human and animal subjects in research. The course catalog and the COA website outline standards related to academic integrity, ethical research, and privacy expectations. The college publishes, digitally and on paper, a comprehensive selection of policies and guidelines related to integrity and ethical behavior for all community members to follow, including all the policies the college is legally required to follow by organizations such as NECHE, the State of Maine, and the federal government.

The college president, Board of Trustees, deans, personnel committee, and AA/EEO officer are responsible for overseeing compliance to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, 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, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services regulations, and the Veterans Administration requirement for financial aid.

Typically, 15–20 students per term find themselves on academic probation, mostly for poor grades, with a few due to academic misconduct. Ninety percent of academic misconduct cases involve plagiarism; most cases are resolved and only happen once. We usually see 3–5 appeals annually regarding academic decisions, most commonly related to course grades.

The college recently underwent a successful search to hire a new, full-time staff member whose primary role is Title IX coordinator, with some secondary responsibilities as a human resources generalist. In 2023, the college hired a consultant to create bias response protocols to situations of identity-based discrimination and misconduct at the college, leading to the passage at All College Meeting in spring 2023 of the Bias Response Policy Phase One. In the last few years there have been a handful of social misconduct cases that included biased/discriminatory classroom behavior and sexual assault cases. The need for clearer and more active college protocols for misconduct has been recognized and is being addressed with the addition of the Title IX coordinator and, based on the Bias Response Policy, future appointment of a confidential resource advisor, bias response team, and bias response team coordinator.

A new, campus-wide compliance training policy, implemented in 2023, provides a baseline FERPA, Title IX (federal and college policies), and Maine sexual harassment law training to all faculty, staff, and contingent faculty. A protocol to offer implicit bias and DEI training has been established for the future, and will be part of the new bias response protocol.

The college's commitment to ethical behavior includes sustainability, which is one of our central missions. Significant policies have been created and improved regarding COA's energy usage, building standards, and waste, including conducting waste audits and transferring all on- and off-campus housing to more efficient energy systems. Between 2021 and 2023, the college involved students in the experiential work of transitioning from oil to electricity in many campus buildings, along with making significant energy improvements. Students are highly involved with every phase

of the work, creating an integral, transparent set of processes as we approach our fossil fuel-free goals. Much of our campus electricity will be delivered from a new, regional solar farm where COA has signed a 20-year contract.

The community-inclusive and FERPA-observed private All College Meeting and comprehensive list of committees run by students, staff, and faculty furthers COA's ethical commitment to having an open, democratic governance structure that provides opportunity for all community members to voice their opinions and put forward a vision for positive, collaborative change in the college community.

All on-campus bathrooms are now gender neutral. COA continues to pursue creating a college that encourages diversity, supports the identities of community members, and is welcoming to all.

The college's website is an up-to-date and easily accessible resource for information about the college model, financial aid options and calculator, institutional policies and resources, course offerings, college news, and information about college personnel. The website is the primary tool for institutional transparency and public disclosure. The course catalog, published every year, includes information about college's educational approach, expected learning outcomes, grievance procedures, mission and vision, information and policies concerning the academic program, student responsibilities, privacy policies, academic program specifics, consortium agreements, registration, fees and financial aid information, transfer information, degree requirements, and a comprehensive list of course offerings for the academic year. Both the catalog and website have a comprehensive list of all faculty, staff, and trustees. The college's financial aid program is explained in detail in the "Financial Planning Options" publication. The total estimated annual cost of attendance is detailed on its own page as well as in the catalog. Much more detailed information, or links to such, is found on the student consumer information page.

At the bottom of every webpage is the college's street address and phone number along with links for further contact information, maps and directions, emergency information, and a staff/faculty directory. Information about academic programs, grading, student discipline, complaints, and appeals can be found on the COA policies section of the website. The registrar page further lists courses offered for current and upcoming terms, along with course schedules for each. COA's annual report, endowment report, and audited financials are all up to date and can be found on the resources for donors page. Information regarding campus security policies and crime statistics is equally up to date and is found on the emergency info page.

The college's website was overhauled in 2015 and previously in 2009. Planning for upgrades in the near term is underway, a process that has been and will continue to involve extensive community involvement, collaborative decision making, and careful consideration as the website is crucial for prospective students, current students and their parents, faculty and staff, donors, and the general public.

The website is maintained by the college's webteam: a formal group of faculty, staff, and students, that communicates regularly. The webteam is easy to contact through on- and offline channels, and periodically invites the community to share feedback. The college's small and inclusive governance structure allows for openness and transparency that ensures personal accountability of the webteam and its members. Staff and faculty handbooks, student academic and social policies, Title IX policies, and others are available for view to anyone visiting the site.

The course catalog is updated annually by a working group comprising academic services, admission, and communications staff. The college's expectations of and goals for our students' education and success are spelled out explicitly in the print and online versions of the course catalog and echoed across the website, making clear that students are expected to use both heart and mind to be "playful, open, and creative," to act with compassion, and to be passionate and dedicated to learning. Decades of catalogs, student capstone senior projects, and other printed documents are available via the college's archives, which are housed in the library. Information about the archives can be accessed through the website.

**Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure
(Integrity)**

?	Policies	Last Updated	Website location where policy is posted	Responsible Office or Committee
	Academic honesty	2023	www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog	Provost
	Intellectual property rights	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Provost
	Conflict of interest	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Faculty Development Group
		2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-	Personnel Committee
	Privacy rights	2023	www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog	Registrar / Student Life
	Fairness for students	2023	https://www.coa.edu/policies/community-policies/	Student Life
		2023	https://www.coa.edu/policies/academic-policies/	Academic Affairs / Student Life
	Fairness for faculty	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Faculty Development Group
	Fairness for staff	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-	Personnel Committee
	Academic freedom	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Faculty Development Group
	Research	2023	https://www.coa.edu/academic-services/errb/	Ethical Research Review Board
	Title IX	2023	www.coa.edu/student-life/title-ix	Title IX Coordinator
	Other; specify			
	Non-discrimination policies			
	Recruitment and admissions	2023	https://www.coa.edu/admissions/apply	Admission Office
	Employment	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-	Personnel Committee
		2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Faculty Development Group
	Evaluation	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-	Equal Opportunity Employment Officer
		2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Equal Opportunity Employment Officer
	Disciplinary action	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-	Equal Opportunity Employment Officer
		2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Equal Opportunity Employment Officer
	Advancement	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-	Equal Opportunity Employment Officer
		2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Equal Opportunity Employment Officer
	Other: Bias Response Policy	2023	https://www.coa.edu/policies/community-policies	Bias Response Team / Student Life
	Resolution of grievances			
	Students	2023	https://www.coa.edu/policies/academic-policies	Review and Appeals Committee
	Faculty	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1531-20221109faculty-	Personnel Committee / Faculty Development
	Staff	2022	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-	Personnel Committee
	Other; specify			
?	Other	Last Updated	Website location or Publication	Responsible Office or Committee

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

All policies are detailed in the COA Course Catalog, which is updated annually.

**Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure
(Transparency)**

Information	Website location and/or Relevant Publication(s)
How can inquiries be made about the institution? Where can questions be addressed?	https://www.coa.edu/contact-us
Notice of availability of publications and of audited financial statement or fair summary	https://www.coa.edu/giving/resources-for-donors
Processes for admissions	https://www.coa.edu/admissions/apply
Processes for employment	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/1532-20221109staff-manualpdf
Processes for grading	https://www.coa.edu/registrar
Processes for assessment	https://www.coa.edu/registrar
Processes for student discipline	https://www.coa.edu/policies/academic-policies
	https://www.coa.edu/policies/community-policies
Processes for consideration of complaints and appeals	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog

List below the statements or promises made regarding program excellence, learning outcomes, success in placement, and achievements of graduates

Statement/Promise	Website location and/or publication where valid documentation can be found
By engaging the experimental and pluralistic heritage of learning in the liberal arts traditions, we seek to inspire theoretically informed and personally reflective learning.	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog
<p>What you should learn at COA:</p> <p>Metacognition: Awareness of one’s thinking processes and patterns of thinking and learning include the ability to motivate and direct one’s own learning—to understand the ways that learning is physical, social, emotional, and cerebral—which may require tolerance of uncertainty, persistence, openness to feedback, and reevaluating self-knowledge. This includes a commitment to and ability to manage time and complex projects. This also includes the ability to construct a coherent and personally meaningful narrative about one’s self-designed program of study.</p> <p>Creativity: In all endeavors the ability to imagine and construct novel approaches or perspectives, to be innovative and to invent. This includes the flexibility to use many different approaches in solving a problem, and to change direction and modify approach, the originality to produce unique and unusual responses, and the ability to expand and embellish one’s ideas and projects. This also includes taking intellectual and creative risks and practicing divergent thinking.</p> <p>Critical thinking: The ability to observe and question assumptions and claims about the relationships between and among living, social, and physical systems and processes. The ability to not only interpret and evaluate information from multiple sources but also to induce, deduce, judge, define, order, and prioritize in the interest of individual and collective growth. This includes the ability to recognize one’s self-knowledge and its limits, challenge preconceptions, and to work with imperfect information. This also includes the ability to apply writing as a critical thinking skill.</p> <p>Community engagement: A deep understanding of oneself and respect for the complex identities of others, their histories, their cultures, and the ability to lead and collaborate within diverse groups, organizations, and communities. This includes the ability to work effectively within diverse cultural, civic, and political settings. This also includes the ability to assess self- and cultural knowledge and to engage constructively with complementarity, incommensurability, and dissent as opportunities for further personal and collective learning and in service to shared aims.</p> <p>Communication: The ability to listen actively and express oneself effectively in spoken, written, and nonverbal domains, grounded in history, communities, and audience. This includes the ability to engage in dialogue, internally and with others, across multiple views. This also includes the ability to accommodate one’s own and/or others’ proficiencies beyond a first language.</p> <p>Integrative thinking: The ability to confront complex situations and respond to them as systemic wholes with interconnected and interdependent parts. This includes the ability to project the social, economic, and environmental impacts of actions, which may be positive, neutral, and/or negative, known, unknown, or unknowable.</p> <p>Interdisciplinarity: The ability to think, research, and communicate within and across disciplines while recognizing the strengths and limitations of disciplinary approaches. This includes the ability to apply interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary knowledge and skills to a range of contexts and activities.</p>	https://www.coa.edu/academics

Date of last review of:	
Print publications	
Digital publications	

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure (Public Disclosure)

Information	Website location
Institutional catalog	www.coa.edu/registrar
Obligations and responsibilities of students and the institution	www.coa.edu/registrar
Information on admission and attendance	www.coa.edu/admissions
Institutional mission and objectives	www.coa.edu/about/mission-history
Expected educational outcomes	www.coa.edu/academics
Status as public or independent institution; status as not-for-profit or for-profit; religious affiliation	www.coa.edu/about/administration/accreditation
Requirements, procedures and policies re: admissions	www.coa.edu/admissions/apply
Requirements, procedures and policies re: transfer credit	https://www.coa.edu/admissions/apply/transfers-visiting-students
A list of institutions with which the institution has an articulation agreement	https://www.coa.edu/academics/off-campus-study/partners-and-exchanges
Student fees, charges and refund policies	https://www.coa.edu/admissions/tuition-fees https://www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog
Rules and regulations for student conduct	https://www.coa.edu/policies
Procedures for student appeals and complaints	https://www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog
Other information re: attending or withdrawing from the institution	www.coa.edu/registrar
Academic programs	www.coa.edu/academics
Courses currently offered	www.coa.edu/registrar
Other available educational opportunities	
Other academic policies and procedures	https://www.coa.edu/policies/academic-policies
Requirements for degrees and other forms of academic recognition	https://www.coa.edu/academics/human-ecology-degree/degree-requirements
List of continuing faculty, indicating department or program affiliation, degrees held, and institutions granting them	https://www.coa.edu/academics/faculty
Names and positions of administrative officers	https://www.coa.edu/people-directory
Names, principal affiliations of governing board members	https://www.coa.edu/about/administration/board-of-trustees
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	Not applicable.
Programs, courses, services, and personnel not available in any given academic year.	https://www.coa.edu/academics/areas-of-study
Size and characteristics of the student body	https://www.coa.edu/about/the-basics https://www.coa.edu/institutional-research
Description of the campus setting	www.coa.edu/about/our-campus
Availability of academic and other support services	https://www.coa.edu/current-students
Range of co-curricular and non-academic opportunities available to students	https://www.coa.edu/our-community/student-activities
Institutional learning and physical resources from which a student can reasonably be expected to benefit	www.coa.edu/registrar
Institutional goals for students' education	www.coa.edu/registrar
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	www.coa.edu/institutional-research
Total cost of education and net price, including availability of financial aid and typical length of study	https://www.coa.edu/admissions/tuition-fees
Expected amount of student debt upon graduation and loan payment rates	https://www.coa.edu/admissions/financial-aid/student-consumer-information
Statement about accreditation	www.coa.edu/about/administration/accreditation

Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness

SECTION A: WHAT STUDENTS GAIN AS A RESULT OF THEIR EDUCATION

Description

COA provides clear public statements about what students are expected to gain as a result of their education. These curricular and co-curricular learning goals, “What You Should Learn at COA,” are placed in the front of our course catalog and on the landing page of the Academics section of the college’s website. Individual courses list student learning objectives that are clearly defined in their syllabi and are assessed by professors through grades and narratives.

The college’s mission and vision statement are also located prominently on our website—directly proceeding the “What You Should Learn at COA” goals in the course catalog. The mission statement talks about the importance of transdisciplinary learning, problem solving and the explicit expectation that students apply what they learn to “investigate—and ultimately improve—the relationships between human beings and our social and natural communities.” Hence students are expected to learn how to think across many domains and then apply what they have learned to be positive agents of change in their lived environments.

Students choose COA because of its single degree in human ecology and the opportunity to self-design a program of study that affords them the ability to create synergies between their unique sets of interests and their educational and post-graduation goals. Students often identify their own learning objectives in addition to the institutional learning goals detailed below. A central tenet of COA’s pedagogical approach is to allow students to realize educational objectives specific to their individual needs. That being said, the college is invested in assuring a base set of educational goals are met by all students. The “What You Should Learn at COA” curricular learning goals, which were revised since our 2017 self-study and fully approved by the faculty in May 2023, are as follows:

1. **Metacognition:** Awareness of one’s thinking processes and patterns of thinking and learning including the ability to motivate and direct one’s own learning—to understand the ways that learning is physical, social, emotional, and cerebral—which may require tolerance of uncertainty, persistence, openness to feedback, and reevaluating self-knowledge. This includes a commitment to and ability to manage time and complex projects. This also includes the ability to construct a coherent and personally meaningful narrative about one’s self-designed program of study.
2. **Creativity:** In all endeavors the ability to imagine and construct novel approaches or perspectives, to be innovative and to invent. This includes the flexibility to use many different approaches in solving a problem, and to change direction and modify approach, the originality to produce unique and unusual responses, and the ability to expand and embellish one’s ideas and projects. This also includes taking intellectual and creative risks and practicing divergent thinking.
3. **Critical thinking:** The ability to observe and question assumptions and claims about the relationships between and among living, social, and physical systems and processes. The ability to not only interpret and evaluate information from multiple sources but also to induce, deduce, judge, define, order, and prioritize in the interest of individual and collective growth. This includes the ability to recognize one’s self-knowledge and its limits, challenge preconceptions, and to work with imperfect information. This also includes the ability to apply writing as a critical thinking skill.

4. **Community engagement:** A deep understanding of oneself and respect for the complex identities of others, their histories, their cultures, and the ability to lead and collaborate within diverse groups, organizations, and communities. This includes the ability to work effectively within diverse cultural, civic, and political settings. This also includes the ability to assess cultural and self-knowledge and to engage constructively with complementarity, incommensurability, and dissent as opportunities for further personal and collective learning and in service to shared aims.
5. **Communication:** The ability to listen actively and express oneself effectively in spoken, written, and nonverbal domains, grounded in history, communities, and audience. This includes the ability to engage in dialogue, internally and with others, across multiple views. This also includes the ability to accommodate one's own and/or others' proficiencies beyond a first language.
6. **Integrative thinking:** The ability to confront complex situations and respond to them as systemic wholes with interconnected and interdependent parts. This includes the ability to project the social, economic, and environmental impacts of actions, which may be positive, neutral, and/or negative, known, unknown, or unknowable.
7. **Interdisciplinarity:** The ability to think, research, and communicate within and across disciplines while recognizing the strengths and limitations of disciplinary approaches. This includes the ability to apply interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary knowledge and skills to a range of contexts and activities.

The college understands that a precursor to a robust measurement system involves institutional alignment around its stated learning goals. This is especially important at this time because roughly half of the COA faculty and approximately 90% of the academic and student support staff have retired or transitioned in the past five years. As such we have needed to gain new alignment and integrate incoming voices in these goals to ensure the entire institution was working towards the same end. With this in mind, the faculty have recently reaffirmed the importance of taking an individualized approach to ensure that students can demonstrate growth throughout their college experience rather than an expectation that every student demonstrates the same set of knowledge or skills. This multi-year review and reaffirmation by faculty and professional staff of our overarching curricular and co-curricular institutional learning goals was an essential step to take prior to the development of a more systematic, institution-wide, skills-based assessment protocol. To that end, the college recently completed a two-year (fall 2021–spring 2023) process involving a total of eight faculty meetings between October 2021 and May 2023 and two All College Meetings (February and November 2022) to review and update our core learning goals.

Previously COA identified six learning goals in the “What You Should Learn at COA” set. Through our review process, an additional seventh learning goal, Metacognition, was added. Metacognition arose out of a qualitative analysis of senior project narrative evaluations and community discussions. This qualitative analysis identified critical metacognitive skills improving through the senior project process. After reviewing these data, there was widespread faculty and community support to add Metacognition as an additional institutional learning goal.

The faculty also made several significant revisions to the pre-existing six learning goals (with the exception of Creativity, which remained unchanged). These changes reflect the college's continued commitment to reflect upon student learning and update institutional goals over time. For example, “the ability to observe and question assumptions and claims about the relationships between and among living, social, and physical systems and processes” was

added to elaborate the Critical thinking learning goal. In addition, “the ability to assess self- and cultural knowledge and to engage constructively with complementarity, incommensurability, and dissent as opportunities for further personal and collective learning and in service to shared aims” further elaborates the Community engagement goal. Additions also focused on applications of these skills within context, such as “the ability to project the social, economic, and environmental impacts of actions, which may be positive, neutral, and/or negative, known, unknown, or unknowable” as an elaboration of Integrative thinking. And finally, the “ability to apply interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary knowledge and skills to a range of contexts and activities” exemplifies Interdisciplinarity.

Findings and analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to help the college assess student success in relation to the “What You Should Learn at COA” learning goals. Currently the effectiveness of the college meeting these goals is measured through a variety of data, including: narrative evaluations, student self-reflections, resource area reviews, advisor feedback, National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) data, graduate school and job placement rates, alumni surveys, student awards, student presentations, student publications, and faculty and staff feedback. Many of these assessments will be further addressed in Section B.

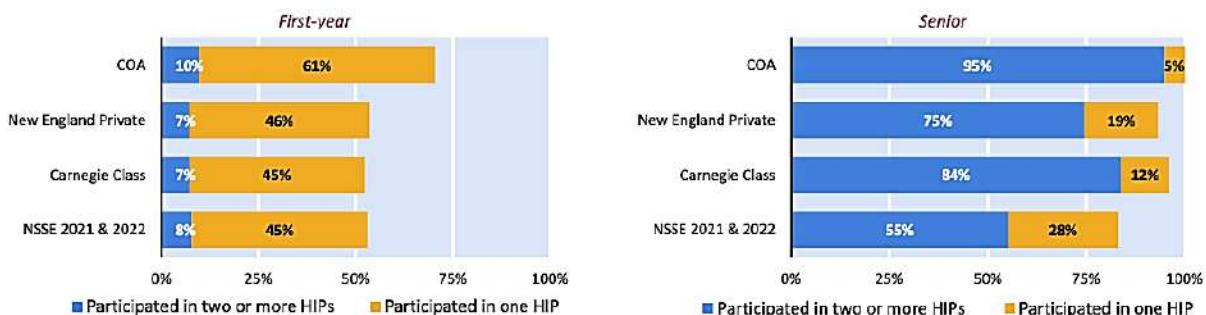
Data from the 2022 NSSE report evidences growth in several of these goal areas. NSSE asks students to identify areas of perceived gains associated with their education, and COA seniors rate their perceived gains very highly across many domains associated with our learning goals (see data below). The college does note that fewer substantial gains were found by NSSE in relation to preparedness associated with job/work related knowledge and analysis of numerical and statistical information. These deficiencies are addressed in Section B.

Perceived Gains (Sorted highest to lowest)	Percentage of Seniors Responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit"
Thinking critically and analytically	95%
Writing clearly and effectively	82%
Working effectively with others	79%
Understanding people of other backgrounds (econ., racial/ethnic, polit., relig., nation.,	79%
Solving complex real-world problems	79%
Being an informed and active citizen	79%
Developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics	79%
Speaking clearly and effectively	74%
Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	59%
Analyzing numerical and statistical information	37%

NSSE data demonstrates that COA students score above peer-institution students for high-impact practices (HIPs) such as service learning, learning communities, research with faculty, internships, field experiences, and study abroad. These gains speak to both the impact of our education and the refinement of our learning goals.

Overall HIP Participation

The figures below display the percentage of students who participated in High-Impact Practices. Both figures include participation in service-learning, a learning community, and research with faculty. The senior figure also includes participation in an internship or field experience, study abroad, and culminating senior experience. The first segment in each bar shows the percentage who participated in at least two HIPs, and the full bar (both colors) represents the percentage who participated in at least one.



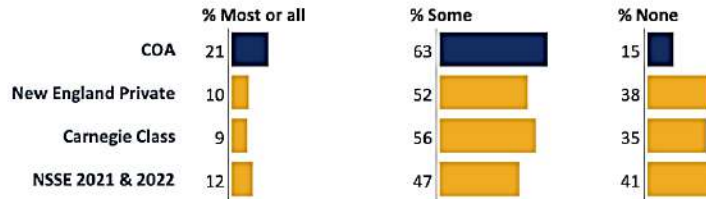
Breaking down the NSSE data by HIP category (see table on next page), one can see that COA seniors compare very strongly against learners at peer institutions. The college believes these data reflect well on our educational approach, affording our students the ability to learn and flourish in both theoretical and applied settings (speaking directly to our mission claims). All HIPs are tied broadly to the suite of the COA’s learning goals. Some HIP areas, however, have direct connections to specific goals. For example, the service-learning HIP connects to COA’s educational goals around community engagement. The learning communities HIP is associated with gains for COA educational goals around critical thinking, community engagement, and communication. The research with a faculty member HIP suggests strengths associated with COA’s educational goals around metacognition, critical thinking, community engagement, communication, integrative thinking, and interdisciplinarity. The internships and study abroad HIPs tie to COA learning goals around creativity, community engagement, communication, and interdisciplinarity. The culminating senior experience HIP could not happen without skills across all institutional learning goals. We also believe HIPs speak directly to the applied aspects of human ecology mentioned in our mission statement.

Finally, the NSSE data for 2022 suggests the college is on par with, or significantly above, peer institutions for significant academic engagement indicators for both first-year students and seniors. In several of these categories the college is within the top 10% in the nation.

Seniors

Service-Learning

About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?



Learning Community

Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together.



Research with a Faculty Member

Work with a faculty member on a research project.



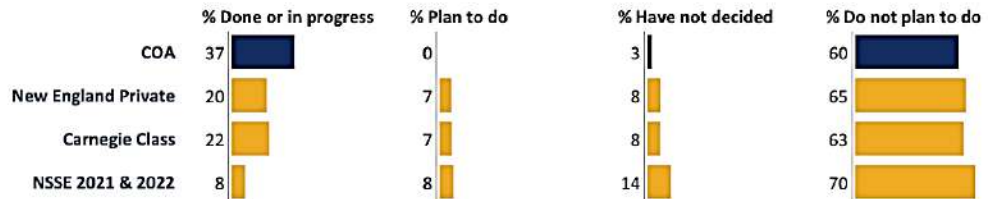
Internship or Field Experience

Participate in an internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement.



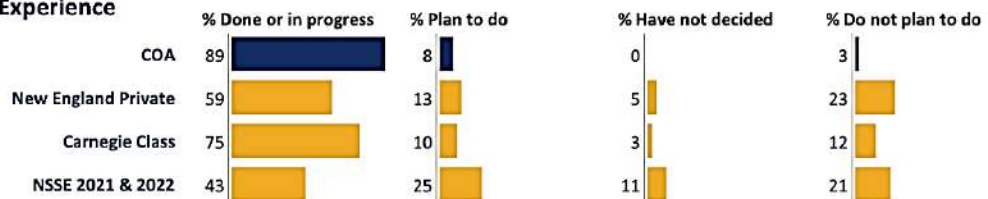
Study Abroad

Participate in a study abroad program.



Culminating Senior Experience

Complete a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, portfolio, recital, comprehensive exam, etc.).



Engagement Indicators: Overview

Engagement Indicators are summary measures based on sets of NSSE questions examining key dimensions of student engagement. The ten indicators are organized within four broad themes: Academic Challenge, Learning with Peers, Experiences with Faculty, and Campus Environment. The tables below compare average scores for your students with those in your comparison groups. Use the following key:

- 5 ▲ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- 4 ▲ **Your students' average** was significantly higher ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- 3 — No significant difference.
- 2 ▼ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- 1 ▼ **Your students' average** was significantly lower ($p < .05$) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

Note: It is important to interpret the direction of differences relative to your institutional context. You may not see all of these symbols

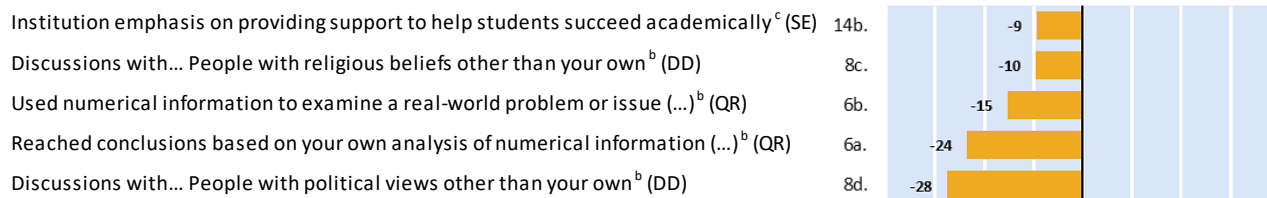
First-Year Students		Your first-year students compared with New England Private	Your first-year students compared with Carnegie Class	Your first-year students compared with NSSE 2021 & 2022
<i>Theme</i>	<i>Engagement Indicator</i>			
<i>Academic Challenge</i>	Higher-Order Learning	--	--	▲
	Reflective & Integrative Learning	▲	▲	▲
	Learning Strategies	--	--	--
	Quantitative Reasoning	--	--	--
<i>Learning with Peers</i>	Collaborative Learning	▲	▲	▲
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	--	--
<i>Experiences with Faculty</i>	Student-Faculty Interaction	▲	--	▲
	Effective Teaching Practices	--	--	--
<i>Campus Environment</i>	Quality of Interactions	--	--	--
	Supportive Environment	--	--	--

Seniors		Your seniors compared with New England Private	Your seniors compared with Carnegie Class	Your seniors compared with NSSE 2021 & 2022
<i>Theme</i>	<i>Engagement Indicator</i>			
<i>Academic Challenge</i>	Higher-Order Learning	--	--	--
	Reflective & Integrative Learning	▲	▲	▲
	Learning Strategies	--	--	--
	Quantitative Reasoning	--	--	--
<i>Learning with Peers</i>	Collaborative Learning	--	--	--
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	--	--
<i>Experiences with Faculty</i>	Student-Faculty Interaction	▲	--	▲
	Effective Teaching Practices	--	--	--
<i>Campus Environment</i>	Quality of Interactions	--	--	--
	Supportive Environment	--	--	--

Taken as a whole, these NSSE data suggest solid growth across our learning goals in significant and documented ways. These data also validate many of the core components of our mission—such as transdisciplinary learning and direct application.

Lowest performing indicators according to NSSE

Lowest Performing Relative to New England Private



From a review of the lowest performing indicators identified by both the NSSE report and recent alumni and student surveys, the college identified three broad areas of deficiency that need to be addressed to improve student learning associated with our mission goals:

Improved support for students with learning differences and mental health issues. The college has made efforts to rectify these issues through targeted faculty meetings. We have brought in outside experts (such as our director of wellness and student support and regional experts on neurodivergence) to ensure that all faculty, including new adjuncts, understand the issues and available support services, including those for students who may need or request accommodations for a disability, mental health issue, or learning difference. Students can submit psychiatric assessments, submit documentation of disabilities from appropriate providers, and/or seek and receive mental health support. Similarly, students may self-identify, or their advisors or instructors may identify, as needing academic support services for time management, tutoring, counseling, and study skills. Learning difference accommodations include extended time on tests and other assessments, designated notetakers, Natural Reader or other text-to-voice tools, recording of classes, use of a computer within the class, teaching assistant support, or alternative assessment formats. We have also encouraged faculty to reach out to the academic services team and the director of wellness and student support if a student has not responded to their outreach or expressed concerns. Please also refer to Standard Five, students, to review the details on updates and improvements made to our counseling and other student support services.

The inclusion of broader perspectives offered in classroom discussions and reading. Because COA has a very diverse student body (students from 40 states, 45 countries, 24% international, 16% first generation, 33% Pell eligible, 12% US students of color), one would expect a diversity of viewpoints being freely exchanged through classes and campus life. For the most part this is true, but some students have identified a perceived liberal bias as a concern. These students give examples around the stifling of conservative views dealing with certain political issues (for example, republican/conservative perspectives, pro-capitalist ideals, nationalism), religious beliefs (right to life, queer/trans concerns, beliefs associated with religious exclusion), and scientific debates (for example., dissenting beliefs on climate change, vaccinations, and support for animal research). These students believe such views are often overlooked in classroom conversations and have limited student activism. Other students, however, claim that the college’s liberal stances are exactly what drew them to attend COA in the first place (a community of liberal learners, perceptions of safety and acceptance around certain ideas, and strong activism around certain beliefs). While the college is committed to the free expression of all ideas, we do believe this concern has merit. To that end,

administrators have brought forward these concerns for further community engagement and problem solving; the inclusion of controversial ideas and conservative viewpoints has been a theme for faculty meetings, ACMs, student experience meetings, DEI working group conversations, anti-bias workshops, and visiting speaker selection protocols.

Improvement in quantitative reasoning courses and support. NSSE data and student surveys have identified the need for curricular improvement around quantitative reasoning and data analytics offerings. The faculty, acknowledging this concern, have, since 2017, added a full-time faculty member in data science and a half-time teaching staff in energy use and assessment. In addition, we have significantly improved and enhanced our statistical offerings, focusing on R and other analytical software.

Appraisal and projection

Even though we believe there is strong evidence to support the claims we make relating to student progress towards our learning goals, we acknowledge that we could do better with a more systematic and robust approach to assessment of these learning goals at the institutional level. To that end, as mentioned in Area of Special Emphasis Five, comprehensive approach to assessment, we have created several faculty assessment teams around the “What You Should Learn at COA” goals who will report back to the full faculty in winter 2024 on their progress and suggestions. In addition, we have increased our institutional research (IR) capacity by hiring a .4 FTE position specializing in this assessment and data analysis. This process of ensuring that our degree requirements align with our stated educational goals will likely continue for several more years before new or revised requirements or assessment and evaluation processes take effect. The current degree audit overseen by the registrar, and based on information in the SIS CAMS, indicates which degree requirements have been met. When the faculty working groups have completed their work, students and their advisors will better understand what skills those degree requirements are associated with, and ultimately show documented improvement with those skills.

Faculty are eager to find ways to make proposed assessments of our institutional learning goals meaningful, reliable, and manageable. The biggest concerns relate to time and relevance. In terms of time, faculty, staff, and students feel the workload expectations during the year are already at maximum. The college needs to embed any new assessments practices into the curriculum and/or co-curriculum carefully. Some possible ways to improve assessment without adding to workload may be to replace/revise some of existing things we already do (for example, the Human Ecology Essay, internship reports, senior projects, narrative evaluations, course evaluations, etc.) with structures that specifically document and assess institutional learning goals. Other suggestions include making new assessments part of a credited capstone experience. Associating the work with credit-bearing activities would allow faculty to fulfill teaching requirements and afford students the time necessary to do the reflections (as opposed to making new structures simply additive to existing work). In short, all assessment suggestions will need more thought, dialogue, and exploration to assure they are indeed meaningful, reliable, and manageable.

The second major concern faculty express relates to the relevance of establishing a systematic assessment for human ecology. Faculty often point out that there is no external oversight body that sets standards or provides metrics to assess competency within this major. By its nature, a degree in human ecology is transdisciplinary, individualized, self-driven, and dynamic. Any assessment structure must thus match many evolving needs. Therefore, the institution will continue to rely on the host of internal and external metrics commonly used by other institutions with self-designed majors (detailed in Sections B and C below). All faculty are dedicated to finding improved ways to assess student learning to improve our curriculum.

Finally, some of the COA faculty have expressed hesitation associated with our proposed increased focus on the assessment of overarching institutional learning objectives. They fear such a focus will reduce the emphasis on honoring individual, student-initiated learning goals. The administration is convinced that these are not mutually exclusive, and we look forward to updating the Commission on progress made on both fronts.

SECTION B: WHAT AND HOW STUDENTS ARE LEARNING

Description

The primary means of assessing student learning occur at the course level (assessing primarily course content). Faculty also assess student learning in independent studies, tutorials, residencies, Human Ecology Essays, and senior projects. Faculty use a range of approaches to assess learning depending on subject matter, disciplinary or interdisciplinary courses, and teaching strengths. Quizzes and tests are less common than problem sets and projects, including performance assessments in the arts and human studies or independent or collaborative research, community-based, or creative projects. Essays and presentations are also common forms of assessments used.

The college continues to use many of the metrics previously identified in the 2017 self-study to assess what and how students are learning. Some of these include:

Internal metrics:

- Narrative evaluations
- Student self-assessments
- Alumni surveys
- Resource and curriculum planning groups
- Student Writing Portfolios
- Feedback from academic and student services
- Review of course evaluations
- Persistence and graduation rates
- Exit interviews
- Senior projects

External metrics:

- Graduate school attendance rates
- Employment rates and employment by study focus
- Student research
- Student awards, publications, grants, and professional publications
- National Survey of Student Engagement results (NSSE)
- External college rankings and awards

Findings and analysis

The college would like to highlight metrics of most interest/change since our last review. The metrics discussed below have immediate promise for improving our assessment strategy, have institutional buy-in, and ultimately can be used to improve our educational approach and assessments.

Narrative evaluations

Professors assess student learning not only through letter, number, or pass/fail grades but also with personalized narrative evaluations. Every student receives a narrative assessment (about ½ page in

length on average) for every class taken. Such narratives offer a detailed description of a student’s progress towards both institutional learning goals and course content objectives. Taken as a whole, these narratives form a portfolio of learning for each student that provides an invaluable resource for the learner and their academic advisors to identify strengths and limitations associated with meeting multiple learning objectives.

Students are invited to write a narrative self-assessment in addition to the faculty narrative for every class taken. The student narratives are then added to their official portfolio. Typically, only 30%-40% of students take advantage of this opportunity per term. The college is considering ways to increase the number of students who write self-assessment narratives, as this practice is thought to be highly beneficial (and related to learning goal one, Metacognition). Student narratives include self-reflection related to course objectives and institutional learning goals along with feedback on how to make learning expectations clearer, what teaching approaches were successful, and what other learning may be occurring in a class that is not evidenced in the assignments. The college is considering making this practice mandatory. Student self-narratives are already mandatory for independent studies, internships, senior projects, groups studies and residencies.

Six years ago, the provost’s office reviewed a subset of faculty narrative portfolios to look for emergent trends. They found that faculty narratives varied greatly in quantity and quality of data associated with learning outcomes. Most faculty gave specific feedback related to their courses’ learning objectives, but few gave feedback specifically directed at institutional learning goals. Most faculty narratives also commented on things like the student’s work ethic, attendance, quality of submitted work, and class engagement. The provost’s office study found that institutional learning goal four, Communication was most frequently evidenced in faculty narratives (writing ability 70%, discussion ability 63%, groupwork 44%, and presentation ability addressed in 33% of the narratives assessed). Many of the other institutional learning goals were also evidenced—but at lower levels.

As discussed in the 2017 self-study, the faculty were surveyed to see which of the institutional educational goals they intentionally tried to foster within their courses, which goals were a likely outcome of their courses (but not intentionally planned for), and which goals were an unlikely outcome of their courses. The results were as follows:

Learning goals	Intentionally built into course	Not intentional but a likely outcome	Not an objective for this course
Metacognition	<i>Not assessed at the time of the study – metacognition added in 2023</i>		
Creativity	76%	21%	3%
Critical thinking	98%	2%	0%
Community engagement	51%	20%	29%
Communication	93%	6%	1%
Integrative thinking	94%	5%	1%
Interdisciplinarity	82%	13%	5%

With such a high representation of institutional learning goals already built into course development, the college believes it could be doing a better job of reflecting student gains through faculty narrative evaluations. Addressing this is on the agendas of the Academic Affairs Committee and academic services staff.

Student writing and portfolios

COA faculty identified improvement of written communication as a priority for attention. This objective intentionally cuts across both institutional and course learning goals. There are two components of the writing requirement:

Coursework. Coursework assures a baseline competence for collegiate writing ability. To that end, all students are required to take a writing class within the first year of their studies at COA. They can fulfill this requirement by taking a traditional writing class (for example, Writing Seminar I: Exposition; Writing Seminar II: Argumentation, Intro to Journalism; Advanced Composition; Technical Writing) or a college seminar. College seminars add a writing-intensive component to standard classes. Hence students can work on their writing in content areas of their choosing, such as food systems, history, biology, or art. College seminars have significantly higher writing expectations than standard classes (about twice as much), expect multiple drafts of papers, include peer-reviews of written work, are assigned designated writing teaching assistants, have an added writing lab, and are pre-approved by the Academic Affairs Committee and the writing program director. About 35% of our students have chosen to use this option to meet the writing requirement since its introduction. Students are reporting increased satisfaction about learning writing skills in content areas of interest, as opposed to doing so in mandated writing classes. Of note, many other students also rate their standard writing classes very favorably. What the institution is trying to do is improve student choice. Assessment of the writing skills learned in college seminars demonstrates similar results to standard writing classes. College seminars tend to fill quickly, and the writing program is planning to expand these offerings because of these early successes.

Portfolio. The goal of this requirement is to ensure that all students write at an advanced collegiate level by the time of graduation. All students must submit a writing portfolio after they have completed their second year. This portfolio is done early in the students' academic journey to allow for time/resources to address insufficiencies. The writing portfolio consists of three essays written for courses; one must be expository, one must demonstrate documentation of references, and the third is open. Writing portfolios get reviewed by a team of trained faculty using a rubric designed by the writing program team. If a student's writing is deemed insufficient in some areas, the student may be required to take an additional writing course or work with a tutor in the writing center until their skill is deemed proficient.

Students also gain writing skills through other courses within the curriculum. Faculty are encouraged to require a short, written assignment in the first two weeks of the term to identify those students who might benefit from working with a peer tutor in the writing center. In addition to this early requirement, students gain writing skills throughout the curriculum. A survey from 2017 found that 97% of all classes required writing, with 57% of classes requiring 15+ pages of written work, 15% requiring 11-15 pages, and the remainder requiring 10 or fewer pages. For those written assignments, 33% of classes required multiple drafts and revisions, and 56% offered revisions or drafts as an option.

Additional focus on writing and writing support is offered through the writing center. The writing center has a full-time director and a cohort of 10-15 writing tutors each term. The director of the writing center has provided intensive anti-bias training for writing tutors (to reduce racial/gender discrimination and improve ESL student support). In addition, the writing center director has also taken steps to increase access for writing support (for example, physical location of the writing center

is more accessible, writing center hours have expanded, and online writing support has increased for those off campus). The writing tutor training program has been revamped and modernized to help assure best practice in writing, increase communication between tutors and the writing center director, and improve work scheduling. The college believes that its foci on writing and writing support benefits overall student learning. Thus far, improvements are viewed as positive but anecdotal in nature. The college hopes to assess and compare writing portfolios generated under the old and new systems to document improvement.

Senior projects

Senior projects are reviewed at multiple levels and by multiple systems. First, students meet with their academic advisor and craft a research proposal (guidelines for senior project proposals can be found at coa.edu/seniorprojectproposal). Next, the student's proposal is assessed by the Review and Appeals Committee (composed of faculty, staff, and students). This review process evaluates learning outcomes, reflects on the timeline and feasibility of the proposed work, and assesses the credentials of the senior project director. Once the project proposal is approved (this usually takes at least two iterations of feedback), the student begins the work associated with it. The student and the project director meet on a weekly basis (often more frequently towards the end of the project) to assess progress, discuss barriers and successes, and re-frame learning goals as needed. The student then completes the project and crafts a final archival report. A survey by the Academic Affairs Committee found that 50% of our students also share their senior projects in other public settings beyond the archived final report (for example, gallery shows, public talks, performances, professional publications, professional conference presentations, policy presentations, community actions, and group facilitation). These public presentations provide external validation of student learning outcomes. Upon completion, the project director provides a narrative evaluation of the student's work, and the student completes a self-evaluation. The archived copy of the project is signed by the project director, the student's academic advisor, the archivist, and the registrar. The Academic Affairs Committee sets the criteria for senior projects and regularly reviews final reports and assessment for quality control. Please see coa.edu/seniorprojects for examples of student work.

The college believes that the intense planning, structured work, dedicated faculty/professional mentoring, rigorous evaluation, public review, and structured documentation associated with the senior project reflect well on student learning. As mentioned above in Section A, the faculty are currently in discussion about possible ways to incorporate specific documentation and assessment of institutional learning goals into senior project design and evaluation.

Internships

All COA students complete either a credited (440-hour) or non-credited (320-hour) internship as part of their core graduation requirements. Internships provide students with opportunities to explore career options and professional settings, meet and network with people in the field, and learn skills that cannot be gleaned through coursework alone. Students intern at a range of businesses, organizations, nonprofits, schools, and research labs in the US and around the world. All students must complete at least one internship; about 20% elect to do a second internship during their studies at COA. As mentioned in Section A, the college finds internships an essential tool for students to apply their academic learning.

Like senior projects, internships are reviewed at multiple levels and by multiple groups. First, students must draft an internship proposal that is reviewed/approved by the Internship Committee (composed of faculty, staff, and students). On these proposals, students list learning goals, discuss

work schedules, and describe how the experience would connect to their areas of focus and broader concepts of human ecology. The proposal must also include a letter of commitment from the location of the proposed internship. Once approved, the student is allowed to begin work. The internship director works with sponsors/employers to outline our program and solicit performance evaluations from site supervisors. The evaluations include questions about general work habits and how well performance meets expectations. Students have regular meetings with their site supervisor (at least weekly) to discuss progress, and at least one check-in meeting with our director of internships and career development. Upon completion of the internship, the student receives an official evaluation of work from the site sponsor, drafts an internship report that reflects upon their attainment of learning goals, and completes a self-narrative evaluation for their transcript. The Internship Committee reviews the student's final report and the sponsor's evaluation and then drafts an institutional narrative evaluation documenting the student's learning. As mentioned above in Section A, the faculty are currently in discussion about possible ways to incorporate specific documentation and assessment of institutional learning goals into internship design and evaluation of the final report.

Course evaluations

Course evaluations, provided by students at the end of each term, are reviewed annually by the provost's office (for multi-year, continuing faculty) and the Academic Affairs Committee (for visiting professors). Faculty are also peer reviewed on a regular basis and their course evaluations are assessed by a team of faculty and students. One focus of these reviews relates to how well students in their courses are meeting learning outcomes. If deficiencies are identified regarding learning outcomes or teaching issues, the Faculty Development Group drafts a remediation/support plan. Continued failure to meet base standards result in non-renewal of contract.

Faculty training to improve learning

Based on some lower-performing NSSE indicators and internal surveys regarding support for student success, the college has made efforts to improve student support services. Faculty meetings have invited guests such as our director of wellness and student support to ensure that all faculty (including adjuncts) understand the support services available to all students. These support services include accommodations for disabilities or learning differences, assistance with mental health issues, and identification of staff support (for example, study skills, counselors, teaching assistants, tutors, and the writing center). See Section A of this essay for additional documentation of how we are addressing this need.

Appraisal and projection

Narrative evaluations. From our internal research, it is clear that narrative evaluations provide a rich documentation of student achievement at the individual course level. The college can do a better job at requiring such narratives to also reflect on institutional learning goals. In addition, the college needs to develop better training and documentation on expectations of what should (and should not be) included in narrative evaluations. Over the past years we have found some questionable reflections in faculty narratives, such as comments about mental health, learning differences, and non-curricular work commitments. In each of these cases corrections were immediately made to the student transcripts—but this further emphasizes the need for comprehensive improvement. To that end, the associate dean of teaching and learning established a training program for new faculty and visitors which includes discussions and examples of productive narrative assessments. The next step in the process is to have the faculty speak directly to institutional learning goals in their narratives along with their course content objectives. As referenced in Area of Special Emphasis Five,

comprehensive approach to assessment, his process is underway following the spring 2023 approval of revised learning goals.

Writing portfolios. The college's next step with writing portfolios is to continue to improve and expand our focus on quantitative assessment. COA has hired a full-time faculty member, Dr. Su Yin Khor, to serve as the writing program director. Dr. Khor is eager to pursue assessment related to writing improvements. In addition, Khor specializes in research focusing on the intersection of writing, literacy, and multilingual/second language studies. This area of focus will be particularly helpful at COA where we have a relatively large international student body and a focus on decolonizing the curriculum.

Senior projects. The Academic Affairs Committee has spent the past five years comprehensively reviewing the senior project process to ensure a more consistent and rigorous experience for students. In 2018, the committee developed a series of measures that were designed to ensure that all seniors completing their projects were also undertaking some form of associated public communication or presentation that would allow their work greater impact. Early tracking of these measures suggested success in getting students into the broader community to discuss their work. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic halted this progress, making it very difficult, even impossible at times, for seniors to share their projects. Academic Affairs will be restarting the tracking of that information in the coming year; we plan to regain the progress achieved prior to the pandemic.

A working group of the Academic Affairs Committee has been meeting since 2021 to update and strengthen the scaffolding for senior project preparation and guidance. The committee is currently overhauling senior project guidance documents and other resources provided to seniors. They are also meticulously reviewing and improving submission guidelines in order to address any ambiguities in the process and ensure greater consistency and uniformity across all projects. Many of these changes will go into effect in the 2023-24 academic year. At the same time, as a result of the faculty's work to examine and update the goals of a COA education, there is a working group of faculty that has formed to take a closer look at how senior projects can more consistently and systematically assess and demonstrate those goals. We anticipate they will bring forward a series of recommendations in the 2023-24 academic year.

Internships. The academic services team recently digitized and standardized the way students apply for internships and submit internship reports. This new system assures that each member of the academic services team has access to relevant contacts, placements, and documents. This new system is a vast improvement over the previous paper system that could only be accessed in the internship office. In addition, the college has recently hired a new director of internships and student development, Dr. Jeffrey Neuhouser. We are confident that Dr. Neuhouser's specialty in career service program development for college students will help us address deficiencies in this area, as identified in alumni and student surveys. The college looks forward to updating the Commission on developing programs and outcomes in our next self-study.

Course evaluations. The Academic Affairs Committee is considering reassessing course narrative evaluation forms to include a more direct assessment of student learning pertaining to institutional learning goals. The next scheduled review for course evaluation forms is in 2025.

SECTION C: MEASURES OF STUDENT SUCCESS, INCLUDING RETENTION AND GRADUATION

Description

The college continues to monitor persistence and graduation rates to predict institutional trends by cohort. Additional information about our persistence and graduation rates, and strategies for improvement, can be found in Area of Special Emphasis Four, persistence and graduation rates. The college's retention efforts continue to be supported by internal and external funds. Internally, COA supports the College Opportunity and Access (COA²) program by paying for a portion of the director's salary (the director is a full-time faculty member who receives additional compensation for the additional duties associated with this position). In addition, COA continues to receive external support from the MELMAC foundation (most recently via a \$50,000 grant awarded in January 2023) to help support institutional retention efforts.

The college also tracks student awards, recognitions, graduate school acceptance rates, job placement rates, and professional student presentations and publications. The college believes these external recognitions serve as another means of cross-validating student success. This section details some of the major accomplishments we have seen since the last self-study, along with our intentions for improved tracking in the future.

Findings and analysis

Some key retention and persistence data: COA monitors regional and national trends in order that we may better predict future enrollment and benchmark against peer institutions. For example, the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (NSCRC) data for 2021-2022 shows that the average first-to-second-year retention rate for all colleges in the US was 75.5%; COA's was 74% for the same period. The NSCRC further reported that the average six-year graduation rate for this same time was 65%; while COA's was 67%. Looking at these broad metrics, it is clear that COA is on par with national averages.

As mentioned in Area of Special Emphasis Four, persistence and graduation rates, COA also tracks many specific internal cohorts in relation to these items. The biggest change since the 2017 ten-year self-study relates to specific data being gathered in relation to cohorts in the COA² program—US students who are first generation, Pell eligible, or BIPOC. For this cohort, we have begun to disaggregate first- to second-term retention, first- to second-, second- to third-, and third- to fourth-year persistence, and graduation rates in order to monitor differences according to Pell eligibility, parents' highest educational attainment, and student's race or ethnicity. Concurrently, we implemented the COA² program for 66 students in the past two years.

During the first two years of the pilot COA² program, we saw some modest gains in first- to second-term and first- to second-year persistence among this cohort. In the first cohort (entering fall 2019), 94% continued into their second term, compared with 86% of those who were eligible for the program but chose not to participate. This trend reversed at the end of their first year, when students were required to return home and continue their education remotely. Only 82% continued into the second year, compared with 93% of those who opted out of the program. In the second to third year, when students returned to campus, 82% of those in the program persisted, compared to 72% of those who opted out of the program.

Generally, those who identified as first-generation college students fared better by a factor of two or three than their peers who opted out of the program. This positive result was not the case for BIPOC and Pell-eligible participants. These differences are likely tied to the idea that students who self-

identified as more likely to benefit from the program were also those who were more likely to suffer negative consequences from the pandemic, as documented nationwide for BIPOC and low-income students. For those students who finished their last term of high school and began their first year of college at the start of the pandemic, this trend persisted.

Since the first year of COA², the college has made a concerted effort to ensure that all low-income, first-generation, and BIPOC students have the opportunity to benefit from the various programming offered (regardless of whether they opt into the program). The benefits to those who opt into the program included participation in early move-in and orientation with hand-picked academic advisors and peer connections. From the data we have analyzed to date, it has been gratifying to see that the gap in annual average GPA between Pell-eligible and ineligible, first- and continuing-generation students, and BIPOC and white students has decreased.

Although GPA has not been the ideal indicator of educational effectiveness for our students due to the college’s emphasis on the use of narrative evaluations, a recent exploratory analysis has shown that for the Class of 2023, which is the first class to have benefited from the program, the difference in average annual GPA between Pell-eligible and Pell-ineligible students decreased from 0.174 at the end of their first year to -0.097 at the end of the third year. The smallest differences were between first-generation and continuing-generation students, yet in this group, we also noted a slight decrease in the difference from the end of the first to the end of the third year, with a slight increase during the first year of the pandemic. The average annual GPA difference between BIPOC and white students increased from the first to the second year and only decreased slightly in the third year. (See GPA data charts in Area of Special Emphasis Two, systematic approach to the collection and use of data.) This data point is another piece of supporting evidence that our approach to ensuring BIPOC students enjoy an equally high-quality education at COA needs to be revisited.

Overall, the college continues to see United World College Students (UWC) students persisting and graduating at slightly elevated rates compared to non-UWC students (see table below). The college believes the UWC students may persist at increased rates due to the stronger pre-college preparation the UWC system affords, targeted support services, and because they generally receive a higher level of student aid due to the Davis Scholarship.

1st to 2nd year persistence	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
UWC	100%	95%	100%	95%
COA overall	79%	89%	81%	74%
Six-year graduation rate				
UWC	88%	94%	88%	70%
COA overall	52%	66%	67%	67%

As mentioned in Area of Special Emphasis Five, comprehensive approach to assessment, a multi-year process has been initiated through which additional means to assess student success beyond persistence and graduation can inform advising, curriculum, and teaching innovations to address any identified gaps in our intended educational objectives and what students demonstrate they have learned. As discussed below, we are working on a new process through which to monitor and analyze graduates’ achievements, including employment and graduate school completion as well as honors, awards, and other special accomplishments.

Student awards, fellowships, and presentations

COA students continue to win regional and national awards in big numbers for our small size. These awards and recognitions further demonstrate our students' successes in acquisition of skills that are recognized by external sources. For example, in just the last two years, COA students have won:

- Two Watson Fellowships
- Five Projects for Peace awards
- Once Udall Scholarship
- Two Garden Club of America awards
- One Barry Goldwater Scholarship
- One Maine Audubon Sal Rooney Scholarship
- Six IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence awards
- Five summer research project scholarships through the National Science Foundation
- Two Greenlight Maine business pitch competition finalists
- Four summer fellowships at the Jackson Laboratory
- Two research fellows at the MDI Biological Laboratory
- One student team accepted to The Draper Competition for Collegiate Women Entrepreneurs
- Two finalists for the 2022 Maine Center for Entrepreneurs' "Top Gun" business training program
- One Clinton Global Initiative University participant
- One student selected for the 2023 cohort of Dirigo Labs Accelerator business training program
- One student as a winning member in the Arctic Opportunity Explorers Program.

In addition, over half of COA students make professional presentations at regional, national, and international conferences before completing their degree. Some recent examples include student presentations at:

- The International Society for Human Ecology Conference
- The Waterbird Society Annual Meeting
- United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties 27
- Northeast Natural History Conference
- North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium
- Maine Sustainability and Water Conference
- Geoscience of MDI website development team

Since our last report, we have begun work on a new process to collect data on alumni activity including employment, awards, and graduate school completion. The alumni relations manager posts graduate surveys and gleans information about alumni achievements, publications, exhibits, performances, and other notable accomplishments from *COA Magazine*, the alumni network, social media, Google alerts, and alumni contacts. A parallel process is under development for current student accomplishments, coordinated by the donor engagement manager and supported by the academic deans and financial aid office, with regard to external scholarships or fellowships awarded, along with notable internships, senior projects, publications, and other recognitions and accolades. Even though the college has made some improvements to the ways we track this information, we recognize that we have more work to do. We see an ideal opportunity to partner with the office of

internships and career services on this and we look forward to working with our new director of internships & career development to plan this strategy.

External college awards and recognitions

External institutional awards and recognition help to validate our students' learning environment and educational experiences. To that end, the college would like to highlight a few awards from the last two years:

- The Princeton Review's 2023 Guide to Green Colleges named COA as the greenest college in the country. This is the seventh year in a row for COA to be named to this top spot by the Princeton Review.
- The Princeton Review also ranked COA in the nation's top 10 colleges and universities for great professors, strong financial aid, students who study the most, and, to the #1 spot for schools where everyone cares about conservation (2022).
- College of the Atlantic is the #1 zero-waste campus in the country, according to the 2021 and 2022 rankings from the Post Landfill Action Network.
- COA was in a three-way tie with two other campuses for the highest undergraduate voting rate in the nation, according to the results of the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge (2022). This shows a strong student dedication to political action and community engagement.

The COA campus was selected by acclaimed artist Andy Goldsworthy, known for his environmentally oriented, site-specific installations that span the globe, as the site of his first permanent artwork in the State of Maine, *Road Line*. Our students have been able to meet and learn directly with Andy as this installation progresses in 2023.

Appraisal and projection

The college is assessing its enrollment data in meaningful ways that help us understand student trends throughout their academic life cycle. The hiring of the new institutional research specialist has already been an asset towards collating and analyzing existing institutional data and for developing better assessment practices as we move forward. Our retention/persistence efforts directed toward some of our least advantaged students (Pell-eligible, and/or BIPOC) through the COA² program have yielded positive results and important data. We intend to export and expand successful practices learned with these cohorts to the broader student body.

As described in Area of Special Emphasis Two, systematic approach to the collection and use of data, the Academic Affairs Committee has collected three successive years of data from the new student enrollment process and plans to review it against student performance and retention data to determine if there are predictive variables that could improve advising and course planning efforts.

Data on student success is still elusive in some areas. Though the college is able to gather solid data on major student awards, we are less effective in tracking student and alumni publications, professional presentations, and off-campus research. Some of the problem rests in the large amount of turnover we have had in offices where these data are gathered, including those of the alumni coordinator, director of internships and career development, manager of student support services, and registrar. This has been identified as an issue to be rectified in the short term, and a new system for collecting this data is being developed.

SECTION D: SATISFACTORY LEVELS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ON MISSION-APPROPRIATE STUDENT OUTCOMES

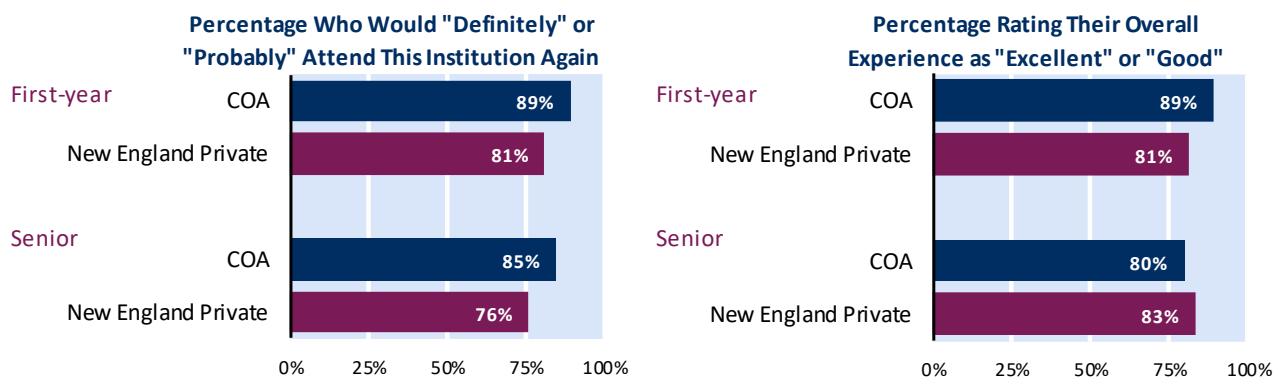
Description

Although the college measures student achievement in many ways, we would like to highlight the following:

- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data—reviewed and monitored for changes across 2-3 year cycles
- Alumni surveys, student surveys, feedback forums, and exit interviews
- Periodic analysis of senior project faculty narrative evaluations and goals
- Feedback from industry experts who certify, hire, review, or collaborate with our graduates
- Strategic planning processes, including the current institution-wide process and the recent DEI process

Findings and analysis

As a result of our experiential, self-directed, and authentic learning model, COA students are highly satisfied with their educational experiences at this college, according to the 2022 NSSE report. We note a modest drop in satisfaction between first-year students and seniors surveyed in 2022, but this notably reflects the graduating cohort that just came through the pandemic. Past NSSE data does not show a similar trend. The college will monitor this closely and look for answers in our exit interviews in the coming year.



More telling, however, is the high percentage of students who would choose to re-attend COA as benchmarked against to other New England private institutions. We believe this is a powerful metric of overall satisfaction.

Alumni surveys and anecdotal information

When COA surveyed our alumni, we found more encouraging news supporting our claims associated with our learning goals. A total of 92-98% of graduates who responded agreed with the following statements:

- COA taught me critical thinking skills.
- COA prepared me to work on complex issues.

- COA prepared me for creative problem solving.
- I am doing work that strives for positive change in the world.
- I am doing work that is meaningful to me.

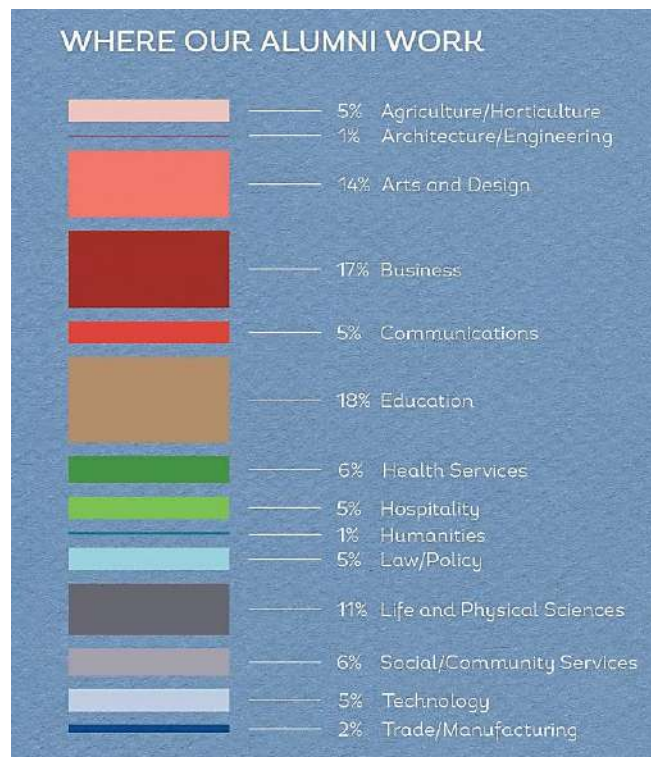
The same survey suggested that we need to do more to support our students with disabilities, learning differences, and mental health needs (less than 62% satisfaction of current practices). Additionally, we had many comments requesting additional career development assistance from the college, plans for which we have addressed elsewhere in this essay.

Data from the alumni office shows that 97% of alumni have gone to graduate school or are fully employed within one year of graduation (24% immediately enter graduate programs, 73% immediately enter the workforce). We also positively note that more than 60% of our students pursue graduate studies within five years of graduation. Many of our alumni attend top graduate schools around the country. In 2022, the graduate schools most commonly attended by COA graduates include:

- American University
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Duke University
- Georgetown University Law School
- Harvard University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Lewis & Clark College
- Northeastern University
- Syracuse University
- Tufts University
- University of Connecticut
- University of Maine
- University of Montana
- University of Oregon
- University of Southern Maine
- University of Virginia
- Yale University

According to data from the alumni office, students from COA find employment in their area of academic interest at high levels (86%). In the past five years, alumni careers are distributed as represented in the chart to the right.

COA has high percentages of alumni in professions that are grounded in service to humanity and to the planet. In addition to formal surveys, COA alumni are part of a connected community that stays engaged with the college and hence we have robust anecdotal data about post-COA life. Our evidence suggests that many alumni in a wide range of fields are focused on mission-driven work, including sustainable business, human-rights-centered health services, education, food systems, social justice, and much more. They are a living embodiment



of our mission to “be part of a community of individuals who strive unapologetically to not just study the world, but change it for the better.”

Analysis of senior project faculty narrative evaluations

A recent analysis by the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning of senior project narrative evaluations and proposals found goals documenting several important learning dispositions (e.g., courage, enthusiasm, flexibility, independence, patience, persistence, reliability, resilience, resourcefulness, and trustworthiness), knowledge areas (e.g., architecture, business, healthcare), and skills (e.g., metacognition, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and community involvement). These further elaborated on indicators of these skills.

- Communication includes spoken, creative writing and nonfiction, mixed media, visual, and web design.
- Community involvement encompasses collaboration, conflict engagement, cross-cultural learning, event organizing, facilitation, and participatory research.
- Creativity involves adaptation, execution, innovation, and problem solving.
- Critical thinking is evidenced through survey design, participant observation, interviewing, data analysis, and program evaluation.
- Interdisciplinarity is demonstrated through multidisciplinary synthesis and application and cross-disciplinary fluency.

Feedback from industry experts

The college’s faculty and staff maintain strong connections with leaders, experts, thinkers, and applied workers in the fields our students and alumni work in. These relationships provide valuable feedback about the competencies and contributions of COA alumni. One concrete example is the formal Maine Board of Education review of COA’s teacher certification preparation programs and student teaching portfolios. This program-specific process takes place every five years through an external visiting team including peers and members of the Maine Board of Education to review the educator preparation programs for PK-8, secondary English language arts, life sciences, and social studies, and PK-12 visual arts. Through a multi-phase process culminating in a pre- and post-student teaching portfolio review, teaching candidates successfully meeting initial licensure requirements are recommended to the Maine Department of Education to receive the appropriate professional endorsement. We have a 100% employment rate for candidates who complete certification requirements. Our most recent educator preparation program five-year review concluded with commendations on all five standards. The visiting team commended our candidates’ preparations to work in schools as teachers, particularly our “multifaceted approach to how students show evidence around the teaching standards that include the formal and final interview, construction of the e-portfolio, and engagement with faculty and supporting teachers,” noting that the reflection and self-assessment is consistently embedded into the program around the Maine Common Teaching Standards and additionally a twelfth standard that has been added to provide intentionality around the focus of human ecology. The program was also commended for its assessment system and unit evaluation, “the strength and breadth of the internships, field placements, and service-learning opportunities for candidates,” and its intentionality around diversity, equity, and inclusion, among other factors.

Strategic planning processes

Our current institution-wide strategic planning process has gathered substantial feedback from members of the community including students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Among the many insights generated were:

- Affirmation of the current interdisciplinary approach even in a world that increasingly asks graduates for isolated pragmatic skills
- A sense of urgency regarding the critical relevance of our learning goals (integrative thinking, community engagement, and so on) in a rapidly transforming world
- Appreciation for unique opportunities available at COA, such as the variety of field-based ecology and natural history courses.

The strategic planning process to date has also identified some areas with room for improvement, such as linking career development more closely to the curriculum, as well as some system and infrastructure challenges that should be addressed in order to ensure the college's continued educational effectiveness.

As detailed in Standard Two, planning and evaluation, the recent DEI strategic planning process also gathered substantial feedback from members of the community and resulted in a deliberate effort to decolonize the curriculum and expand inclusive pedagogy.

Appraisal and projection

Going forward, we will continue to monitor NSSE results and use the exit interview process to better understand trends that develop. We will continue to survey alumni and maintain professional relationships in diverse sectors, so we can understand our graduates' preparedness, satisfaction, and unique contributions.

The COA institution-wide strategic plan for 2024-34 is underway and will incorporate the findings noted above—and many more—in relation to the curriculum and our teaching and learning effectiveness. The plan is due to be finalized in early 2024. The DEI strategic planning process took place 2019-2021 and the DEI Strategic Plan Phase One, finalized in 2021, calls for a total of nine immediate actions and longer-term considerations related to envisioning and enacting an anti-racist curriculum and pedagogy.

We look forward to sharing the results of this work in future updates.

**Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness
(Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates)**

Student Success Measures/ Prior Performance and Goals	3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	Prior	Prior	Prior		
	(FY2019)	(FY2020)	(FY2021)	(FY 2022)	(FY2023)
IPEDS Retention Data					
Associate degree students					
Bachelors degree students	79%	89%	81%	74%	
IPEDS Graduation Data (150% of time)					
Associate degree students					
Bachelors degree students	52%	66%	67%	58%	
IPEDS Outcomes Measures Data					
First-time, full time students					
Awarded a degree within six years	66%	67%	51%	66%	
Awarded a degree within eight years	70%	68%	52%	57%	
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
First-time, part-time students					
Awarded a degree within six years	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Awarded a degree within eight years	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Non-first-time, full-time students					
Awarded a degree within six years	48%	77%	64%	72%	
Awarded a degree within eight years	52%	77%	64%	25%	
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non-first-time, part-time students					
Awarded a degree within six years	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Awarded a degree within eight years	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Not awarded within eight years but still enrolled	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other Undergraduate Retention/Persistence Rates (Add definitions/methodology in #1 below)					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
Other Undergraduate Graduation Rates (Add definitions/methodology in # 2 below)					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
Definition and Methodology Explanations					
1					
2					

Note: complete this form for each distinct student body identified by the institution (See Standard 8.1)

Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness
(Student Success and Progress Rates and Other Measures of Student Success)

Category of Student/Outcome Measure	Bachelor Cohort Entering		Associate Cohort Entering	
	6 years ago	4 years ago	6 years ago	4 years ago
First-time, Full-time Students				
Degree from original institution	58%	57%		
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution	0%			
Degree from a different institution				
Transferred to a different institution	34%			
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolled				
First-time, Part-time Students				
Degree from original institution	0%	0%		
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution	0%	0%		
Degree from a different institution	0%	0%		
Transferred to a different institution	0%	0%		
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolled	0%	0%		
Non-first-time, Full-time Students				
Degree from original institution	79%	92%		
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution	0%			
Degree from a different institution				
Transferred to a different institution				
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolled				
Non-first-time, Part-time Students				
Degree from original institution	0%	0%		
Not graduated, still enrolled at original institution	0%	0%		
Degree from a different institution	0%	0%		
Transferred to a different institution	0%	0%		
Not graduated, never transferred, no longer enrolled	0%	0%		

Measures of Student Achievement and Success/Institutional Performance and Goals					
	Prior (FY 2)	Prior (FY2)	Prior (FY 2)	Current Year (FY 2)	Forward (goal) (FY 2)
1	Success of students pursuing higher degrees (add more rows as needed; add definitions/methodology in #1 below)				
1	Other measures of student success and achievement, including success of graduates in pursuing mission-related paths (e.g., Peace Corps, public service, global citizenship, leadership, spiritual formation) and success of graduates in fields for which they were not explicitly prepared (add more rows as needed; add definitions/methodology in #2 below)				
1	Definition and Methodology Explanations				

**Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness
(Licensure Passage and Job Placement Rates and
Completion and Placement Rates for Short-Term Vocational Training Programs)**

	3-Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Most Recent Year
	(FY2019)	(FY2020)	(FY2021)	(FY2022)

? State Licensure Examination Passage Rates								
Name of exam	# who took exam	# who passed	# who took exam	# who passed	# who took exam	# who passed	# who took exam	# who passed
1 Teacher Certification	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
2								
3								
4								
5								

? National Licensure Passage Rates								
Name of exam	# who took exam	# who passed	# who took exam	# who passed	# who took exam	# who passed	# who took exam	# who passed
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

? Job Placement Rates									
Major/time period	*	# of grads	jobs	# of grads	jobs	# of grads	jobs	# of grads	# with jobs
1 Teaching		3	3	4	2	2	2	4	3
2									
3									
4									
5									

* Check this box if the program reported is subject to "gainful employment" requirements.

Web location of gainful employment report (if applicable)

Completion and Placement Rates for Short-Term Vocational Training Programs for which students are eligible for Federal Financial Aid

	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	(FY 2)	(FY2)	(FY 2)	(FY 2)	(FY 2)

? Completion Rates					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

? Placement Rates					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Please enter any explanatory notes in the box below

In 2020, all testing was discontinued in Maine and only Pathway Two has resumed in this previous year.

**Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness
(Graduate Programs, Distance Education, Off-Campus Locations)**

Student Success Measures/ Prior Performance and Goals	3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current Year	Next Year Forward (goal)
	Prior (Fall 2019)	Prior (Fall 2020)	Prior (Fall 2021)	(Fall 2022)	(Fall 2023)
? Master's Programs (Add definitions/methodology in #1 below)					
Retention rates first-to-second year	100%	100%	100%	n/a	
Graduation rates @ 150% time	100%	50%	100%	n/a	
Average time to degree	2.3 yr	2 yr	3 yr	1 student, still	enrolled
Other measures, specify:					
? Doctoral Programs (Add definitions/methodology in #2 below)					
Retention rates first-to-second year					
Graduation rates @ 150% time					
Average time to degree					
Other measures, specify:					
? First Professional Programs (Add definitions/methodology in #3 below)					
Retention rates first-to-second year					
Graduation rates @ 150% time					
Average time to degree					
Other measures, specify:					
Distance Education (Add definitions/methodology in #4 below)					
Course completion rates					
Retention rates					
Graduation rates					
Other measures, specify:					
Branch Campus and Instructional Locations (Add definitions/methodology in #5 below)					
Course completion rates					
Retention rates					
Graduation rates					
Other measures, specify:					
Definition and Methodology Explanations					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Institutional Plans

In this section, we identify eight significant issues and initiatives that will help frame our efforts as we work collectively to create an ever-stronger College of the Atlantic.

Persistence

Improving our first- to second-year retention rate and four- and six-year graduation rates, even by a few percentage points, would provide an added layer of fiscal stability as we confront the approaching demographic shifts among college-aged students. It is also important to recognize that persistence figures are reflective of the quality of the COA experience, even while keeping in mind that there can be many other factors at play. Improving persistence is an overarching goal that is being baked into the 2024-34 strategic plan and in some ways persistence rates will be an important indicator of the relative success of the creation and implementation of the strategic plan.

Strategic plan implementation

According to our strategic planning calendar, by January 2024 the college should have a ratified, 10-year strategic plan in hand. This fall, we will continue with the community process, including finalizing details and building community understanding and support in the lead up to a policy vote at All College Meeting. Our focus over the next 10 years, including the period leading up to our next decennial report to the Commission, will be on the implementation of the strategic plan, including establishing measurable objectives and strategies, putting operational initiatives into place, and building appropriate metrics for progress and improvement.

Stronger connections between institutional goals and learning outcomes

The college has completed some major elements of this initiative including revising our core institutional learning goals and increasing our capacity to gather and use relevant data. Our work in this area will continue as faculty working groups bring forth recommendations for more meaningfully evaluating student work in relation to the core goals and as our new cohort of staff in the registrar's office, institutional research, career services, and others work within the goals and strategies of the 2024-34 strategic plan to develop appropriate systems for better analysis and use of both internal and external data.

The next capital campaign

The multi-year process of strategic planning at COA has helped clarify a number of issues, and visions, of great importance to members of the COA community and the overall health and wellbeing of the college. Through our community process, these ideas are being incorporated into the 2024-34 strategic plan. As they crystallize into specific operational goals and strategies, we'll be facing many funding opportunities. Just as the college's previous strategic plan, The COA MAP, led to the (very successful) *Broad Reach* capital campaign, we fully expect the 2024-34 plan to lead to a similar fundraising effort. This important philanthropic work will be of utmost importance as we continue to grow into the future.

Systematization

The past 10 years have seen important improvements in our back-of-the-house systems in the advancement and admissions offices. That said, as an institution we have not taken full advantage of the efficiencies that would be available with more unified, integrated IT and data systems operations. It further behooves us on behalf of our DEI commitments to improve our systems so that we may present more equitable, inclusive, and standardized interfaces. COA has an important and vital living

history as an experimental college with a strong oral tradition, but after arriving at a total campus community of approximately 500, we must take more systematic, coordinated approaches to operations. One of the first areas to benefit from this new emphasis on systems is our financial and accounting framework. Moving forward, and as is being outlined in our 2023-34 strategic plan, we will embrace systems improvements in sectors across the college.

Staff/faculty changes and housing

We are amidst the greatest demographic transition in the history of the college, with significant retirements in staff and faculty. This turnover presents challenges but also gives us the opportunity to reexamine our collective direction—and, as has been described, we are doing that as part of our 10-year strategic plan and through various working groups and committees. These efforts will lead to actionable goals and objectives which will be of importance in the years ahead. More proximately, hiring new staff and faculty has become increasingly difficult because of the inadequacies of the local housing market. Attracting excellent faculty and staff necessitates that we address some of these housing needs ourselves. We have the property to do that, but need a plan and additional financial resources.

Focus on careers

Engaging in a massive data collection effort with five decades of COA alumni, our strategic planning process identified improved career preparedness services as an area of critical need for the college. As we welcome new staff in this area and support from the 10-year strategic plan, we will seek to develop ways to support all of our students more in this regard, during the time of their studies here, into the period immediately following graduation, and beyond. We have an engaged, positive alumni base and many professional connections that have been developed over the years, all of which give us a solid footing. As we learn to incorporate better use of data, improve and deploy more advanced systems, continue to focus on our human connections, and take a proactive approach to career preparedness, we can expect to step off that footing and make solid progress over the next decade.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

Working toward an anti-racist curriculum and a college community that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive is of vital importance to COA as an institution, and relates directly to our mission to investigate, and improve, our relationships with our social and natural communities. Passage of the 2021 DEI Strategic Plan Phase One was an important step, and the college has engaged in several processes looking at implementation and next steps. These have led to several successful initiatives, as detailed, but have also faced challenging circumstances related to the strain on planning resources caused by the pandemic. As we work to craft our 2024-34 strategic plan the elements outlined in the 2021 DEI strategic plan remain front and center, and it is our objective to incorporate these elements as much as actionably possible into the strategic plan. The DEI strategic planning process, and subsequent guiding document, remain elements of great importance as we plan and implement our future. Implementing specific objectives and strategies as related to DEI at COA will be an important part of our work in the decade ahead.

Appendix

- A. Affirmation of Compliance with Federal Regulations Relating to Title IV
- B. Audited Financial Statement
- C. Auditor's Management Letter (with recommendations)
- D. E-Series Form (E3): Making Assessment More Explicit

Appendix A

AFFIRMATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS RELATING TO TITLE IV

Periodically, member institutions are asked to affirm their compliance with federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

- 1. Credit Transfer Policies.** The institution’s policy on transfer of credit is publicly disclosed through its website and other relevant publications. The institution includes a statement of its criteria for transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education along with a list of institutions with which it has articulation agreements. (NECHE Policy 95. See also *Standards for Accreditation* 4.29-4.32 and 9.18.)

URL	www.coa.edu/registrar
Print Publications	COA Course Catalog (annual publication)
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	30–31

- 2. Student Complaints.** “Policies on student rights and responsibilities, including grievance procedures, are clearly stated, well publicized and readily available, and fairly and consistently administered.” (*Standards for Accreditation* 5.18, 9.8, and 9.18.)

URL	www.coa.edu/policies
Print Publications	COA Course Catalog (annual publication)
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	36, 56–57

- 3. Distance and Correspondence Education: Verification of Student Identity:** If the institution offers distance education or correspondence education, it has processes in place to establish that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit. . . .The institution protects student privacy and notifies students at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity. (NECHE Policy 95. See also *Standards for Accreditation* 4.48.)

Method(s) used for verification	COA does not offer distance or correspondence education
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	Not applicable

- 4. FOR COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS ONLY: Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Opportunity for Public Comment:** The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public of an upcoming comprehensive evaluation and to solicit comments. (NECHE Policy 77.)

URL	
Print Publications	
Self-study Page Reference	

The undersigned affirms that College of the Atlantic (institution name) meets the above federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including those enumerated above.

Chief Executive Officer: 

Date: August 10, 2023

March, 2016, June 2020, August 2021

Appendix B



College of the Atlantic

**Financial Statements for the Years Ended
June 30, 2022 and 2021 with Supplemental Schedule
and Independent Auditors' Report**

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**Financial Statements for the Years Ended
June 30, 2022 and 2021 with Supplemental Schedule
and Independent Auditors' Report**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Trustees
College of the Atlantic

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of College of the Atlantic (the College), which comprise the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2022, the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as of June 30, 2022, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the College and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Other Matter

The financial statements of the College, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2021 were audited by other auditors, whose report, dated December 1, 2021, expressed an unmodified opinion on those statements.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the College's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of one year from the date that the financial statements are issued or available to be issued.

To the Board of Trustees
College of the Atlantic

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the College's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the College's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as of and for the year ended June 30, 2022, as a whole. The accompanying supplementary information is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information as of and for the year ended June 30, 2022, has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information as of and for the year ended June 30, 2022 is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole. The supplementary information as of June 30, 2021, was audited by other auditors, whose report, dated December 1, 2021, expressed an unmodified opinion on such information in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Baku Newman & Noyes LLC
Portland, Maine
December 19, 2022

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

June 30, 2022 and 2021

ASSETS

	2022	2021
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 8,075,716	\$ 4,995,166
Restricted cash	211,539	211,795
Accounts receivable, net	258,197	157,440
Inventories	11,128	18,343
Prepaid expenses	84,604	124,761
Student loan receivables, net	115,478	163,889
Promises to give - other	2,419,403	5,868,567
Promises to give - capital purposes	3,667,584	8,078,416
Promises to give - endowments	1,893,284	3,286,726
Note receivable - related party	123,185	126,032
Beneficial interest in trust	-	525,165
Funds held by bond trustee	6,386,459	1,114,183
Investments - endowment	67,786,884	81,831,154
Other assets	109,872	245,907
Property and equipment, net	42,532,695	34,399,577
Total Assets	\$ 133,676,028	\$ 141,147,121

LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS

Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 535,020	\$ 396,709
Accrued payroll	360,657	307,135
Accrued expenses	288,730	122,882
Line of credit	-	350,358
Deferred tuition revenue	370,763	318,221
Deferred revenue - other	72,488	55,889
Federal portion of student loan funds	81,209	111,609
Bonds payable	14,010,553	5,701,555
Total Liabilities	15,719,420	7,364,358
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions	44,267,492	43,094,855
With donor restrictions	73,689,116	90,687,908
Total Net Assets	117,956,608	133,782,763
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 133,676,028	\$ 141,147,121

See independent auditor's report.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended June 30, 2022

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Operating Activities			
Revenue, Gains and Other Support			
Tuition	\$ 15,256,003	\$ -	\$ 15,256,003
Less: Davis United World College scholarships	(1,712,778)	-	(1,712,778)
Less: other student aid	(9,165,375)	-	(9,165,375)
	<u>4,377,850</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,377,850</u>
Sales and service of auxiliary enterprises	2,374,846	-	2,374,846
Summer programs	151,466	-	151,466
Government grants	1,029,074	-	1,029,074
Contributions	2,973,898	3,158,139	6,132,037
Endowment utilized for operations	2,557,532	-	2,557,532
Other sources	450,931	-	450,931
Net assets released from restrictions	2,944,079	(2,944,079)	-
Net assets released from restrictions - capital campaign pledges	3,671,815	(3,671,815)	-
Net assets released from restrictions - annual fund pledges	131,512	(131,512)	-
Total Operating Revenue, Gains and Other Support	<u><u>20,663,003</u></u>	<u><u>(3,589,267)</u></u>	<u><u>17,073,736</u></u>
Expenses			
Program Services	13,550,130	-	13,550,130
Supporting Services			
Management and general	2,424,945	-	2,424,945
Fundraising	936,918	-	936,918
Total Supporting Services	<u>3,361,863</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,361,863</u>
Total Expenses	<u>16,911,993</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,911,993</u>
Changes in Net Assets from Operating Activities	<u>3,751,010</u>	<u>(3,589,267)</u>	<u>161,743</u>
Non-Operating Activities			
Contributions	-	1,191,228	1,191,228
Net investment return (loss) - other investments	-	(4,580)	(4,580)
Net investment return (loss) - endowment investments	(2,982,062)	(11,274,387)	(14,256,449)
Endowment utilized for operations	(2,557,532)	-	(2,557,532)
Pledge write offs	-	(360,565)	(360,565)
Net assets released from restrictions	2,961,221	(2,961,221)	-
Changes in Net Assets from Non-Operating Activities	<u>(2,578,373)</u>	<u>(13,409,525)</u>	<u>(15,987,898)</u>
Changes in Net Assets	1,172,637	(16,998,792)	(15,826,155)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>43,094,855</u>	<u>90,687,908</u>	<u>133,782,763</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	<u><u>\$ 44,267,492</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 73,689,116</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 117,956,608</u></u>

See independent auditor's report.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended June 30, 2021

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Operating Activities			
Revenue, Gains and Other Support			
Tuition	\$ 15,022,063	\$ -	\$ 15,022,063
Less: Davis United World College scholarships	(1,383,148)	-	(1,383,148)
Less: other student aid	(9,331,475)	-	(9,331,475)
	<u>4,307,440</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,307,440</u>
Sales and service of auxiliary enterprises	1,905,623	-	1,905,623
Summer programs	34,961	-	34,961
Government grants	836,746	-	836,746
Contributions	4,581,761	2,460,583	7,042,344
Endowment utilized for operations	2,001,766	-	2,001,766
Other sources	311,387	-	311,387
Net assets released from restrictions	2,385,758	(2,385,758)	-
Net assets released from restrictions - capital campaign pledges	4,326,787	(4,326,787)	-
Net assets released from restrictions - annual fund pledges	149,132	(149,132)	-
Total Operating Revenue, Gains and Other Support	<u>20,841,361</u>	<u>(4,401,094)</u>	<u>16,440,267</u>
Expenses			
Program Services	11,822,723	-	11,822,723
Supporting Services			
Management and general	2,457,085	-	2,457,085
Fundraising	755,727	-	755,727
Total Supporting Services	<u>3,212,812</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,212,812</u>
Total Expenses	<u>15,035,535</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,035,535</u>
Changes in Net Assets from Operating Activities	<u>5,805,826</u>	<u>(4,401,094)</u>	<u>1,404,732</u>
Non-Operating Activities			
Contributions	-	2,651,443	2,651,443
Net investment return (loss) - other investments	-	3,867	3,867
Net investment return (loss) - endowment investments	2,929,812	15,299,374	18,229,186
Endowment utilized for operations	(2,001,766)	-	(2,001,766)
Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness	1,889,000	-	1,889,000
Pledge write offs	-	(10,000)	(10,000)
Net assets released from restrictions	2,001,766	(2,001,766)	-
Changes in Net Assets from Non-Operating Activities	<u>4,818,812</u>	<u>15,942,918</u>	<u>20,761,730</u>
Changes in Net Assets	10,624,638	11,541,824	22,166,462
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>32,470,217</u>	<u>79,146,084</u>	<u>111,616,301</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	<u>\$ 43,094,855</u>	<u>\$ 90,687,908</u>	<u>\$ 133,782,763</u>

See independent auditor's report.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
Year Ended June 30, 2022

	Instructional	Library	Dining and Housing	Summer Programs	Museum	Financial Aid Work Study	Grants, Research and Projects	Beech Hill Farms	Admissions	Total Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Total
Salaries and wages	\$ 3,932,637	\$ 251,606	\$ 209,657	\$ 122,214	\$ 30,787	\$ 346,043	\$ 577,938	\$ 217,665	\$ 294,711	\$ 5,963,236	\$ 883,300	\$ 411,023	\$ 7,247,551
Payroll taxes and employee benefits	1,189,238	74,167	61,801	36,028	9,066	-	170,361	64,162	86,873	1,561,693	281,530	121,189	2,034,327
Depreciation	232,744	155,163	843,070	232,744	77,581	-	-	-	77,581	1,318,883	185,163	77,881	1,551,627
Buildings and grounds	182,023	121,348	424,719	182,023	60,674	-	-	-	60,674	1,031,459	121,348	60,674	1,213,481
Supplies	76,232	7,309	49,928	12,311	8,389	-	259,008	85,931	10,849	809,948	198,531	10,008	713,481
Interest	-	-	363,788	-	-	-	-	-	-	363,788	-	-	363,788
Repairs and maintenance	-	1,375	42,203	79,434	3,751	-	2,462	96,927	-	229,172	111,661	4	340,837
Insurance	-	-	-	590	-	-	-	329	-	919	320,098	-	321,017
Cost of sales - form	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	306,729	-	306,729	-	-	306,729
Cost of sales - food services	-	-	262,814	10,013	-	-	848	-	-	273,672	-	-	273,672
Miscellaneous	8,972	6,183	200	1,183	499	-	111,320	9,378	49,058	186,760	71,664	4,376	262,799
Consultants	73,296	10,819	-	40,790	-	-	60,904	605	-	186,413	14,815	47,963	249,191
Utilities	-	-	122,030	-	13,920	-	19,591	93,365	-	248,996	-	-	248,996
Instructional expenses	172,368	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	172,368	27,617	-	199,985
Fees	-	-	-	4,959	803	-	46	19,270	4,431	29,319	133,247	10,792	173,886
Faculty Awards/Chairs	141,617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	141,617	-	-	141,617
Student activities	127,110	-	-	-	-	-	1,550	-	-	128,670	-	-	128,670
Financial aid	-	-	-	-	-	-	115,231	-	-	115,231	-	-	115,231
Publications and subscriptions	-	47,210	-	-	-	-	1,900	-	54,721	102,931	40	-	102,971
Conferences	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,782	-	4,882	91,644	2,788	491	94,920
Events	11,987	-	-	-	-	-	394	-	4,420	16,801	-	71,294	88,095
Printing and postage	2,181	3,181	-	34	1	-	290	117	8,962	11,766	4,490	67,634	83,690
Student expenses	80,163	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,163	-	-	80,163
Visiting Faculty	78,883	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	78,883	-	-	78,883
Technology	16,167	20,496	-	-	-	-	210	-	-	36,872	37,828	-	74,700
Membership and dues	31,606	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,770	37,376	22,338	10,224	69,938
Travel	-	100	-	84	-	-	25,090	2,770	9,703	37,717	7,048	7,556	52,313
Equipment	-	24,068	-	1,955	-	-	12,636	-	-	38,659	9,297	3,388	51,344
Management fee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,326	-	48,326	-	-	48,326
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46,340	-	46,340
Advertising and marketing	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,578	-	25,253	27,931	-	13,067	40,993
Telephone	2,281	-	-	-	-	-	4,224	1,248	723	8,473	26,762	873	36,108
Occupancy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26,296	-	26,296	9,046	-	35,344
Alumni	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	200	-	18,516	18,716
Small projects	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,973	-	-	12,973	-	-	12,973
Storage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,385	-	4,385	-	-	4,385
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,209	3,209
Totals	\$ 6,329,473	\$ 723,024	\$ 2,080,210	\$ 724,328	\$ 205,211	\$ 346,043	\$ 1,465,621	\$ 980,412	\$ 695,808	\$ 13,680,130	\$ 2,424,948	\$ 936,918	\$ 16,911,993

See independent auditor's report.
The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
Year Ended June 30, 2021

	Instructional	Library	Dining and Housing	Summer Programs	Museum	Financial Aid Work Study	Grants, Research and Projects	Beech Hill Farms	Admissions	Total Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Total
Salaries and wages	\$ 3,945,347	\$ 282,321	\$ 172,553	\$ 97,969	\$ 25,155	\$ 413,284	\$ 351,442	\$ 229,502	\$ 313,867	\$ 5,801,440	\$ 881,169	\$ 421,748	\$ 7,104,357
Payroll taxes and employee benefits	1,066,345	68,197	46,637	26,479	6,799	-	94,987	62,030	84,832	1,456,306	238,162	113,990	1,808,458
Depreciation	197,937	131,958	461,853	197,937	65,979	-	-	-	65,979	1,121,643	131,958	65,979	1,319,580
Buildings and grounds	153,414	102,276	357,966	153,414	51,138	-	-	-	51,138	869,346	102,276	51,138	1,022,760
Supplies	38,150	3,680	49,039	900	1,713	-	-	-	7,782	243,643	375,344	985	619,972
Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	309,013	-	309,013
Cost of sales - farm	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	266,587	-	266,587	-	-	266,587
Miscellaneous	3,291	4,547	-	800	-	-	168,741	7,578	33,192	218,149	25,042	432	243,623
Interest	-	-	226,532	-	-	-	-	-	-	226,532	-	-	226,532
Cost of sales - food services	-	-	218,035	1,714	-	-	-	1,955	-	221,704	-	-	221,704
Consultants	61,565	9,477	-	16,125	-	-	70,623	-	-	157,790	24,262	11,585	193,637
Faculty Awards/Chairs	190,912	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	190,912	-	-	190,912
Utilities	-	-	96,216	-	14,237	-	-	8,263	52,439	171,155	-	-	171,155
Repairs and maintenance	-	-	18,443	27,385	9,600	-	-	5,416	28,067	88,911	81,461	181	170,553
Instructional expenses	127,679	-	-	-	-	-	-	27,354	-	155,033	-	-	155,033
Fees	-	-	-	2,831	678	-	-	55	15,470	3,288	95,335	8,904	126,561
Student activities	84,759	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	84,759	-	-	84,759
Small projects	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,981	-	-	79,981	-	-	79,981
Publications and subscriptions	-	44,571	-	-	-	-	-	-	35,280	79,851	-	75	79,926
Technology	15,344	21,477	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	51,821	23,068	-	74,889
Printing and postage	2,584	6,136	-	64	-	-	149	105	9,843	18,881	5,926	44,882	69,689
Student expenses	66,785	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66,785	-	-	66,785
Visiting Faculty	64,576	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64,576	-	-	64,576
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62,918	-	62,918
Travel	49	-	-	-	-	-	11,299	1,969	500	13,817	30,495	-	44,312
Advertising and marketing	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,975	-	21,346	37,321	-	1,612	38,933
Equipment	-	19,069	-	-	-	-	3,055	-	-	22,124	13,000	-	35,124
Occupancy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26,774	-	26,774	7,552	-	34,326
Telephone	2,055	-	-	186	-	-	2,448	656	600	5,945	26,178	1,724	33,847
Alumni	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,078	-	-	28,078	-	5,000	33,078
Membership and dues	3,428	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,110	6,538	21,370	3,652	31,560
Events	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	366	366	-	23,328	23,694
Rental expense	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,500	-	-	13,500	-	-	13,500
Conferences	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,075	-	1,734	4,809	2,556	475	7,840
Storage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,324	-	5,324	-	-	5,324
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	37
Totals	\$ 6,024,220	\$ 663,709	\$ 1,647,274	\$ 525,804	\$ 175,299	\$ 413,284	\$ 980,920	\$ 759,356	\$ 632,857	\$ 11,822,723	\$ 2,457,085	\$ 755,727	\$ 15,035,535

See independent auditor's report.
The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

Years Ended June 30,

	2022	2021
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Changes in net assets	\$ (15,826,155)	\$ 22,166,462
Adjustments to reconcile changes in net assets to net cash flows from operating activities		
Depreciation and amortization	1,551,629	1,319,579
Net loss (gain) on investments	14,261,029	(18,233,053)
Contributions for capital purposes	(385,500)	(5,042,759)
Contributions for endowment	(517,994)	(298,021)
Net amortization of bond premium/debt issuance costs	(43,675)	(25,940)
Pledge write offs	360,565	10,000
Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness	-	(1,889,000)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Accounts receivable, net	(100,757)	40,514
Contributions receivable - other	3,447,667	3,862,998
Beneficial interest in trust	525,165	(66,819)
Inventories	7,215	4,614
Prepaid expenses	40,157	(50,863)
Other assets	136,036	(146,889)
Accounts payable	138,311	(615,161)
Accrued payroll	53,522	(38,600)
Accrued expenses	165,848	(4,835)
Deferred tuition revenue	52,542	64,264
Deferred revenue - other	16,599	(229,483)
Net cash flows from operating activities	<u>3,882,203</u>	<u>827,008</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Net proceeds from (purchases of) investments	(216,759)	(2,022,318)
Purchase of property and equipment	(9,684,747)	(7,473,561)
Repayment of note receivable - related party	2,847	4,316
Student loans, net	18,011	41,797
Net cash flows from investing activities	<u>(9,880,648)</u>	<u>(9,449,766)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Proceeds from issuance of bonds	9,595,127	-
Principal payments on bonds payable	(1,055,000)	(360,000)
Payment of bond issuance costs	(187,454)	-
Net (repayments on) proceeds from line of credit	(350,358)	350,358
Change in funds held by bond trustee	(5,272,276)	(11,248)
Proceeds from contributions for capital purposes	5,095,692	3,657,154
Proceeds from contributions for endowment	1,253,008	815,989
Net cash flows from financing activities	<u>9,078,739</u>	<u>4,452,253</u>
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	3,080,294	(4,170,505)
Cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash at beginning of year	<u>5,206,961</u>	<u>9,377,466</u>
Cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash at end of year	<u>\$ 8,287,255</u>	<u>\$ 5,206,961</u>
Cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash at end of year consists of the following:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 8,075,716	\$ 4,995,166
Restricted cash	211,539	211,795
Total cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash	<u>\$ 8,287,255</u>	<u>\$ 5,206,961</u>
Supplemental disclosures of cash flow information:		
Cash paid during the year for:		
Interest	\$ 363,788	\$ 226,532

See independent auditor's report.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 1 – PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Nature of the Organization

College of the Atlantic (the College) is a four-year liberal arts college located in Bar Harbor, Maine. Established in 1969, 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, and trustees. The College of the Atlantic community encourages, prepares, and expects students to gain expertise, breadth, values, and practical experience necessary to achieve individual fulfillment and to help solve problems that challenge communities everywhere.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

The College considers all cash and highly liquid financial instruments with original maturities of three months or less, which are neither held for nor restricted by donors for long-term purposes, to be cash and cash equivalents. Cash and highly liquid financial instruments restricted to building projects, endowments that are perpetual in nature, or other long-term purposes are excluded from this definition and reported as restricted cash in the statements of financial position.

Receivables and Credit Policy

Accounts receivable consist primarily of non-interest bearing amounts due for program related services and various grant agreements and are stated at the amount management expects to collect from outstanding balances. Management determines the allowance for uncollectible accounts receivable based on historical experience, an assessment of economic conditions, and a review of subsequent collections. Accounts receivable are written off when deemed uncollectible. At June 30, 2022 and 2021, the allowance for uncollectible accounts receivable was approximately \$47,000.

Student loan receivables consist of balances relating to the Federal Perkins Loan program which the College administers. Loans outstanding at June 30, 2022 and 2021 were \$157,370 and \$205,781, respectively. The College has also recorded an allowance for uncollectible student loan receivables of \$41,892 at June 30, 2022 and 2021. The federal loan program is no longer available to students and is in a wind-down phase.

Promises to Give

Unconditional promises to give are recognized as revenues in the period received. Conditional promises to give are not recognized until they become unconditional, that is, at the time when the conditions on which they depend are substantially met. Promises to give to be received after one year are discounted at an appropriate discount rate commensurate with the risks involved. Accretion of discount is recorded as additional contribution revenue in accordance with donor-imposed restrictions, if any, on the promise to give. The College determines the allowance for uncollectible promises to give based on historical experience, an assessment of economic conditions, and a review of subsequent collections. Promises to give are written off when deemed uncollectible. At June 30, 2022 and 2021, the College considered all remaining promises to give to be fully collectible. Accordingly, there was no allowance for uncollectible promises to give recorded.

Note Receivable – Related Party

Note receivable – related party is stated at the unpaid principal balance. Interest on the note receivable – related party is recognized based on the individual terms of the note. When needed, management provides for loan losses through a charge to earnings and a credit to an allowance based on its assessments of the current status and creditworthiness of the individual note, past loss experience, adverse situations that may affect the borrower's ability to repay and current economic conditions. Balances that are still outstanding after management has used reasonable collection efforts are written off through a charge to the allowance and a credit to notes receivable.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Beneficial Interest in Trust

The College held a beneficial interest in a charitable remainder trust. The trust was established to benefit the donor's children and in accordance with the trust agreement, the Trustees shall pay the individual beneficiaries an amount equal to 10% of the net fair market value of the assets of the trust determined as of the valuation date for such taxable year. The trust agreement stipulated that the trust will terminate on the earlier of (1) the date of death of the survivor on the individual beneficiaries and (2) the date that is fifteen years from the date of execution of the trust agreement. At termination, the balance of the then remaining principal shall be transferred and distributed in equal shares to six charitable organizations identified in the trust agreement. As of and for the year ended June 30, 2021, the estimated fair market value of the College's interest in the underlying trust assets of \$525,165 was reported as an estimate of the present value of future cash flows from the trust and reported as net assets with donor restrictions. Appreciation in the trust is not available for expenditure by the College. As of June 30, 2022, the College was no longer named as a beneficiary in the trust.

Funds Held by Bond Trustee

Funds held by bond trustee consist of principal and interest reserve funds required to be maintained separately as part of the College's debt arrangements. Refer to Note 10 for additional disclosures related to the College's debt arrangements.

Investments

The College records investment purchases at cost, or if donated, at fair value on the date of donation. Thereafter, investments are reported at their fair values in the statements of financial position. Net investment return/(loss) is reported in the statements of activities and consists of interest and dividend income, realized and unrealized gains and losses, less investment expenses.

Property and Equipment

Property and equipment are stated at cost at the date of acquisition, or fair value at date of donation in the case of gifts, less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation expense is computed on the straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets or in the case of capitalized lease assets or leasehold improvements, the lesser of the useful life of the asset or the lease term. Estimated useful lives currently range from three to thirty-nine years. When assets are sold or otherwise disposed of, the cost and related depreciation or amortization are removed from the accounts, and any resulting gain or loss is included in the statements of activities. Costs of repairs and maintenance that do not improve or extend the useful lives of the respective assets are expensed as incurred.

Deferred Tuition Revenue

Deferred tuition revenue represents a contract liability related to tuition (student deposits) for which the College was not yet entitled to the revenue. All student deposits at year end are recognized as revenue in the next fiscal year when they are applied as payment toward the student's tuition bill.

Net Assets

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

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions – Net assets available for use in general operations and not subject to donor (or certain grantor) restrictions. The College's board of directors has designated, from net assets without donor restrictions, net assets for a board-designated endowment.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Net Assets with Donor Restrictions – Net assets subject to donor- (or certain grantor-) imposed restrictions. Some donor-imposed restrictions are temporary in nature, such as those that will be met by the passage of time or other events specified by the donor. Other donor-imposed restrictions are perpetual in nature, where the donor stipulates that resources be maintained in perpetuity. Gifts of long-lived assets and gifts of cash restricted for the acquisition of long-lived assets are recognized as revenue when the assets are acquired and placed in service. The College reports donor-restricted contributions as increases in net assets with donor restrictions, depending on the nature of the restrictions. When a restriction expires, net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the statements of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Revenues and Revenue Recognition

Tuition

The College contracts as a private college with students to provide educational instruction. Revenue is recorded at the amount the College expects to be entitled to in exchange for providing instruction.

The College bills students for tuition and payments are due prior to the start of the academic term. Performance obligations are determined based on the nature of the services provided by the College. The College measures the performance obligations of its educational instruction to the point when it is no longer required to provide services to the student. These services are considered to be a single performance obligation. Revenue is recognized as performance obligations are satisfied, which is ratably over the academic term.

The transaction price is based on standard charges for educational instruction, reduced by discounts provided for scholarships and other price concessions provided to students. In addition, students who adjust their course load or withdraw prior to the end of the academic term may receive a full or partial refund in accordance with the College's refund policy. Historically, refunds issued by the College have not been material to the College's financial statements and the College has not recorded a refund liability at year-end. Based on the nature of services provided by the College and due to the fact that all of the College's performance obligations relate to contracts with a duration of less than one year, the College has elected to apply the optional exemption provided in the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) 606-10-50-14(a) and, therefore, is not required to disclose the aggregate amount of the transaction price allocated to performance obligations that are unsatisfied or partially unsatisfied at the end of the reporting period.

The College has elected to apply the practical expedient allowed under FASB ASC 606-10-10-4 for applying the new revenue standard to a portfolio of contracts with similar characteristics. The College accounts for the contracts within each portfolio as a collective group, rather than individual contracts, based on the payment pattern expected in each portfolio category and the similar nature and characteristics of the students within each portfolio. Based on historical collection trends and other analysis, the College has concluded that revenue for a given portfolio would not be materially different than if accounting for revenue on a contract-by-contract basis.

The College has also elected to apply the practical expedient allowed under FASB ASC 606-10-32-18 for the financing component, as the period of time between the service being provided and the time that the student pays for the service is typically one year or less.

Sales and Service of Auxiliary Enterprises

Sales and service of auxiliary enterprises consist of primarily room and board and farm product sales and are recognized over the period the services are provided or when goods have been transferred to the customer.

College of the Atlantic
NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
June 30, 2022 and 2021

Government Grants

Revenues derived from cost-reimbursable federal and state contracts and grants, which are conditioned upon certain performance requirements and/or the incurrence of allowable qualifying expenses. Amounts received are recognized as revenue when the College has incurred expenditures in compliance with specific contract or grant provisions. Amounts received prior to incurring qualifying expenditures are reported as part of deferred revenue-other in the statements of financial position.

Contributions

The College recognizes contributions when cash, securities or other assets; an unconditional promise to give; or a notification of a beneficial interest is received. Conditional contributions and promises to give - that is, those with a measurable performance or other barrier and a right of return - are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend have been met.

Operating Activities

Revenues received and expenses incurred in conducting the programs and services of the College are presented in the statements of activities as operating activities.

Non-Operating Activities

Non-operating activities consist of contributions and bequests for non-operating purposes such as the acquisition or construction of capital projects, life income funds, trusts and remainder interests, endowment contributions and endowment gains and losses.

Functional Expenses

The costs of program and supporting services activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the statements of activities. The statements of functional expenses present the natural classification detail of expenses by function. Certain categories of expenses are attributed to more than one program or supporting function. The expenses that are allocated include building and grounds and depreciation which are allocated on a square footage basis, as well as salaries and wages, fringe benefits, and payroll taxes which are allocated on the basis of estimates of time and effort. Other costs, as applicable, are directly allocated among program and supporting functions.

Income Taxes

The College is a not-for-profit organization that, under the provisions of tax code Section 501(c)(3), is exempt from federal and state income taxes. Management evaluated the College's tax positions and concluded that the College had taken no uncertain tax positions that required adjustment to the financial statements. The College does not expect that unrecognized tax benefits or liabilities arising from tax positions will change significantly within the next twelve months.

Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires the College to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates, and those differences could be material.

Financial Instruments and Credit Risk

The College maintains cash balances at several financial institutions. The balances are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) up to \$250,000. At various times throughout the year, the College's cash balances exceeded FDIC insurance. The College has not experienced any losses in such accounts and management believes it is not exposed to any significant risk.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Credit risk associated with accounts receivable is considered to be limited due to high historical collection rates and because substantial portions of the outstanding amounts are due from program participants, governmental agencies, and other organizations supportive of the College's mission. Credit risk associated with promises to give is considered to be limited due to the high historical collection rates and because substantial portions of the outstanding amounts are with former students and faculty members and other organizations supportive of the College's mission. Investments are made by diversified investment managers whose performance is monitored by the investment committee of the board of directors. Although the fair values of investments are subject to fluctuation on a year-to-year basis, the College and the investment committee believe that the investment policies and guidelines are prudent for the long-term welfare of the College.

Reclassifications

Certain amounts in the 2021 financial statements and notes thereto have been reclassified to conform to the 2022 presentation.

Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through December 19, 2022, the date the financial statements were available to be issued and determined that any subsequent events that would require recognition or disclosure have been considered in the preparation of the financial statements.

NOTE 2 – ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

Recently Issued Accounting Pronouncements Not Yet Adopted

Leases

In February 2016, FASB issued ASU 2016-02, *Leases (Topic 842)*. Under this ASU, a lessee should recognize in the statement of financial position a lease liability and lease asset representing its right to use the underlying asset for the term of the lease for both finance and operating leases. An entity may make an accounting policy election not to recognize lease assets and lease liabilities for leases with a term of 12 months or less. Recognition, measurement, and presentation of expenses and cash flows arising from a lease by a lessee have not changed significantly. Qualitative and quantitative disclosures are required by lessees and lessors to enable users of financial statements to assess the amount, timing and uncertainty of cash flows arising from leases. The ASU is effective for fiscal periods beginning after December 15, 2021. Management has not yet determined the impact adoption of this ASU will have on the financial statements.

NOTE 3 – LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY

Financial assets available for general expenditure, that is, without donor or other restrictions limiting their use, within one year of the statement of financial position date, comprise the following as of June 30:

	2022	2021
Cash and cash equivalents	\$8,075,716	\$4,995,166
Accounts receivable	258,197	157,440
Promises to give	1,166,922	3,861,745
	<u>\$9,500,835</u>	<u>\$9,014,351</u>

The College's endowment funds consist of donor-restricted endowments and funds designated by the board as endowments. Income from donor-restricted endowments is restricted for specific purposes, with the exception of the amounts available for general use.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

The board-designated endowment of \$9,764,408 is subject to an annual spending rate of 4.8 percent as described in Note 12. Although the College does not intend to spend from this board-designated endowment (other than amounts appropriated for general expenditure as part of the Board's annual budget approval and appropriation), these amounts could be made available if necessary.

In the event of an unanticipated liquidity need, the College also could draw upon funds available under its working capital line of credit (as further discussed in Note 9). As of June 30, 2022, the amount available to draw under its line of credit was \$4,000,000.

NOTE 4 – FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AND DISCLOSURES

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. In determining fair value, the College uses various methods including market, income and cost approaches. Based on these approaches, the College often utilizes certain assumptions that market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability, including assumptions about risk and or the risks inherent in the inputs to the valuation technique. These inputs can be readily observable, market corroborated, or generally unobservable inputs. The College utilizes valuation techniques that maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

Financial assets and liabilities carried at fair value will be classified and disclosed in one of the following three categories:

- Level 1 – Valuation for assets and liabilities traded in active exchange markets, such as the New York Stock Exchange.
- Level 2 – Valuations for assets and liabilities traded in less active dealer or broker markets. Valuations are obtained from third party pricing services for identical or similar assets or liabilities.
- Level 3 – Valuations for assets and liabilities that are derived from other valuation methodologies, including option pricing models, discounted cash flow models and similar techniques. Level 3 valuations incorporate the entity's own assumptions and projections in determining the fair value assigned to such assets or liabilities.

In determining the appropriate levels, the College performs a detailed analysis of the assets and liabilities. At each reporting period, all assets and liabilities for which the fair value measurement is based on significant unobservable inputs are classified as Level 3.

For the years ended June 30, 2022 and 2021, the application of valuation techniques applied to similar assets and liabilities has been consistent however the College did adopt the net asset practical expedient to value certain investments during the year-end June 30, 2022. The adoption of the net asset practical expedient did not have a significant impact on amounts previously reported in the June 30, 2021 financial statements. The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for instruments measured at fair value:

Investment Securities

The fair value of fixed income, publicly traded equity securities and marketable alternatives is based on quoted market prices, when available, or market prices provided by recognized broker dealers. Shares in mutual funds are based on share values reported by the funds as of the last business day of the fiscal year. If listed prices are not available, fair value is based upon externally developed models that use unobservable inputs due to the limited market activity of the instrument.

Beneficial Interest in Trust

Common collective trust funds are not actively traded in a securities exchange. Units are valued using the net asset value per share (NAV) practical expedient as determined by the issuer based on the current values of the underlying assets of the funds.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Alternative Investments

The College values these investments at fair value, which ordinarily will be the amount equal to the pro-rata interest in the net assets of the funds, as such value is supplied by, or on behalf of the investment manager for each investment from time to time, usually monthly and/or quarterly.

The College invests in funds valued using the NAV practical expedient. Each of the Funds invests in alternative investment funds. For these investments, the College has concluded that the net asset value reported by each of the underlying investment funds approximates the fair value of the investment. These investments are redeemable with the investment fund at net asset value under the original terms of the subscription agreements and operations of the underlying investment funds.

However, it is possible that these redemption rights may be restricted or eliminated by the investment funds in the future in accordance with the underlying investment fund agreements. Due to the nature of the investments held by the investment funds, changes in market conditions and the economic environment may significantly impact the net asset value of the investment funds and, consequently, the fair value of the College's interests in the investment funds. Furthermore, changes to the liquidity provisions of the investment funds may significantly impact the fair value of the College's interest in the investment funds. Although such investments may be sold in a secondary market transaction, subject to meeting certain requirements of the governing documents of the investment funds, the secondary market is not active and individual transactions are not necessarily observable. It is, therefore, reasonably possible that if the College were to sell an investment fund in the secondary market, the sale could occur at an amount different than the reported value, and the difference could be material.

College management is responsible for the fair value measurements of investments reported in the financial statements. Because of inherent uncertainty of valuation of certain alternative investments, the estimate of the fund manager or general partner may differ from actual values, and differences could be significant. Management believes that reported fair values of its alternative investments at the statement of financial position dates are reasonable.

The following table presents assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of June 30, 2022:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,013,423	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,013,423
Corporate bonds		6,859,203	-	6,859,203
Equities	18,184,371	-	-	18,184,371
	<u>\$ 19,197,794</u>	<u>\$ 6,859,203</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 26,056,997</u>
Investments at net asset value				
Global equity funds				25,282,215
Market alternative funds				16,447,672
				<u>41,729,887</u>
Total investments at fair value				<u>\$ 67,786,884</u>

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

The following table discloses the fair value, unfunded commitments and redemption frequency of those assets whose fair value is estimated using the net asset value per share at June 30, 2022:

	Fair value	Unfunded Commitment	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice Period
Global equity funds	\$ 13,022,471	\$ -	Quarterly	60 days notice
Global equity funds	7,918,205	-	Weekly	5 days notice
Global equity funds	4,341,539	-	Monthly	5 days notice
Market alternative funds	13,260,906	-	Quarterly	60-90 days notice
Market alternative funds	3,186,766	-	Semi-annually	90 days notice
	<u>\$ 41,729,887</u>			

The following table presents assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis as of June 30, 2021:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,073,448	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,073,448
Corporate bonds		9,707,857	-	9,707,857
Equities	28,709,803	-	-	28,709,803
	<u>\$ 29,783,251</u>	<u>\$ 9,707,857</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 39,491,108</u>
Investments at net asset value				
Global equity funds				27,821,420
Market alternative funds				14,518,626
Beneficial interest in trust				525,165
				<u>42,865,211</u>
Total investments at fair value				<u>\$ 82,356,319</u>

The following table discloses the fair value, unfunded commitments and redemption frequency of those assets whose fair value is estimated using the net asset value per share at June 30, 2021:

	Fair value	Unfunded Commitment	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice Period
Global equity funds	\$ 19,456,943	\$ -	Quarterly	60 days notice
Global equity funds	8,364,477	-	Weekly	5 days notice
Market alternative funds	11,181,349	-	Quarterly	60-90 days notice
Market alternative funds	3,337,277	-	Semi-annually	90 days notice
	<u>\$ 42,340,046</u>			

NOTE 5 - ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Accounts receivable at June 30, consisted of the following:

	2022	2021
Tuition	\$79,594	\$80,820
Other accounts receivable	225,758	123,686
	<u>305,352</u>	<u>204,506</u>
Less: allowance for uncollectible accounts	(47,155)	(47,066)
	<u>\$258,197</u>	<u>\$157,440</u>

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 6 – PROMISES TO GIVE

Promises to give, net of allowance for uncollectible promises to give and unamortized discount are summarized as follows at June 30:

	2022	2021
Annual fund	\$160,100	\$269,800
Scholarships, faculty chairs, capital campaign and other	2,259,303	5,598,767
Capital projects	3,667,584	8,078,416
Restricted for endowment	1,893,284	3,286,726
	<u>\$7,980,271</u>	<u>\$17,233,709</u>
Unconditional promises to give to be collected in:		
Less than one year	\$5,347,496	\$12,173,438
One to five years	3,248,825	6,363,953
Thereafter		80,243
	<u>8,596,321</u>	<u>18,617,634</u>
Discount to present value (5%)	(616,050)	(1,383,925)
Totals	<u>\$7,980,271</u>	<u>\$17,233,709</u>

NOTE 7 – NOTE RECEIVABLE – RELATED PARTY

Note receivable – related party is secured by a second priority mortgage of real property located in Bar Harbor, Maine. Interest accrued at a rate of 4% per annum through May 1, 2020 at which time it changed to 3%. Principal and interest shall be due and payable as follows: 18 consecutive bi-weekly interest installments of \$115 each commencing on May 2, 2016 and continuing every 2 weeks thereafter up to and including December 26, 2016; 26 consecutive bi-weekly interest installments of \$230 each commencing on January 9, 2017 and continuing every 2 weeks thereafter up to and including December 25, 2017; 26 consecutive bi-weekly interest installments of \$260 each commencing on January 8, 2018 and continuing every 2 weeks thereafter up to and including December 24, 2018; and 702 consecutive bi-weekly installments of \$314 each, which bi-weekly installments shall include interest in full to date and payments on account of principal to the extent each installment will permit after deduction of interest, commencing on January 7, 2019 and continuing every other Monday thereafter up to and including

December 18, 2045 at which time the principal and interest shall be fully paid. In the event the related party is no longer employed by the College, the principal and interest due hereunder shall be due and payable within 1 year of the date of termination, and all installment payments due as set forth above shall continue until such payment in full within the 1 year period. The aging of the note receivable – related party was current and no allowance for loan losses was recorded as of June 30, 2022 and 2021. The balance of the note was \$123,185 and \$126,032 as of June 30, 2022 and 2021, respectively.

NOTE 8 – PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

The following summarizes property and equipment at June 30:

	2022	2021
Land improvements	\$10,892,684	\$6,956,608
Building and improvements	46,249,609	43,483,393
Furniture and equipment	5,954,298	5,825,029
Vehicles and boats	2,023,797	1,985,676
Construction in progress	3,287,142	472,077
Library collection	1,002,109	1,002,109
	<u>69,409,639</u>	<u>59,724,893</u>
Accumulated depreciation	(26,876,944)	(25,325,316)
Net property and equipment	<u>\$42,532,695</u>	<u>\$34,399,577</u>

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

In January of 2017, the College, through All College Meeting (ACM), approved an energy framework that set a goal to eliminate the use of fossil fuels on campus by 2030. The College made progress in moving towards this goal during the 2022 fiscal year as follows:

- The College purchased and moved the following building units (all located in Bar Harbor) off the use of fossil fuels by retrofitting the heating and water heating systems to heat pumps from heating oil-burning furnaces:
 - Units (I through IV) at 1 Bloomfield Road (known as Summertime)
 - 12 Norris Avenue
 - 14 Norris Avenue
 - 16 (units a and b) Norris Avenue
 - 18 (units a and b) Norris Avenue
 - 48 Glen Mary Road
 - 2 Brewer Avenue
- The school installed heat pumps in the six units (311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316) of Birch Tree Lane apartments to make their electricity use significantly more efficient.
- The school uses all of the abovementioned units as off-campus student housing during the academic year.
- Additionally, the college took the buildings listed below off the use of fossil fuels by retrofitting the heating and water heating systems to heat pumps from heating oil-burning furnaces:
 - Studios 5&6 (two offices continue to use oil for heat)
 - Witchcliff Apartments on campus (both the upstairs and the downstairs units)
 - Davis Carriage House (three bedrooms still use oil supplements)
 - Cottage House
 - The Buildings and Ground Building
 - The farm house at Peggy Rockefeller Farm
 - 171 Beech Hill Road, Mount Desert, Maine, at Beech Hill Farm

The school continues to engage in capital work to move operations away from the use of fossil fuels and seal and insulate building to improve building performance to drive energy needs.

NOTE 9 - LINE OF CREDIT

At June 30, 2022 and 2021, the College had a working capital line of credit with a maximum borrowing limit of \$4,000,000. The outstanding balance at June 30, 2022 and 2021 was \$0 and \$350,358, respectively. Interest is at the Wall Street Journal prime rate (4.75% and 3.25% at June 30, 2022 and 2021, respectively). The line matures December 1, 2022 and is secured by pledged investments.

NOTE 10 - BONDS PAYABLE

Bonds payable consisted of the following at June 30:

	2022	2021
Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority Bonds of 2011C	\$-	\$885,000
Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority Bonds of 2021C	8,515,000	-
Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority Bonds of 2017B	4,235,000	4,405,000
	12,750,000	5,290,000
Unamortized bond premium	1,498,484	476,767
Less: debt issuance costs	(237,931)	(65,212)
Total bonds payable	<u>\$14,010,553</u>	<u>\$5,701,555</u>

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Bond premiums and debt issuance costs are being amortized on a straight-line basis over the life of the bonds.

Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority (MHHEFA) revenue bonds – Series 2011C were 12 year amortizing bonds that provided funds for refinancing the cost of acquiring, constructing and improving College facilities. The bonds had coupons with interest rates from 2% to 5% and were secured by real estate and certain other assets. The bonds required a reserve fund in the amount of the final year of debt service. The reserve fund balance at June 30, 2021 was approximately \$247,000. The bonds were paid in full during the year ended June 30, 2022.

Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority (MHHEFA) revenue bonds – Series 2017B are 20 year amortizing bonds that provided funds for refinancing the cost of acquiring, constructing and improving College facilities. The bonds have coupons with interest rates from 3.5% to 5% and are secured by real estate and certain other assets. The bonds require a reserve fund in the amount of the final year of debt service. The reserve fund balance at June 30, 2022 and 2021 was approximately \$379,200.

Maine Health and Higher Education Facilities Authority (MHHEFA) revenue bonds – Series 2021C are 30 year amortizing bonds that provided funds for refinancing the cost of acquiring, constructing and improving College facilities. The bonds have coupons with interest rates from 2.5% to 5% and are secured by real estate and certain other assets. The bonds require a reserve fund in the amount of the final year of debt service. The reserve fund balance at June 30, 2022 was approximately \$474,800.

The loan agreement also contains certain loan covenants regarding additional borrowings, financial ratio requirements, and submissions of budgets and financial reports. The College was in compliance with the loan covenants for the years ended June 30, 2022 and 2021.

Maturities of bonds payable are as follows as of June 30:

2023	\$265,000
2024	340,000
2025	355,000
2026	370,000
2027	395,000
Thereafter	<u>11,025,000</u>
	<u>\$12,750,000</u>

NOTE 11 – PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM LOAN

During the year ended June 30, 2020, the College qualified for and received a loan pursuant to the Paycheck Protection Program, a program implemented by the U.S. Small Business Administration under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, from a qualified lender (PPP Lender) for an aggregate principal amount of \$1,889,000 (PPP Loan). The PPP Loan bears interest at a fixed rate of 1.0% per annum, is payable monthly with the first six monthly payments deferred, has a term of two years, and is unsecured and guaranteed by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The College has elected to account for the PPP Loan as a financial liability in accordance with FASB ASC 470, *Debt*. The College did not accrue interest on the PPP Loan as of June 30, 2020 as management considered the amount immaterial to the financial statements as a whole.

The College applied for loan forgiveness during the year ended June 30, 2021 under the provisions of Section 1106 of the CARES Act. Loan forgiveness is subject to the sole approval of the U.S. Small Business Administration. The College is eligible for loan forgiveness in an amount equal to payments made during the 24 week period beginning on the Loan date, with the exception that no more than 40% of the amount of loan forgiveness may be for expenses other than payroll expenses. The College used its loan proceeds to partially subsidize direct payroll expenses. The College's loan forgiveness application was approved in November 2020. As it relates to loan forgiveness, the College will follow the guidance from FASB ASC 405-20, *Liabilities: Extinguishments of Liabilities*.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Under this guidance, the proceeds from the loan would remain recorded as a financial liability until the loan is, in part or wholly, forgiven and the College has been legally released as the primary obligor under the loan. Therefore, the College reduced the liability by the amount forgiven and recorded loan forgiveness revenue in the 2021 statement of activities.

NOTE 12 - ENDOWMENT

The College's endowment (the Endowment) consists of individual funds established by donors to provide annual funding for specific activities and general operations. The Endowment also includes certain net assets without donor restrictions that have been designated for endowment by the Board of Directors.

The College's Board of Directors has interpreted the State of Maine Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the date of the donor-restricted endowment funds, unless there are explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. At June 30, 2022 and 2021, there were no such donor stipulations. As a result of this interpretation, the College retains in perpetuity (a) the original value of initial and subsequent gift amounts donated to the Endowment and (b) any accumulations to the Endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added. Donor-restricted amounts not retained in perpetuity are subject to appropriation for expenditure by the College in a manner consistent with the standard of prudence prescribed by UPMIFA.

The College considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

- The duration and preservation of the fund
- The purposes of the College and the donor-restricted endowment fund
- General economic conditions
- The possible effect of inflation and deflation
- The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments
- Other resources of the College
- The investment policies of the College

At June 30, 2022, the College had the following endowment net asset composition by type of fund:

	Without Donor Restriction	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Board-designated endowment funds	\$9,764,408	\$-	\$9,764,408
Donor-restricted endowment funds	-	58,022,476	58,022,476
Totals	\$9,764,408	\$58,022,476	\$67,786,884

At June 30, 2021, the College had the following endowment net asset composition by type of fund:

	Without Donor Restriction	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Board-designated endowment funds	\$11,780,805	\$-	\$11,780,805
Donor-restricted endowment funds	-	70,050,349	70,050,349
Totals	\$11,780,805	\$70,050,349	\$81,831,154

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Investment and Spending Policies

The College's investment and spending policies for board-designated and donor-restricted endowment investments are as follows:

The overall **financial objectives** of the endowment are (1) to support the current and future operations of the College and (2) to preserve the purchasing power of the endowment in perpetuity.

The primary **investment objective** of the endowment is to attain an average annual real rate of return of at least 5% (net of investment management fees, commissions, and inflation) over a full market cycle. It is recognized that this goal may be easily achievable in some periods and harder to achieve in other periods. The secondary objective is to outperform the weighted average of the policy targets and market indices, as outlined in the College's investment policy.

The **spending policy** should be designed to ensure that the real value of the endowment is maintained over time. Spending from donor-restricted endowment funds is established as 4.8% of the average endowment market value of the past twelve-quarters, determined as of December 31st. Given the College's recent capital campaign and concurrent growth in the endowment market value, the averaging period was six quarters for fiscal year 2016, ten quarters for fiscal year 2017 and was extended to 12 quarters for fiscal year 2018 onward. The College also utilizes a similar spending policy for its board-designated endowment funds however actual spending may exceed this policy amount based on board approval.

To maximize the likelihood of achieving the investment objective and to control risk, the endowment will be diversified across four distinct asset classes, each with a specific role in the portfolio:

- *Global Equity:* This allocation is comprised of equity investments in U.S. and non-U.S. companies, including emerging markets. With a primary objective of providing for the long-term growth of the endowment, this asset class comprises the largest portion of the endowment. The Global Equity allocation will be diversified by geography, economic sector, and size. It may also include opportunistic investments in high-yield debt, emerging markets debt, and other investments that carry the expectation of equity-like returns. The policy asset allocation target for this asset class is 65% with an allowable range of 55-75%.
- *Marketable Alternatives:* This allocation is intended to mitigate overall portfolio volatility, while providing diversification and some participation in up markets. The Marketable Alternatives allocation will be diversified by manager and strategy, and shall be implemented through a fund of funds or individual managers. In general, the allocation will be comprised of funds with high levels of transparency, reasonable liquidity, and little portfolio leverage. The policy asset allocation target for this asset class is 15% with an allowable range of 5-25%.
- *Real Assets:* This allocation is intended to provide additional diversification and a source of capital during an inflationary environment. The intention is for this asset category to consist of a diversified basket of liquid underlying assets (e.g., TIPS, REITS, commodities, etc.), some of which will also be expected to generate growth for the portfolio. This allocation is not expected to offset all losses that may occur elsewhere in the portfolio during an inflationary environment. The policy asset allocation target for this asset class is 5% with an allowable range of 0-10%.
- *Fixed Income:* This allocation is intended to be a source of capital in an economic contraction. As such, investments held in this allocation should be liquid and expected to generally maintain their value. This allocation is not expected to offset all losses that may occur elsewhere in the portfolio during an economic contraction. The policy asset allocation target for this asset class is 15% with an allowable range of 5-25%.

Investments in each of these asset classes can be implemented through separately managed accounts or commingled vehicles (e.g., institutional-class mutual funds, limited partnerships).

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

The endowment's policy asset allocation targets ("policy targets") will be an important determinant of long-term investment performance. The policy targets maximize the probability of achieving the endowment's investment objectives with minimum expected volatility, and are consistent with the size of the endowment.

The College's investment policy contains a summary of the endowment's policy targets, allowable ranges and relevant benchmarks. As the policy asset allocation is intended to be independent of market conditions, changes to the policy targets are expected to be infrequent and to be driven by a change in the needs of the endowment. The College's investment committee is authorized to make tactical changes to the portfolio within the stated allocation ranges.

Changes in Endowment net assets for the year ended June 30, 2022 are as follows:

	Without Donor Restriction	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Endowment net assets, beginning of year	\$11,780,805	\$70,050,349	\$81,831,154
Net investment loss	(2,982,062)	(11,274,387)	(14,256,449)
Contributions	1,689,939	1,765,369	3,455,308
Appropriation of endowment assets pursuant to spending rate policy	-	(2,518,855)	(2,518,855)
Other changes:			
Distribution from board-designated endowment pursuant to distribution policy	(327,000)	-	(327,000)
Distribution from board-designated endowment pursuant to board approval	(397,274)	-	(397,274)
Totals	<u>\$9,764,408</u>	<u>\$58,022,476</u>	<u>\$67,786,884</u>

Changes in Endowment net assets for the year ended June 30, 2021 are as follows:

	Without Donor Restriction	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Endowment net assets, beginning of year	\$5,956,732	\$55,619,051	\$61,575,783
Net investment return	2,929,812	15,299,374	18,229,186
Contributions	3,879,190	1,106,203	4,985,393
Appropriation of endowment assets pursuant to spending rate policy	-	(1,974,279)	(1,974,279)
Other changes:			
Distribution from board-designated endowment pursuant to distribution policy	(284,581)	-	(284,581)
Distribution from board-designated endowment pursuant to board approval	(700,348)	-	(700,348)
Totals	<u>\$11,780,805</u>	<u>\$70,050,349</u>	<u>\$81,831,154</u>

During the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, the Board of Trustees approved the borrowing of a total of \$2,000,000 from the College's board-designated and unrestricted investment accounts to fund a capital project. During the year ended June 30, 2018, the Board of Trustees approved the borrowing of a total of \$750,000 from the College's board-designated and unrestricted investment accounts to fund a capital project. It is the College's intent to repay the amounts borrowed at an interest rate commensurate with current rates of return on its endowment. The College is currently tracking the amount as a separate fund in its endowment pool. Therefore, the effects of this borrowing have been excluded from the disclosure above of changes in endowment net assets. As of the date of the auditors' report, the Board of Trustees has not approved repayment terms.

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

NOTE 13 – NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor restrictions are restricted for the following purposes or periods:

	2022	2021
Subject to expenditure for specified purpose:		
Grants and research projects	\$1,955,516	\$1,903,908
Academic programs	2,475,003	2,440,120
Capital projects	5,232,506	377,328
Other	37,125	41,703
	<u>9,700,150</u>	<u>4,763,059</u>
Subject to passage of time		
Annual fund – without restriction	160,100	269,800
Capital campaign – without restriction	1,601,041	5,045,528
Faculty salary – with restriction	483,711	540,738
Capital projects – with restriction	3,667,584	8,078,416
Other – with restriction	174,552	12,500
	<u>6,086,988</u>	<u>13,946,982</u>
Endowments subject to spending policy and appropriation		
Donor-restricted funds to be maintained in perpetuity	44,329,307	44,125,640
Unappropriated appreciation	13,572,671	27,327,062
	<u>57,901,978</u>	<u>71,452,702</u>
Not subject to spending policy or appropriation		525,165
	<u>\$73,689,116</u>	<u>\$90,687,908</u>

Donor-restricted funds to be maintained in perpetuity are as follows at June 30:

	2022	2021
Academic program/faculty salary	\$22,861,767	\$22,836,999
Academic program support	3,366,555	3,365,305
Financial aid	7,048,686	6,539,346
Plant	5,704,710	5,704,710
Unrestricted	1,434,145	1,765,836
Library	743,228	743,228
Faculty development	375,897	375,897
Student travel and program support	2,375,589	2,375,589
Student development/senior project support	41,595	41,595
Student/faculty collaboration	99,740	99,740
Program development	277,395	277,395
	<u>\$44,329,307</u>	<u>\$44,125,640</u>

College of the Atlantic

NOTES to FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

June 30, 2022 and 2021

Net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purpose or by occurrence of the passage of time or other events specified by the donors as follows for the years ended June 30:

	2022	2021
Satisfaction of purpose restrictions:		
Financial aid	\$2,071,112	\$1,712,778
Grant and research projects	872,967	672,980
Capital projects	403,689	
	<u>3,347,768</u>	<u>2,385,758</u>
Expiration of time restrictions:		
Capital campaign pledges	3,671,815	4,326,787
Annual fund pledges	131,512	149,132
	<u>3,803,327</u>	<u>4,475,919</u>
Restricted-purpose spending-rate distributions and appropriations		
	<u>2,557,532</u>	<u>2,001,766</u>
	<u>\$9,708,627</u>	<u>\$8,863,443</u>

NOTE 14 - RETIREMENT PLAN

The College sponsors a defined contribution plan through TIAA-CREF. During the majority of the year ended June 30, 2022, the College contributed 5% of eligible employee's salary depending on the employee's level of contributions to the Plan. During the year ended June 30, 2021, the College contributed 2% of eligible employee's salary depending on the employee's level of contributions to the Plan. Total expense under the Plan amounted to approximately \$285,000 and \$120,000 for the years ended June 30, 2022 and 2021, respectively.

NOTE 15 - COMMITMENTS

The College has entered into a signed contract for approximately \$2,300,000 related to construction of a building in Northeast Harbor, Maine. As of June 30, 2022 the construction was substantially completed, and was placed into service in September 2022.

The College has also entered into a signed contracts for approximately \$7,650,000 related to construction of on campus student housing. As of June 30, 2022 the College had incurred and capitalized approximately \$470,000 under the contract.

These amounts are included in construction in progress and is part of property and equipment reported in the statement of financial position.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE

AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Source	Expendable Net Assets:	
Statement of Financial Position	Net assets without donor restrictions	<u>\$ 44,267,492</u>
Statement of Financial Position	Net assets with donor restrictions	<u>\$ 73,689,116</u>
Statement of Financial Position	Secured and unsecured related party receivable	<u>\$ 123,185</u>
See Note A on Page 27	Property and equipment pre-implementation (amount of property and equipment reported in our last submission less subsequent depreciation and disposals)	\$ 32,847,948
N/A	Property and equipment post-implementation with outstanding debt for original purchase	-
See Note A on Page 27	Property and equipment post-implementation without outstanding debt for original purchase	6,397,605
See Note A on Page 27	Construction in progress (CIP)	<u>3,287,142</u>
Statement of Financial Position	Property and equipment, net (includes CIP) - Total	<u>\$ 42,532,695</u>
N/A	Lease right-of-use asset, pre-implementation	\$ -
N/A	Lease right-of-use asset, post-implementation	-
	Lease right-of-use asset, net - Total	<u>\$ -</u>
N/A	Intangible assets	<u>\$ -</u>
N/A	Post-employment and pension liabilities	<u>\$ -</u>
See Note B on Page 27	Long-term debt - for long-term purposes pre-implementation	\$14,010,553
N/A	Long-term debt - for long-term purposes post-implementation	-
N/A	Line of credit for CIP	-
	Long-term debt - for long-term purposes - Total	<u>\$ 14,010,553</u>
N/A	Pre-implementation right-of-use asset liability	\$ -
N/A	Pre-implementation right-of-use asset liability	-
	Lease right-of-use asset liability - Total	<u>\$ -</u>
N/A	Annuities with donor restrictions	\$ -
N/A	Term endowments with donor restrictions	-
N/A	Life income funds with donor restrictions	-
	Annuities, term endowments and life income with donor restrictions - Total	<u>\$ -</u>
Footnote 13, page 23, Donor-Restricted Funds to be Maintained in Perpetuity plus Amount not Subject to Spending Policy or Appropriation	Net assets with donor restrictions, restricted in perpetuity	<u>\$ 44,329,307</u>

See independent auditor's report.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE - CONTINUED

AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Source	Expenses and Losses:	
Statement of Activities	Total expenses without donor restrictions - taken directly from statement of activities	<u>\$ 16,911,993</u>
Statement of Activities	Total non-operating and investment losses without donor restriction	<u>\$ -</u>
N/A	Pension-related changes other than net periodic costs with donor restrictions	<u>\$ -</u>

EQUITY RATIO

	Modified Net Assets:	
Statement of Financial Position	Net assets without donor restrictions	<u>\$ 44,267,492</u>
Statement of Financial Position	Net assets with donor restrictions	<u>\$ 73,689,116</u>
N/A	Intangible assets	<u>\$ -</u>
Statement of Financial Position	Secured and unsecured related party receivables	<u>\$ 123,185</u>
	Modified Net Assets:	
Statement of Financial Position	Total assets	<u>\$ 133,676,028</u>
N/A	Lease right-of-use asset pre-implementation	<u>\$ -</u>
N/A	Pre-implementation right-of-use asset liability	<u>\$ -</u>
N/A	Intangible assets	<u>\$ -</u>
Statement of Financial Position	Secured and unsecured related party receivables	<u>\$ 123,185</u>

NET INCOME RATIO

Statement of Activities	Change in net assets without donor restrictions	<u>\$ 1,172,637</u>
Statement of Activities - Total Operating Revenue, Gains and Other Support plus Non-Operating Revenues and Gains	Total revenues and gains without donor restrictions	<u>\$ 18,084,630</u>

See independent auditor's report.

COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC
FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE - CONTINUED
AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Note A for Property and Equipment, Net

Source	Pre-implementation property and equipment, net	
Statement of Financial Position - June 30, 2021	Ending balance of last financial statement submitted to the Department of Education (June 30, 2021)	\$ 34,399,577
Statement of Cash Flows - Depreciation	less subsequent depreciation	<u>(1,551,629)</u>
	Balance pre-implementation property and equipment, net	32,847,948
Included in Statement of Cash Flows - Purchases of Property and Equipment	Construction in progress - acquired subsequent to June 30, 2021	3,287,142
Included in Statement of Cash Flows - Purchases of Property and Equipment	Post-implementation property and equipment, net acquired without debt subsequent to June 30, 2021	<u>6,397,605</u>
	Total property and equipment, net - June 30, 2022	<u><u>\$ 42,532,695</u></u>

Note B for Long-Term Debt for Long-Term Purposes

Source	Pre-implementation debt	
Statement of Financial Position - June 30, 2021	Ending balance of last financial statements submitted to the Department of Education (June 30, 2021)	\$ 5,701,555
Statement of Cash Flows - Proceeds from Issuance of Bonds plus Payment of Bond Issuance Costs	Plus new debt	9,407,673
Statement of Cash Flows - Repayment of Long-Term Debt plus Amortization of Bond Premium and Debt Issuance Costs	Less subsequent debt repayments	<u>(1,098,675)</u>
	Balance pre-implementation debt	<u><u>\$ 14,010,553</u></u>

See independent auditor's report.

Appendix C



To the Audit Committee
College of the Atlantic
Bar Harbor, Maine

Re: Comments and Suggestions

During our audit of the College, we became aware of several matters that are opportunities for strengthening internal controls and operating efficiency. The following summarizes our comments and suggestions concerning those matters. This letter contains our comments and suggestions which do not rise to the level of significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. We have reported on the College's internal control based upon our audit of the financial statements in our management letter dated December 1, 2021.

Controls over Payroll (Prior-Year Comment)

We noted the following internal control issues over payroll:

- The Controller and Business Office Manager have the ability to add employees to the payroll system, approve time sheets, and submit and record payroll. The Controller and Business Office Manager also have other general ledger access and responsibilities.

We noted that the College has implemented the following mitigating controls to reduce the risk of misappropriation over payroll:

- All payroll changes are approved by the Administrative Dean prior to entering into the payroll system.
- Payroll change reports are reviewed and signed off as approved by the Administrative Dean. Approved payroll change reports are filed with applicable payroll registers.
- Departmental budget to actual reports are provided to department managers and Administrative Dean for review on a monthly basis.

We recommend that the College continue to review policies and procedures over payroll and implement procedures where necessary to further mitigate the risk of misappropriation over payroll. We also recommend that the Trustees and management remain aware of the risk of management override and assess the risks and feasibility of segregating the access to records from the authorization of transaction.

Controls over Cash Disbursements (Prior-Year Comment)

We noted the following internal control issues over cash disbursements:

- The Controller has check signing authority and is responsible for performing bank reconciliations and has access to the general ledger.
- For certain cash accounts, the same individual can generate and sign checks. It was noted that these checks are primarily transfers from various accounts to the College's operating account.

We noted that the College has addressed and implemented certain mitigating controls to reduce the risk of misappropriation over cash disbursements. These procedures include:

- The Administrative Dean reviews and signs off on supporting documentation for all disbursements over \$1,000 and randomly reviews and signs off on supporting documentation for disbursements under \$1,000.
- Review of monthly bank statements and reconciliations by the Administrative Dean.
- Assigning an individual, separate from the bank reconciliation process, to receive unopened bank statements for review.
- Requiring that the Controller not sign checks for random weeks throughout the year.

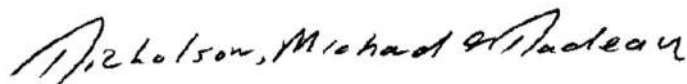
We recommend that the Trustees and management remain aware of the risk of management override and assess the risks and feasibility of segregating the access to records from the authorization of transaction.

Recording Pledges on the Accrual Basis (Prior-Year Comment)

We noted the College's development department records and monitors pledges receivable in the development software; however, pledges are not recorded in the general ledger until the payment is received (cash basis method). The College records the pledges in the general ledger at year-end to comply with accrual accounting. We recommend the College consider the benefits of recording pledges on the accrual method and including periodic reconciliations throughout the year to allow for monitoring by management and to reduce administrative time necessary to convert from the cash to accrual method at year-end.

We will review the status of these comments during our next audit engagement. We have already discussed these comments and suggestions with various organization personnel, and we would 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.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the Audit Committee, Board of Trustees, management, and others within the organization, and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.



Waterville, Maine
December 1, 2021

Appendix D

E-SERIES FORMS: MAKING ASSESSMENT MORE EXPLICIT

OPTION E3. INSTITUTIONAL CLAIMS FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, WITH VALIDATING

CATEGORY	(1) What are the claims for student achievement or student success?	(2) Where are the claims published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	(3) Other than course completion and grades, what outcomes evidence is used to support the claims?	(4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. by the curriculum committee)	(5) What changes have been made in the program, the claims or the evidence?
At the institutional level:	<p>The faculty updated and affirmed seven core learning objectives associated with the COA curriculum and co-curriculum. It is expected that students will see improvements in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Metacognition 2. Creativity 3. Critical Thinking 4. Community Engagement 5. Communication 6. Interactive Thinking 7. Interdisciplinarity 	<p>Learning Objectives: https://www.coa.edu/academics/</p>	<p>Core Learning Objectives are evidenced through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Course narratives: all courses offer both letter grades and written narratives from professors. Student self-assessment narratives are optional. These narratives often detail improvements in the learning objectives. - Senior Project (capstone course) Both the proposals and the final write-up often demonstrate learning that has improved because of their educational experiences. - Advisor feedback. Academic advisors meet often with students and help the students reflect upon their learning 	<p>Course narratives are reviewed by the office of the provost and by academic advisors. These narratives show a path of progress for the student and can identify persistent problems and/or strengths.</p> <p>Senior projects educational guidelines are set by the Academic Affairs Committee. All project proposals are reviewed and approved by the Review and Appeals Committee. The final assessment of the senior project is completed by the project director (usually over multiple revisions). All senior projects are also archived and available through the Thorndike</p>	<p>The faculty are currently developing an assessment plan for institutional learning objectives. We spent the last year re-assessing the core objectives (and added metacognition).</p> <p>The Academic Affairs Committee has the review of Senior Project leaning objectives on its workload list for the upcoming year, as well as a review of the advising system.</p> <p>Training programs for academic advisors are regularly scheduled throughout the year based on feedback from the faculty and students. Recently we have had trainings on decolonizing the curriculum, working</p>

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			<p>objectives.</p> <p>External student awards, professional presentations, grants, and publications. These experiences demonstrate</p> <p>Graduate School placement rates</p> <p>Employment rates and employment by focus area rates</p> <p>Nation Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results</p> <p>Alumni Surveys</p> <p>Feedback from academic, student life, and student service teams</p> <p>Exit interviews</p>	<p>Library for external sharing and review.</p> <p>All students have at least one academic advisor (more than 40% of our students have two or more academic advisors). Our small student to faculty ratio allows for in-depth advising that occurs frequently.</p> <p>The alumni office has started tracking student awards, graduate school attendance rates and employment data for graduates.</p> <p>The admission office, the persistence working group, and student life all survey students about school learning and learning satisfaction.</p>	<p>with neurodivergent students and are set to have a training of grading for equity this fall.</p> <p>Improvements have been made to the orientation of new advisors, and in how advisors are initially selected.</p> <p>A new set of exit interviews (and a shared digital format for information) is being developed by a team of staff from the provost's office, academic services, student life, financial aid, and admission.</p>
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OPTION E3. INSTITUTIONAL CLAIMS FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, WITH VALIDATING

<p>For general education if an undergraduate institution:</p>	<p>First year requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quantitative Reasoning - History - Writing - Human Ecology Core Course <p>Resource Area Distributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two courses in Arts and Design (one must be a studio course) - Two courses in Human Studies - Two courses in Environmental Science <p>Other Graduation Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internship - Senior Project - Writing Portfolio - Community Service - Human Ecology Essay 	<p>All Degree requirements coa.edu/academics/human-ecology-degree/degree-requirements</p> <p>First Year Requirements Quantitative Reasoning: https://www.coa.edu/academics/human-ecology-degree/degree-requirements/#Quantitative-reasoning</p> <p>History: https://www.coa.edu/academics/human-ecology-degree/degree-requirements/#History</p> <p>Writing: https://www.coa.edu/academics/human-ecology-degree/degree-requirements/#Writing</p> <p>Resource Area and Distribution Requirements: https://www.coa.edu/academics/human-ecology-degree/degree-requirements/#Distribution-requirements</p> <p>Internship https://www.coa.edu/academics/internships/</p>	<p>Quantitative Reasoning ability is also evidenced in student presentations at conferences and through publications</p> <p>History – No evidence beyond class assessments</p> <p>Writing: Students must compete a writing portfolio by their second year</p> <p>Human Ecology Core Course</p> <p>Internships: These require written proposals, site sponsor evaluations, and a final written self evaluation including learned objectives and connection to human ecology.</p> <p>Distribution requirements</p> <p>Senior Projects: please see above</p> <p>Human Ecology Essay: Essays require multiple drafts and reviews during the</p>	<p>Quantitative reasoning: Evidence from the NESSE and reports from faculty suggested that students would benefit from additional offering related to quantitative reasoning, advanced statistics, and data science.</p> <p>Writing portfolios are evaluated based on a rubric developed by the writing program faculty and assessed by a team of trained faculty and professional staff.</p> <p>The learning objectives for the Human Ecology Core course were developed by a team of 17 faculty and are reviewed and assessed on an annual basis by the Core Course teaching team</p> <p>Internship proposals and final reports are reviewed by the internship committee. The site evaluation of student performance come from the on-site</p>	<p>New and improved course offerings in quantitative reasoning have been established. We have added faculty and courses in the areas of physics and math of sustainable energy, numerous data science courses, and additional statistics classes focusing modeling software (R, Python, Tableau)</p> <p>The writing center has improved writing tutor training (to ensure less bias, and greater ESL training). The writing program will have new directorship starting in the fall of 2023 and we will look to the new director for an assessment plan.</p> <p>The Human Ecology Core Course has altered its format (rotation of students through all the Core Course teaching faculty) to ensure greater time on area content, more eyes for assessment, and greater exposure to</p>
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		<p>Senior Project https://www.coa.edu/live/files/82-seniorprojectproposalcoversheetpdf</p> <p>Writing Portfolio (page 9): https://www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog</p> <p>Community service (page 10) https://www.coa.edu/live/files/510-course-catalog</p>	<p>senior year.</p> <p>Community service</p>	<p>internship supervisor.</p> <p>Distribution requirements are developed and approved by each resource area (AD, ES and HS). The resource areas assure that foundational knowledge skills are embedded in courses receiving their designation.</p> <p>Human Ecology Essays are guided and reviewed by two different faculty (the students academic advisor and one other faculty member of their choosing). Final essays for all students are published in a book.</p>	<p>more faculty for new students.</p> <p>The internship program has digitized the system of submitting both applications and final reports as well as clarified learning objectives. The college has also hired a new Director of Internships and Career Development</p> <p>Faculty have initiated some initial discussions between the resource areas to see how they each assign course status and what evidence a course needs to represent in order to get their designation.</p>
List each degree program: 1.	COA has a single self-directed major in Human Ecology – offering both a BA and MA degrees	https://www.coa.edu/academics/human-ecology-degree/ https://www.coa.edu/academics/graduate-program/	Faculty oversee the degree and graduate requirements for both the undergraduate and graduate degrees.	Degree requirements are reviewed and approved by the Faculty Meeting, the Academic Affairs Committee, and the Graduate Committee.	
2.	Teacher certification	https://www.coa.edu/academics/areas-of-study/educational-studies/	Job placements rates for graduates of the program, formal/final reviews with portfolios, external reviews from professional	A committee of COA education faculty and regional education assess student portfolios and formal and final reviews.	

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			placements, state of Maine Teacher Certification reports and reviews	Professional accreditation teams from the state of Maine assess the program on a five year cycle	
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